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The Fight Against Barbarians and Heretics in Hydatius' Chronicle

Theses of the doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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1. The subject and objectives of the dissertation

One of the most valuable source of 5th century history, Hydatius' Chronicle offers a detailed account of the history of contemporary Hispania and the disintegration of imperial power. Hydatius' work is one of the earliest surviving works among the chronicles written in Latin, and is regarded as the most important summary of the disintegration of Hispania in the period between Orosius and John of Biclaro. Furthermore, there is no other western author in the period between Ammianus Marcellinus and Gregory of Tours who would also present 5th century political and military developments in their historical work. Thompson considers the detailed source available to us from this period of Gallaecia "*a stroke of extraordinary good luck*", which supports the view of Candelas-Colodrón, who regards Hydatius as "*un historiador preciso y minucioso*."

Hydatius' Chronicle is the only known literary attempt from 5th century Hispania, which at the time, in the words of Collins, emerged as a "*sole literary luminary*" from the intellectual medium of the province. Hydatius is also known as "*the father of Iberian history*" since he was the first to take a focused interest in the Iberian peninsula. According to Burgess he was the first European chronicler to work in the genre of "*post-Roman history*" and "*Latin regional history*". Cassiodorus and Jordanes are considered chroniclers of the Goths, Gregory of Tours is known as chronicler of the Franks and Paul the Deacon as that of the Lombards. Through his presentation of the history of the Suebi Hydatius also ascended in the ranks of the most significant chroniclers.

Muhlberger finds Hydatius' records worthy of interest because they reflect the thoughts of one of the leading officials of the time, focusing on events in a region where Roman power suffered an extreme setback. Gelarda is of the opinion that even in a modern sense, Hydatius is "*uno dei più attenti uomini politici*", who, compared to other chroniclers, pays an unusual amount of attention to diplomatic events: there is no other contemporary source at our disposal of the internal and outer relations of the authorities in Gallaecia, from which conclusions could be drawn pertaining to the evolution of barbarian–Roman relations. For quite a number of events related to eastern and western areas Hydatius' Chronicle is our only source, and since he took his records at the time of 5th century barbarian occupation, he can authentically inform the reader about the settlement and activities of Germanic tribes. In addition, for scarcity of contemporary ecclesiastical documentation, our knowledge of church hierarchy is also based upon Hydatius' Chronicle.

According to Burgess, both ancient and modern opinions hold that if the bishop of a town of minor interest in a distant region decides to record history, his chronicle cannot be as valuable and reliable as the works of his more famous contemporaries. This stereotype may be further reinforced if we consider that supposedly Hydatius did not conduct high level studies, and that in Gallaecia cut off by Suevic occupation he was gradually losing touch with the outside world and may not have had access to adequate source material. Hydatius fought against barbarians and heretics all his life and according to Muhlberger he swung into battle against the enemies of the Hispano–Roman population and those of Orthodoxy as a kind of “*champion of the Roman community*”. The personal efforts he made in politics and religion and the fact that despite the chaotic nature of the 5th century he still dared to don the mantle of the chronicler, confirm the view that in a sense he was an optimist although it is his pessimism that is frequently underscored. Notwithstanding giving his own situation a realistic assessment he must have known that the arrival of the barbarians would bring about an irreversible change not only in the situation of Gallaecia but that of the whole empire as well. In our opinion his relentless trust in imperial power and his exemplary stance towards Orthodoxy enabled Hydatius to hold out even when it was clear that Gallaecia could no longer count upon central assistance from the Empire and that coexistence with the barbarian invaders was on the cards for the Hispano–Roman population; furthermore, heretic teachings had gained immense popularity with the population and bishops alike. Nevertheless, Hydatius was committed to his values and by writing the Chronicle was trying to encourage his readers to take a similar stance. Earlier research argues that on detecting the hardships of his age Hydatius had been filled with apocalyptic beliefs and was preparing for an impending doom, yet his ambitious personality and characteristic view of history indicate that his failed efforts still inspired him to write the Chronicle and thus aspire for popularity and acclaim among the Gallaecians, while the Roman world around him had fallen into an apparently hopeless state in both a military and religious sense.

In the 4–5th centuries the barbarian peoples living on the borders of the Roman Empire stepped up their attacks as a result of which Roman border defences were gradually eroded. Following their incursions the barbarians began to sack Roman areas and their conquests led to the establishment of independent states of their own and to their forcing the Roman population to a certain degree of cooperation, but their intentions are known to have triggered resistance, too. The weakness of imperial power and the fluctuating nature of political protection Catholic faith received resulted in the immense popularity heretic teachings had gained with the Roman population as well, especially Arian and Priscillianist

beliefs, which threatened both the authority of papal power and the upkeep of church discipline among bishops. The crisis in the operation of imperial power and the Catholic church was further escalated by the disloyalty apparent in Roman political and ecclesiastical life. Hydatius' Chronicle presents exactly this transitional period to the readers who on reading the records about barbarians and heretics may visualize the portrait of a church leader who spent all his life fighting for the protection of the Roman world in a peripheral area. On Hydatius' work we can also study how barbarian incursions and settlements changed the Gallaecian way of thinking and what response this triggered in Hydatius' life, full of failed attempts, as well as in his view of history.

Hydatius presented Suevic activity from a Roman viewpoint and we have no source document in our possession written by the Sueves themselves therefore archeological and numismatic research bear special significance through which we can objectively assess the presence of Sueves in Gallaecia. In recent years the intention has even been voiced to regard the formerly neglected Gallaecian archeological data as part of the “*historical narrative*”. In the first half of 2018, an unparalleled exhibition named *In Tempore Sueborum. El Tiempo de los Suevos en la Gallaecia (411–585)* [Suevic Times in Gallaecia] opened in Ourense, which by exhibiting valuable European artefacts and the findings of recent archeological excavations attempted to break with the traditional portrayal of the Suebi, and instead of the connection between the Great Migration and the decline of the Roman Empire it focused on the relations between the barbarians and the Roman aristocracy. Therefore our study briefly touches upon the results of the numismatic research, the excavations of cemeteries, *villas*, settlements and church buildings so that we can have a more accurate picture of the establishment of Suevic power and the Sueves' religious situation as well as the dynamics of early mediaeval society in Gallaecia.

2. The structure and methodology of the dissertation

In the first half of the study we review those points of the genre's history and formal and chronological requirements that may have had a large effect on the formation of Christian world chronicles rooted in Jewish and Greek traditions. Since apologetic history tried to sum up world history using a unified chronological framework, the world chronicles of the late imperial period were mostly written by Christian authors. Eusebius connected ecclesiastic history with biblical tradition through specific chronological tables and thus was able to

summarize the whole history of mankind in a single work. Jerome then, having translated and complemented his predecessor's work made this account accessible to readers who understood Latin only, creating an easily imitable model to the chroniclers of the 5–6th centuries. After the presentation of the innovations of Eusebius and Jerome, and the analysis of the effects of Roman annalistic tradition, we will take a brief look at those world chronicles of the period which were written in Latin, paying special attention to the chronological framework applied by Prosper and Marcellinus Comes, continuers of Jerome, and from among those continuing Prosper, by Victor of Tunnuna and John of Biclaro. We will also examine how Cassiodorus and Isidore, both key contributors in the Middle Ages, facilitated the later development of the genre. Subsequently, our focus is on the life of Hydatius: we will review the debates concerning Hydatius' background, pilgrimage and election as a bishop. Then in the analysis of the types of sources used for the Chronicle we will examine more thoroughly than earlier research did the correspondence between church leaders, oral accounts and official reports. Finally, we will examine the characteristics of chronology and manuscript tradition.

In Chapter Two we will deal in detail with research problems related to the developments in Suevic foreign policy. The reason for the presentation of this subject is the fact that Hydatius is the only author who through personal experiences of his own gave his accounts not only as a witness but frequently as an active participant in the events: how the Suebi settled after their incursion in Gallaecia in 409 and through what means they tried to extend their rule over the whole of Hispania. Relying on the tendencies of Suevic foreign policy we are trying to establish under what circumstances what barbarian groups participated in the invasions in 406 and 409. Then we will examine that subsequent to Hermeric's peaceful and Roman-friendly rule what military or diplomatic events gave rise to the formation of Rechila's and Recharius' expansive foreign policy. Their defeat at the hands of the Visigoths in 456 opened a new era in the history of the Suebi as the activities of the various political factions and candidates for leadership had plunged Gallaecia into civil war. In an effort to reinforce their own positions, the Suevic leaders regularly ended up in armed conflicts either with the Goths or with the Romans. Meanwhile Remismund, who had in the meantime come to power, stepped up his raids against the Hispano–Roman population and broke off the diplomatic ties the Suebi had established.

In Chapter Three we will take a closer look at the forces of disintegration which unravelled the political and religious order of the 5th century thus throwing Hydatius' idealized Roman world into crisis. First we will examine in general what specific strategic

and economic circumstances affected the encounter of Romans and barbarians. Special focus will be given to the changes Rome's 'barbarian policy' and the composition of the army underwent as a result of the creation of Germanic settlements. Without a doubt, the increasing role of barbarians in Roman society had resulted in immense anxiety. However, the amazement Germanic peoples showed at Roman culture and the military loyalty they displayed in exchange for social privileges encouraged a certain degree of cooperation and cultural interaction between the two sides. On account of this, we shall examine the process of acculturation reflected in the usage of the Latin language, in the takeover of Roman institutions and even in the royal attitudes of barbarian kings. Mention will also be made of the *raison d'être* for the notions of Romanization and multiculturalism in the 5th century. A special aspect to Romano-barbarian interactions are the attempts made by the Church to eliminate religious differences and convert heretics. In light of this, we must analyse the conditions for the Christianization of the barbarians as well as the reasons for the popularity of Arianism, raised to the level of national religion by the Germanic peoples.

In the largest part of Chapter Three we shall examine the forces of disintegration which according to Hydatius contributed to the crisis Gallaecia and the Roman Empire experienced in the 5th century. As it is still highly debated which historical period or process should be considered to mark the end of the Roman imperial period, it seemed necessary to summarize the different opinions related to this matter. Then we shall point out how Germanic incursions and the weakness of central control combined in various logical ways with the signs of crisis led to the fall of the Western Empire. The first group of forces of disintegration is comprised of the stereotypical behaviour of the barbarian peoples, characterized by plundering and violating their commitments to their allies. We will examine this in relation to the Suebi, the Vandals and the Goths, based on Hydatius' records. We will pay special attention to the fact that in 411 the barbarians were able to settle in Hispania either through drawing lots or agreements made with the Romans. We will also touch upon Suevic-Gallaecian relations, which varied depending on the circumstances, the African expansion of the Vandals and Gaiseric's Roman incursion of 455. Regarding the Goths, we will discuss the significance of the *foedus* of 382, the developments in Gothic-Roman diplomatic relations and we will also deal with the role the battle of Catalaunum and the conflict of 456 played in the formation of alliances.

Another group of the forces of disintegration is comprised of the heretic movements which owing to their popularity with the barbarian peoples and the weakness of central power spread widely among the Roman population and the bishops as well. After defining

heresy and Orthodoxy we will examine to what extent the spread of Arianism influenced the development of the primacy of the Church of Rome. In addition, we will also deal with the rivalry among patriarchies. A separate line of scrutiny will be how Arianism spread among the Vandals and the Suebi and what role Gaiseric's and Rechiarius' religious policy played in stabilizing rule over the barbarians. Since Hydatius called his readers' attention to the dangers of other heretic teachings as well, it seemed necessary to give an overview of how ecclesiastical and secular power was trying to make a stand against Nestorianism and Monophysitism, renowned for the dogmatic disputes they generated, against Priscillianism, which was extremely popular in Gallaecia and known to have even caused political scandal, and against the secret movement Manichaeism, as well as Pelagianism and Donatism, both important in the view of the Church. However, instead of presenting dogmatic disputes, Hydatius strove to support Orthodoxy and to acquaint the readers with the harmful impacts affecting central power.

The third group of the forces of disintegration is disloyalty and the dilemma surrounding loyalty among political and church leaders. By this Hydatius meant that it was not only the activity of barbarians and heretics that threw the western areas into crisis but that it can also be attributed to the disloyal attitude of the Romans themselves. It may well be traced back to the loosening of church discipline, the scandalous elections of bishops as well as the military leaders' and *usurpators'* aspirations for power. To counter this image, Hydatius set the example of those political and church leaders, both to himself and the readers, who remained loyal to the spirit of Rome and would be able to restore military and religious order in the weakened empire.

Chapter Four is devoted to a detailed analysis of Hydatius' view of history and motivation as an author. Since in the 5th century rational explanations could not always be given for the disasters that struck, one of the most intriguing aspects of Hydatius' view of history is when he refers to providence and conveys apocalyptic thoughts. Phenomena of the supernatural are often regarded as divine warnings or omens indicating specific events to come, therefore we need to examine whether we can view the plunderings of the barbarians as divine justice designed to discipline the sinful Romans. It is also worthy of our attention why Hydatius took an especially keen interest in the supernatural and prophecies and why the Chronicle gave special treatment to divine punishment, omens and miracles. The ultimate question, of course, is whether Hydatius could indeed have interpreted the sufferings of his age as an omen of the Parousia and whether the reference to the Apocalypse of Thomas could be taken as evidence that Hydatius believed in the impending end of the

world. In order to determine this, we need to know how the Church viewed the Apocrypha, what the Catholic response was to the delay of the Parousia and how eschatological calculations were regarded.

In the context of Hydatius and the chronicle tradition, we will then try to establish what was the driving force for Hydatius to write the Chronicle and also when he began to compile his records. In many respects Hydatius followed the models of Jerome, still he could not entirely follow in his footsteps. Therefore it may be useful to examine how much the *praefatio* at the beginning of the Chronicle justifies Hydatius being dubbed a traditionalist as far as the genre, the choice of topic and his treatment of sources are concerned, and to see what innovations Hydatius applied in an effort to surpass the achievements of contemporary chroniclers. Hydatius looks upon the barbarian incursion of 409 as a turning point both in the history of Hispania and his own life. Therefore we must explain the critical condition Gallaecia was in as well as the social consequences caused by imperial power by failing to meet popular expectations. It may also prove useful to analyse the way of thinking 5th century pagan and Christian authors had, especially how Augustine thought of the Roman state, and what impact Daniel's prophecy of 4 world-ruling empires and the legacy of *translation imperii* had on the methodology of the periodization of history.

Sensing the increasingly critical condition Gallaecia was in, in his battle against barbarians and heretics Hydatius took up the fight in several forms. As a first step on the political front, representing the interests of the local population he tried to ask for Aëtius' help in stopping the plundering Suebi. This fact points to the disintegration of contemporary Roman administration and the significant role bishops played in diplomacy. In the second stage, complying with Thoribius' request, he took the battle to the domain of religion in his fight against heretic movements. A closer look at Hydatius' activities as a bishop and his capture in 460 give us a more detailed idea of the status of the Gallaecian Church and the symptoms of the disintegration of religious and social order. The signals were there: the dissatisfaction of the sunken middle stratum of society, the population fleeing to *villas*, the bad state the *coloni* were in, the formation of the system of *patrocinium* and the raids of the Bagaudae and the Circumcellions, these phenomena indicated that the majority of Romans had been alienated from imperial politics and in order to retain their former status they would rather choose cooperation with the barbarians. In contrast, Hydatius would never accept that the Roman population should fall under foreign rule, and regarded everyone who joined the service of barbarian rulers as an enemy, declining any form of cooperation with the Suevic invaders.

Having failed in his earlier struggles, towards the end of his life Hydatius continued the fight in the domain of literature. Relying on the experiences gained in his native land, he recorded the most important events of the decline of the empire in chronicle form. With the peripheral status of Gallaecia in mind, we examine the amount of sources Hydatius had at his disposal, from which we can estimate his level of physical isolation and gradual loss of contact with the outside world. It is also worth examining how the view of history the fellow Hispanic Orosius and Prudentius present differs from that of Hydatius. But we might also contrast the optimism of other chroniclers with the pessimism of Hydatius and what notion Hydatius held of the role of Rome. Hydatius did apply the formal and chronological framework of the chronicle genre, but gave the contemporary reader an unusually detailed account of events, which could have contributed to the failure of his literary struggle and his subsequent unpopularity. At the end of this study there are chronological lists, geographical indices, maps and pictures to assist the reader in the specific problem areas.

3. The major results of the dissertation

1. Hydatius was well-versed in the traditions of chronicle writing and appreciated his predecessors' activities in this field. He was aware of the formal and chronological requirements of writing chronicles, used the dating methods of Eusebius and Jerome, applied ruling years and consular years, the Olympiads and also *computatio* for calculating the number of years that had elapsed. Determined to follow tradition he regarded Jerome as the most significant model thus he linked his own work to his without any revision. Jerome strove to express his admiration for the achievement of Eusebius by translating his predecessor's chronicle and continuing it. Similarly, Hydatius was also proud to follow the model of his predecessor. Yet, he was realistic in his judgment that his own work could not compare to that of Jerome. In the *praefatio*, unlike his contemporaries, Hydatius displays a high level of expertise regarding the methodology of historiography and handling sources. The dramatic structure of the Chronicle shows that he was familiar with the structural constraints of the genre and his remarks regarding miraculous signs and apocalyptic references confirm his attachment to biblical and historical traditions.

2. Hydatius aspired for popularity and made various attempts to arouse the reader's interest. In this again, Jerome served him as a model, who in his effort to translate Eusebius' work into Latin wanted to create literary sensation and for the sake of popularity introduced

innovations as well. Hydatius was motivated to write the Chronicle amongst other things by his respect to Jerome, and by taking advantage of his predecessor's popularity he was trying to enhance his own. As the Suevic incursion supposedly thwarted his plan to leave Gallaecia and conduct high-level studies, he was constantly trying to prove himself within his own community. His voluntary part in the deputation to Aëtius and the success of the investigation entrusted to him by Thoribius attest that he wished for recognition and fame and he gave a detailed account of his activities as a bishop so that his readers would notice his conscientiousness and support of Orthodoxy. His exaggerating and detailed descriptions of the pillaging barbarians were to stir the readers' emotions. His records related to biblical prophecies and miraculous signs, the presented natural phenomena and his reference to the Apocalypse of Thomas are evidence to his own interest and thorough knowledge and are also useful to capture the attention of the less educated reader. At the end of his life with his historiographical work Hydatius tried to gain recognition within in his own community and in order to achieve this, he introduced several innovations. In addition to the traditional chronological methods he was the first to apply the notion of the Hispanic *aera*. His unusually long *praefatio* contains a lot of biographical information and information related to handling sources. In an effort to maintain the readers' interest, he devoted a larger part of his account to military events and natural phenomena than other chroniclers, and by widening the constraints of the genre, regarding certain events he provided extremely detailed descriptions to satisfy the readers' curiosity. Already in the *praefatio* he is trying to gain the readers' sympathy when confessing to the limited nature of his scope and his sources, and although he was writing a work of world history, on nearing his own age he turned more and more towards Gallaecia. Hydatius' contemporary Orosius was probably not included in the Chronicle because his view of history was different and because he was one to underrate the significance of chronicle writing. Furthermore, Hydatius probably regarded him as a rival and wanted posterity to consider him, Hydatius, the most famous historiographer of Gallaecia.

3. The Suebi settled in Gallaecia under the terms of a contract made with the Roman governance, and the power they held over the Hispano-Roman population was not the kind of absolute power Hydatius described it to be. Barbarian settlement, similarly to contractual agreements made with other peoples, had to be recorded in writing. Yet, Hydatius may have referred to the allocation of lands by means of drawing lots because he was not proud of the fact that the barbarians had occupied Hispania with the permission of central power. The

Suebi probably received lands to settle in exchange for military service based on an agreement with a legitimate ruler or one of the *usurpators*. But it is also conceivable that only a few of their groups came into possession of land as a result of bargaining. Even coins attest to the cooperation between the two rulers, but it is also confirmed by the two decades in which Hermeric launched no invasion to Roman areas. The policy the Romans conducted around 418–419 was expressly Suebi-friendly and Hydatius on several occasions referred to the renewal of former agreements. The Suebi never occupied Gallaecia in its entirety and they did not interfere in the operations of Roman institutions. They did not really keep the Hispano–Roman population under tight control and their raids were never launched on religious grounds. We have no evidence that in the region they occupied they would interfere in the election of bishops or that the bishops would have to seek the Suebi's approval to conduct their investigations mentioned in the Chronicle or to travel. Although Hydatius felt that the Suebi would never leave Gallaecia, archaeological findings confirm that land tenure relations had remained the same, trade was uninterrupted, what is more, Suevic looting in the area of Aquae Flaviae seems to indicate that it was a mostly Hispano–Roman population that lived there.

4. The quality of Suevic–Roman interactions was subject to constant change, but Hydatius was adamant in refusing any form of cooperation. At the beginning of Suevic occupation the Gallaecians moved to the more secure heights and fortified regions. Some of the farmers made an attempt to hold out against the invaders, but the exchange of envoys between 431–438 indicate the initiation of cooperation between the two peoples. These agreements are unlikely to have been honoured by all and they were often based on bargaining and involved smaller groups only. Rechila chose to cooperate with some of the Hispano–Roman population so that he could make use of their military forces and resources for Suevic invasions. Also strategically motivated, the Catholic Recharius, with the intention to win over the Roman population, refrained from pressing ahead with forced conversions. After their defeat of the Goths in 456, the Suebi entered into a much more peaceful era in their dealings with the Gallaecians. At the same time, following an increase in Suevic raids, many chose to cooperate with the barbarians. All in all, the Suevic–Roman relations, depending on the circumstances, were in a constant state of flux, i.e. in general we can characterize them neither as hostile nor peaceful. It was Hydatius' conviction that diplomatic means and his own undertakings as envoy may facilitate the resolution of the problems between Romans and barbarians, even in the long term. For this reason, he firmly refused any cooperation

with the barbarians and would fail to notice the general tendency: a large proportion of the sunken middle stratum of society, who had expected central assistance in vain, had already been alienated from imperial politics, and putting its own interest first, would rather accept the rule of the barbarian invaders.

5. Vandal king Gaiseric strove to strengthen his own rule by totally refusing to cooperate with the Romans. Unlike other barbarian peoples, the Vandals were not committed to the empire, not even from a military point of view. After their move to Africa, they showed no sign of cooperation whatsoever with the imperial leadership, what is more, they did not always respect the administrative institutions they had taken over from the Romans, and they rarely employed Roman officials in the offices. The Vandals, along with the Sueves and the Burgundians, immediately adopted Arianism, showing no trace of tolerance towards those of a different religion. They did not even maintain contact with the Arian communities of other regions. Gaiseric put the Arian belief in the service of his own power trying to increase Vandal unity through aggressive religious politics. In order to support his political and economic interests, he ruthlessly persecuted the leaders of the Catholic Church. He banished some of the Roman aristocracy from the occupied lands and levied multiple taxes for the use of the rest of the lands. Therefore, in the occupied regions the Vandals usually lived separately from the Roman population. The capture of Carthage in 439 involved a great deal of destruction, even though local cultural life was in its heyday under the rule of Gaiseric. With the *foedus* of 442, when the most significant African regions had ended up in the hands of the Vandals, Gaiseric – in the fashion of a veritable pirate – plundered along the coastline of the Mediterranean, threatening Rome's grain supply. This is why chroniclers greatly exaggerated the Vandal sacking of Rome in 455, and in 468 the eastern and western troops made a concerted effort to put an end to their activities. Gaiseric did not share his power with other Vandal leaders, which is why his scope of authority seems significantly larger than that of other Germanic rulers. Perhaps this is the reason why Hydatius related him with biblical prophecies, and in the 460s we do not read of the atrocities committed by the Vandals because this way the extent of Suevic pillage may loom larger for the readers.

6. Hydatius always stood by imperial power and the protection of Orthodoxy. In accordance with the negative stereotypes developed in historical tradition he described the barbarians as violent, plundering people who could not be trusted. He also applied the tool of exaggeration when describing the extent and consequences of the Germanic invasion because in his view

the Germanic peoples intended to destroy traditional Roman order. At the same time he tried to conceal any breach of contract and violence on the Romans' part. He harshly criticized the Romans who instead of loyalty to the emperor and working on the restoration of the imperial order chose betrayal or took advantage of the Roman army as a means to their own aspirations for power. As a counterbalance, he drew up positive portraits of Roman emperors and generals for his readers, keeping quiet about any event that would reflect badly on the activity of a church leader or political leader he had portrayed as a role model. Hydatius gave an almost complete overview of the heretic movements of the 5th century, but instead of interpreting their tenets he tried to show his readers how these movements played a part in weakening the position of Orthodoxy and how they threw imperial control into crisis. In his *Chronicle* Hydatius put a large emphasis on the church leaders who, like him, stood by Orthodoxy and took concrete steps to fight against heretic teachings. His mentioning Plegianism and Donatism, for instance, are justified by the successful fight against them by Jerome and Augustine, respectively. Hydatius' interest in miraculous signs only shows the effects paganism and heresy had on him to the extent that he was familiar with the prophecies related to them, but he did not believe they ran counter to Orthodoxy. Despite the confusion around him he relentlessly believed in the strength of secular and ecclesiastical power which he expected to be capable of resolving the crisis in Gallaecia. However, he was unable to regard the forces of disintegration as natural historical phenomena. The critical condition of Gallaecia was encouraged him to take up the fight against barbarians and heretics in several forms. That is why he was so enthusiastic to become an envoy during the time of Suevic plunder and subsequently why he so conscientiously participated in the investigation against Priscillians and Manicheans. His attitude runs counter to the assumptions of several scholars who believe that Hispano-Romans were totally indifferent to improving their own conditions under barbarian invasions. During the Suevic attack of 460 informers probably wanted to have Hydatius removed from public life because he was so well-known of his commitment to Roman interests and Orthodoxy.

7. Hydatius' *Chronicle* is not in need of apocalyptic interpretation since its central topic is not the impending end of the world. Hydatius believed the church and political leaders he mentioned as role models would in a best case scenario be able to save the Empire. In addition to heavenly punishment and fulfilled prophecies his depiction of divine mercy and providence is also significant. Furthermore, since like other church leaders, he rejected eschatological calculations, Hydatius must have been indifferent to the time left until a

potential end of the world scenario. Although supposedly through the Priscillians he became familiar with the Apocalypse of Thomas, in the Chronicle he never directly mentioned the impending end of the world. Thoribius even warned bishops in a letter of the dangers of the Apocrypha and Hydatius must have obeyed the senior instructions. The supernatural phenomena and miraculous signs in the Chronicle cannot always be linked to actual events; their use could be explained with Hydatius' interest and the intention to indulge the readers, that is, he used them as a literary tool to maintain attention. His apocalyptic references only confirm his attachment to biblical traditions and the inclusion of the table of year calculation was necessary for compliance with formal requirements. With his collection of the events of the past Hydatius expected historical times to continue and even encouraged his readers to continue the Chronicle. If he had really been preparing for the impending end of the world, both factors should be disregarded.

8. Hydatius was a respected member of his community in Gallaecia, but towards the end of his life he lost not only his popularity but outside contacts as well. Hydatius was elected bishop of Aquae Flaviae at a very young age, which was probably due to his religious upbringing and reputation within the community. Making use of the diplomatic influence church leaders possessed, in full awareness of his responsibility and as an advocate for the local population he decided to become an envoy in 431. By this means, compensating for his own isolation, he could have joined political life, and in case of a successful peace treaty he could have increased his influence within the Church. Hydatius may have been known from a young age to be committed to Orthodoxy and this is why Thoribius and Pope Leo requested him to conduct an investigation against heretics. However, we have no knowledge of any of Hydatius' independent measures as a bishop in a Gallaecia mostly populated with Priscillians, perhaps because on account of his views he was intimidated and kidnapped or because his attempts ended in failure. After he had been elected as a bishop, his church contacts must have expanded. However, because of the chaotic political situation after 456, he had trouble maintaining his contacts outside Gallaecia and could hardly have had access to reliable sources. The desperate nature of his last years encouraged Hydatius to write the Chronicle, which, after the failure of his earlier struggles could at last have brought him recognition for the long term, but the overly detailed text and the complicated language did not bring him popularity.

4. Publications related to the subject of the dissertation

Hydatius: Chronica (379–469). Documenta Historica 68. Szeged, 2005.

Hydatius, az V. század gallaeciai krónikása. [Hydatius, a Chronicler of the 5th century from Gallaecia.] In: *Panegyris*. Eds. Mészáros Tamás – Jutai Péter. Budapest, 2007, 53–56.

Az 5–6. századi világkrónikák forrásai. [Sources of 5–6th Century World Chronicles.] In: *Enumeratio*. Eds. Jutai Péter – Tóth Iván. Budapest, 2008, 38–43.

Tunnunai Victor: Chronica (444–565). Documenta Historica 80. Szeged, 2008.

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