

Philological and Historical Notes on the Introduction of a Letter Sent by the Emperor Honorius to the Army (*Epistula Honorii*)*

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Apuntes histórico-filológicos sobre la introducción de una carta del emperador Honorio al ejército (*Epistula Honorii*)

A tenth-century manuscript, composed in the Kingdom of Pamplona's courtly circle, transmits a letter by the emperor Honorius to the troops stationed in the city of Pamplona. The brief introduction that precedes the letter features information crucial to the understanding and interpretation of the rest of the text. This article seeks to reevaluate existing scholarship on its content, firstly, by analysing the function of the whole text within the manuscript's conception and tradition and, secondly, by looking at other Late Antique and Early Medieval sources, to try to re-contextualise the prefatory text. My main argument is that an anonymous author from the Kingdom of Pamplona wrote it, or the compilers of the code modified it to suit their own interests.

Key words: Codex of Roda; Kingdom of Pamplona; Late Antique imperial texts; Hispania; Barbarian invasions of the fifth century; *Pompelo* / *Pampilona*.

Un manuscrito del siglo X, compuesto en el ambiente cortesano del Reino de Pamplona, nos ha transmitido una carta del emperador Honorio a las tropas estacionadas en Pamplona. La breve introducción que precede a la carta propiamente dicha ofrece información crucial para la comprensión e interpretación del resto del texto. El artículo pretende reevaluar los estudios existentes sobre su contenido: en primer lugar, analizando la función de todo el texto dentro de la concepción y tradición del manuscrito; en segundo lugar, recurriendo a otras fuentes tardoantiguas y altomedievales para tratar de (re) contextualizar el prefacio. El argumento principal radica en atribuir a un autor anónimo del reino pamplonés su redacción o a los compiladores del código el haberlo modificado para adaptarlo a sus propios intereses.

Palabras clave: Códice de Roda; Reino de Pamplona; textos imperiales tardoantiguos; Hispania; invasiones bárbaras del siglo V; *Pompelo* / *Pampilona*.

* This article is part of a project that has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. Grant agreement ID: 101001991. I am grateful to Peter Riedlberger and Lorenzo Livorsi for their valuable suggestions and remarks on earlier drafts. I also owe special thanks to the journal's reviewers, whose critical readings helped to improve this article considerably.

Citation / Cómo citar este artículo: Setién García, Carla (2023): «Philological and Historical Notes on the Introduction of a Letter Sent by the Emperor Honorius to the Army (*Epistula Honorii*)», *Emerita* 91 (1), pp. 123-148.

I. INTRODUCTION

A northern-Spanish codex from the tenth century, the Roda codex or *Rotensis* (hereafter *R*), constitutes a very puzzling manuscript for modern scholarship¹. Among its numerous texts, it contains an imperial letter, dating from the first decades of the fifth century, sent in the name of Honorius (r. 393-423) to the Roman forces presumably quartered in the city of Pamplona (at the foothills of the south-western Pyrenees). In it he congratulates the whole army (*uniuersis militibus*) and offers them a set of rewards. The *Epistula Honorii* (*EH*), as it is commonly known, poses numerous problems: (1) the corrupted transmission of the text, presenting some unintelligible or unconnected passages; (2) the *incipit*'s mention of Rome as its place of origin hampers its precise dating, (3) the unit of Pamplona as the recipient of the letter, (4) a certain patrician named Sabinianus, otherwise an unknown figure, who was in charge of conveying the letter to Pamplona, (5) what exactly is granted to them, and, finally, (6) the actual nature of the letter².

My aim in the following pages is to focus on the brief prefatory text (*incipit*) to the letter itself, as it provides key information upon which modern studies have relied to analyse the entire text. I will begin by briefly discussing the origins and location of the city, given that it is one of the most relevant features, only mentioned in the introduction and, suspiciously, not in the letter. Then, I will contextualise the historical circumstances and the ideological mission behind the drafting of the *R*. This approach to the text has not

¹ The codex (manuscript 78) is digitised online at the website of the Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid (<https://bibliotecadigital.rah.es/es/consulta/registro.do?id=101>). For a palaeographic description of the ms, see Ruiz 1997, pp. 395-405, 618, 703. She suggests (p. 405) that, in terms of its material, the ms bears some resemblance to the scriptorium of St. Millán (La Rioja).

² Several scholars have attempted to give responses to these conundrums, either proposing different text amendments and / or (military-)historical notes: Lacarra 1945, pp. 266-270; Demougeot 1956; Jones 1957; Gil 1984; Sivan 1985; Livermore 1996; Arce 1998; Kulikowski 1998; Arce 1999; Archan 2009; Lanti 2022.

been undertaken hitherto. Thus, the aim is to shed some light, first, on the function of the whole text within the ms, and second, to analyse, linguistically and historically, the different pieces of information of the initial paratext, in order to argue that it was written at a later stage, and / or eventually suffered further modifications.

1. *Origins and location of the Roman city of Pompelon*

Located in the remote lands of the *Vascones* —as the Romans called these peoples of northern Hispania— the city of Pamplona was first mentioned by Strabo (60s BC-25 AD). It was located along «the road from Tarrakon to the farthest Vasconians (on the Ocean)»³. *Pompelon* enjoyed an extraordinary location: by the River Arga, on top of a hill, and on the way between the Pyrenean pass of Roncesvalles into the extended Aquitaine and the Ebro Valley. Moreover, in this privileged *ciuitas Pompelonensis* four *uiaes* converged⁴. Thus, it was the centre of transport routes between the Ebro Valley and the Atlantic, and between Aquitania and the high Hispanic *Meseta*. Yet, despite this attractive and promising setting, the city was never, throughout the Roman period, a prominent setting economically, politically, or socially.

2. *The Codex Rotensis and its ideological and political background*

The *R* was produced around the last decade of the tenth century in Nájera (La Rioja), where the court of the Kingdom of Pamplona was usually located. Sancho Garcés I founded this *regnum Pampilonam* (*R* f. 231r) (or *Pampilonensis*) and was its first monarch from 905 to 925. By the end of the century, the kingdom had already acquired a tangible identity. Pamplona was the capital and the only episcopal see of the sovereign political territory. Under Sancho Garcés

³ Str. III 4.10 (Roller 2014, p. 173). He claims that the name of *Pompelon* came from *Pompeiopolis* (πόλις Πομπέλων ὡς ἂν Πομπηϊόπολις), founded (not *ex novo*, being that it had been inhabited since the Bronze Age) by Pompeius Magnus in 75 / 74 BC. See Andreu 2006, pp. 196-198.

⁴ A later source, the *Antonine Itinerary* (*Itinerarium prouinciarum Antonini Augusti*) (mid-second to the third century) mentions *Pompelone* as one of the cities through which passed the most occidental road (XVI) of the three that led into the Iberian Peninsula (Löhberg 2006, pp. 324-325).

II (970-994) there emerged an ideological and intellectual program that would outline the culture and identity of the realm and its capital. This political enterprise took shape in the conception of three different but highly interconnected codices: *Vigilanus (Albeldensis)* (974-976)⁵, *Emilianensis* (992), and *Rotensis*⁶.

The first two essentially portray the capital as an abstract symbol of the Neogothic monarchy against Islam, in this way linking the city with Jerusalem, Toledo, and Oviedo⁷. The *R*, by contrast, directly relates, not only symbolically, but also physically, Pamplona with the ancient imperial Rome. The scribes who arranged it and gave it form were not much interested, unlike those responsible for the other mss, in mentioning previous Peninsular kingdoms, such as that of Toledo and, after this one, the Astur-Leonese⁸.

Furthermore, the *R* has usually been described as a miscellaneous ms, whose texts present a diverse nature and enormous chronological differences. Scholars like Martín 2003 and Miranda 2011, however, have focused on its historical context and the political motives the scribes had in copying the texts it contains, arguing that there was a clear intention behind their selection and arrangement. One of its main purposes was to uphold the Kingdom of Pamplona as the rightful heir, first and foremost, to the Roman Empire; and, secondly, to the Roman-Carolingian one⁹.

In this respect, several studies have demonstrated that many of the *R* texts were extracted / tweaked from other works, and / or that their original order was altered to extol, to some extent, the distinguished position of the King-

⁵ The Monastery of San Martín of Albelda was founded by Sancho Garcés I around 924. There, the ecclesiastical figures like Gomesanus, Salvus, and Vigilanus, apart from their own literary productions, inserted personal prologues, colophons, and subscriptions in the creation and compilation of mss. Vigilanus was a poet and the author/compiler of the *Codex Albeldensis*, together with his *socius* Sarracinus and his disciple García. He compiled the two most important law collections in the Peninsula: The *Collectio Hispana*, which included the *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum (ACO)*, and the *Lex Visigothorum*. These were artificially attributed to three kings. See Díaz y Díaz 1991, p. 53ff, and 351-370 for his poems, many of which are acrostics.

⁶ Díaz y Díaz 1991, pp. 27-52; Martín 2003; Miranda 2011.

⁷ Indeed, by the time these were being compiled, the *hachib* al-Mansur (Almanzor) was making incursions (*razzias*) into this territory, see Miranda 2011, p. 294.

⁸ See De Carlos 2011, p. 121ff., for the distinction of various hands (at least three) in the ms in a Visigothic writing. She also argues that the ms was created in a monastic environment in collaboration with the political power (pp. 138-140).

⁹ Martín 2008, p. 398; Miranda 2011, p. 295ff.

dom of Pamplona and its capital¹⁰. One of the first peculiarities we find is the unusual disposition of two works by Isidore of Seville (556-636) (f. 156r-176v): the *Historiae Vandalorum* and *Sueuorum* were first copied, then the *Chronicle* and, finally, the *Historia Gothorum*. The following text, entitled *Item in Alexander* (f. 177r), is the result of a thematic selection and fusion of previous texts, as De Carlos 2008 has demonstrated. Other examples have been discussed by Gil 1971. One worth mentioning is the fictitious and ‘disparatada’ (preposterous) story of *Octavianus* and *Septemsiderus* (f. 197v-198r), probably composed by a Gallaecian author, to discredit the Kingdom of Toledo and Rome and empower the Gallaecian territory. But the most interesting texts for this study are those created in and for the Kingdom of Pamplona¹¹. The *EH* is the first one, as we will see, arranged as one with a panegyric of the city (f. 190r-v). Then there are the famous genealogies of the kings of Pamplona and four other cities closely related to that one (f. 191r-192v)¹², two short chronicles of the city (f. 231r), another chronicle of the kings of Pamplona, an obituary of its bishops (f. 231v)¹³ and an *Epithalamium of the Queen Leodegundia*, married to a prince of Pamplona (f. 232r-v). Mysteriously, Leodegundia does not appear there, even though this rather long poem was dedicated to her¹⁴. All of them set Pamplona at the centre.

Finally, essential for our analysis —and to understand the overall meaning of the ms— is the fact that the *Histories* by the Hispanic author Paulus Orosius (c. 385-c. 420) open the ms. This voluminous opus occupies more than two-thirds of the entire codex; namely f. 1r-155r out of 232 f. in total. The last Roman universal history, written c. 410s, is chronologically related and,

¹⁰ Díaz y Díaz 1991, p. 36 argues that the *R* was written with more ambition than objectivity. For a comprehensive work of this ms and this aspect of many of its texts, see the excellent doctoral thesis by Gómez 2015. She focuses on the leading idea of the *translatio imperii*. Accordingly, the intention behind the *R* was to prove that the Roman Empire had been replaced by the kingdom of Pamplona (esp. p. 196ff.).

¹¹ Lacarra 1945; Martín 2008, pp. 396-400.

¹² These ‘genealogies’, written in the 980-990s, present a biased view of the complex family ties in Pamplona’s royalty, Lacarra 1945, p. 215; Martín 2003, p. 234ff. It is worth noting that in this text (*Ordo numerum regum Pampilonensium*), which comes right after the *EH* and the *laus*, there are many blank spaces to be filled perhaps once the scribe had the information. Interestingly, Sancho Garcés I is portrayed as *optime imperator*.

¹³ These two were modified at a later stage, Martín 2003, p. 238.

¹⁴ Her name is written in acrostics, like many of Vigilanus’ poems, see note 5.

partly, in terms of its content, to the *EH*¹⁵. The information contained in the initial paratext of the *EH* could be easily compared to that offered in Orosius' final chapters, that is, the episode of Didymus and Verinianus in the year 408 (VII 40.5-8). According to Orosius, they were two Lusitanian noble landowners (*locupletes*) and relatives of Honorius¹⁶. After having recruited an army-like from among their *seruuli* (peasants and slaves bond to work the lands) to fight Constans, the son of the usurper Constantine III, and the barbarians, they «marched to the passes in the Pyrenees»¹⁷. Thus, as it will be argued, we could infer that in the eyes of the scribe / author of the *incipit*—aware of this information—the city must had been one of the first places to suffer the consequences of the barbarian invasions.

II. THE PREFATORY TEXT (*INCIPIT*) OF THE *EPISTULA HONORII*

Edition¹⁸ and translation of the text:

DE LAUDE PAMPILONAE EPISTULA

Incipit sacra Honorii imperatoris quam de Roma detulit / 1
militiae urbis Pampilonensis cum Sabiniano patricio, qui <eo>dem /
tempore e sede praelatus in Hispaniam profectus est ob infestatione /
diuersarum gentium barbarorum.

¹⁵ It has been stated that the first hand copying Orosius was the same as the one copying the *EH-laus*, De Carlos 2011, pp. 122-123, referring to García Villada, Z. (1928): «El código de Roda recuperado», *Revista de Filología Española* 15, pp. 113-130 (p. 115). But after a thorough examination of the *R*, I do not think that the scribe of the *EH/laus* is to be found in any other text of the ms, except for the *Epithalamium*.

¹⁶ Honorius' government is narrated in Oros., *Hist.* VII 36ff.

¹⁷ Oros., *Hist.* VII 40.6 (Fear 2010, p. 405). Lacarra 1945, pp. 266-267 directly linked their defence to the purpose and content of the *EH*. For the episode of Didymus and Verinianus, see Escribano 2000.

¹⁸ The following solely displays the controverted emendations proposed by previous studies: *titulus*: *Pampilone R*, Sivan, Lanti **2** *militie R*, Lacarra, Kulikowski, *miles* Demougeot, *militia* Sivan, *militiae* Lanti. In an erasure: *qui ...dem R*, *quidem* Lacarra, Kulikowski, *quidam* Demougeot, *quodam* Jones, Lanti, *qui eodem* Sivan **3** In an erasure: *...pore R*, *tempore* Lacarra, Demougeot, Sivan, Jones, Kulikowski, Lanti, *erede* Lacarra, Jones, Kulikowski, *†erede†* Sivan, *era* Lanti. Demougeot associates *erede* with the death of Arcadius (*sic* 'Arcadii (?)') in 408 (?).

EPISTLE IN PRAISE OF PAMPLONA

Beginning of the sacred (letter) of the emperor Honorius, which (he) dispatched from Rome to the troops of the city of Pamplona with the patrician Sabinianus, who, elected from his office at that time, came to Hispania due to the disruption caused by various barbarian peoples.

III. HISTORICAL AND LINGUISTIC COMMENTARY

The following commentary is organised according to the different units of content within the above text:

1. De laude Pampilonae epistula

Two clearly different and rather small texts fall under this title: the first one, which takes up more than half of the ms folio, is the *EH*; the second, coming right after and with no sign to mark the start of a different text, is a *laudatio*¹⁹. It is important to note that they are presented as one set. There are,

¹⁹ Due to lack of space, the following only displays the most relevant parts of this text. It is taken from Lacarra's edition 1945, pp. 269-270, but with some emendations (*R* f. 190v): *Quorum orationibus inter inimicas et barbaras gentes custoditur inlesam, ex quibus uigiliis per multos martyrum titulos refulget lumen angelicum ut antiquitus sicut per alegoriam dicitur* (Gal 4.24). *Si homines silebant ad uigilia martyrum lapides proclamabant ad uigiles excitandos* (Lk 19.40). *Hic locus semper uictor et pompa uirtutum. Pampilona presidium bonis, tribus angulis coartata, ter preposita portis quattuor posticis sita, portui uicina: Greco eloquio Pampilona, latine porta omnium dicitur. ... Deseruiat ereticis contraria resistat baceis* («And through their prayers he (the Lord) keeps it (Pamplona) safe from enemies and barbarian peoples. Thanks to these vigils through the many merits of the martyrs, an angelic light shines forth, as is told by ancient tradition through allegory. If men kept silence during the vigils of the martyrs, the stones clamoured to awake them. This was always a victorious place and an ornament of virtue. Pamplona is fortress for the good ones, enclosed in three corners with three front gates and four rear gates, close to the port. In the Greek language it is called *Pampilona*, and in Latin 'everyone's door' (πᾶν, 'all, every'; πύλη, 'door'). ... It shall not subject to heretics and shall resist the Basques») (own trans.). Larrañaga 1994, p. 139 argues that a monk or a cleric might have been its author due to its liturgical and Biblical reminiscences. He (p. 141ff.) has proposed the end of the eight century or beginning of the ninth as the date of its composition. In this respect, the text could reflect both the severe siege and attack the city suffered in 778 by Charlemagne and his army, Irujo 2021, pp. 37-62, 67-70. But I am more inclined to believe that it could reflect important military actions against the Caliphate

among others, two different though not mutually exclusive reasons for this arrangement: (1) the scribes of the codex gathered these two together with the presumption that both had the city of Pamplona as their central focus; (2) the author of the *laudatio* composed his text having the *EH* on hand. They do not only share the same topic(s) —the prominence of the city of Pamplona as a bulwark withstanding barbarian attacks, and the brightness, triumph, and hospitality of the place—, but also a common semantic field²⁰. Leaving aside the legal and historical content, and stressing only its literary aspects, the *epistula*, coming from no other than the emperor of the Roman Empire, and addressing himself to the army of this specific city, displays, above all, a vivid, celebratory, and decidedly laudatory tone. Hence, it can be considered a highly rhetorical text just like the *laus* and the *Epithalamium*. It may be acknowledged, therefore, that for the copyist of the ms, or the potential author of the *laus*, this was clearly a panegyric to the soldiers (of Pamplona) and their victorious deeds.

As for the *laus*, its acclamatory content goes back to the classical literature and had a long tradition into the medieval period. Also present in the *R* (f. 195v-196r) and possibly a model for it was Isidore's *Laus Spanie*²¹. Heir to this tradition, the poem glorifies the city itself. Here, as well, the comparison with the 'great' Rome is obviously sought: «As much as the rich Rome provided for the Romans, Pamplona did not cease to provide for its own ones».

of Cordoba (970-990) under Sancho Garcés II. In 992 this monarch was obliged to bow down to Almanzor in Cordoba. Al-Andalus's Abu Umar ibn Darray (958-1030), an important poet at Almanzor's palace, rebuked the king of Pamplona, but also underscored the latter's Roman ancestry, Martín 2003, p. 233-234. This surely was something of which he was supposed to boast and is clearly reflected in the *R*. Furthermore, f. 186 of the *R* was already written by 992 (Lacarra 1945, p. 215), so *EH-La* should have been inserted then or shortly thereafter.

²⁰ For example, *gloriosus, triumphator, semper Augustus (EH) = semper victor (laus); lux, refulgent, uirtus* in both; while the *EH* mentions the barbarian *infestatio*, the *laus* regrets the city's state as *inter inimicas et barbaras gentes*. The same could be said about Leodegundia's hymn in relation to these two texts. Impressively, they share specific vocabulary and topics (victory against barbarians and enemies). It is worth mentioning that this song of praise, of Greek origin, has been related to Vigilanus' poems, see note 5.

²¹ This text is preceded by the (scholarly?) poem *De fabrica mundi*, falsely attributed to Isidore. A brief geographical description of Hispania from his work *Origines* (or *Etymologiae*) XIV 4.28 has been inserted at the end.

Again, the ideological plan to make the capital of the incipient kingdom a new Rome is clear²².

2. Incipit sacra Honorii imperatoris quam de Roma detulit

As previously stated, the first four lines of the *EH* —that is, the *superscriptio*²³— are not part of the original imperial letter²⁴. It seems reasonable, however, to assume that at least part of this introduction's content was somehow in the original (con)text. At the same time and, contrarily, some of the data were not. Nonetheless, here again, the aim of the person writing this short introduction should be stressed. An in-depth examination of its different elements might serve to illustrate the problems in play:

Incipit sacra: I have found only one exact example in *ACO* II 2.2.19, taken from the *Collectio Hispana*. Also, there are many *R* texts starting by the word *incipit*: all of Orosius' and Isidore's Books; the *Chronica Adephonsi III*, f. 178r; the *Chronica Prophetica*, f. 186r-189v, and others.

sacra: a specific term for late antique 'imperial' letters (already in the title: *epistula*)²⁵. A sixth-century author, Liberatus of Carthage (c. 560), employs it as a noun, that is, in the same way as in this text: *sacram ad eum dirigeret; scripsit quidem ad eum sacram imperator; Scripsit imperator sacram et beato Augustino* (Liberat. IV-V, *ACO* II 5 (Schwartz 1936, pp. 102-103))²⁶.

²² The medieval general turning to the ancient world stands out in the *laudatio*, as in the inventiveness of a Greek etymology for the city's name, revealing, in this way, the author's knowledge of that language. See note 19.

²³ This would form part of the «chancellery's notes», which include every piece of an official text that was not originally in it, Moreau 2014, p. 238ff.

²⁴ This became a normal practice for official documents. Moreau 2014, p. 243 discusses a letter from Honorius to the bishops of Africa (*Avell.* 28, *CSEL* 35.1, p. 73). Its compiler (probably in the sixth century) might have changed the regular chancellery rules of the titles in the interest of a more unified compilation. See *ibid.* for more examples.

²⁵ *Cod. Theod.* VII 8.8 (year 400 [405]): *sacras litteras dedimus* («We sent imperial letters»); Veg., *Mil.* II 7: *per epistolam sacram imperatoris iudicio destinatur*.

²⁶ It frequently appears in the *ACO*; for example, in the *incipit* of an imperial letter from 430: *Post hanc sacra* (*ACO* I 3.50.22). In the sixth century, when translating a passage from Socrates, Cassiodorus (*HE* III 7.1) renders the Greek δι' ἐπιστολῆς (referring

It is possible that different copies of this letter were also sent to other troops or high-ranking military officials²⁷. In addition, considering the exchange of mss between the area of modern Catalonia, Castilla y León, and La Rioja in the early medieval period (Lacarra 1992, pp. 214-216), it could also be argued that the *EH* came from another city within these territories. Some of the *R* texts came from great distances, including the *Baetica* and Frankish territory²⁸.

de Roma: this information has normally been taken for granted. Hence, a date when Honorius would have been in Rome was needed: autumn 407-beginning 408 (Demougeot 1956, p. 39); around 410 (Lanti 2022, p. 12); Jan. 23, 411 to celebrate Honorius' *uicennalia* (before defeating Constantine II); Aug. 30, 414; May 416, his last visit to Rome to celebrate the triumph over Attalus (Balil 1979, p. 618). Sivan (1985, pp. 276-277) supposes that the «compiler had no idea where the emperors of the fifth century resided». According to Kulikowski 1998, p. 250: «Sabinianus' title and his receipt of the letter at Rome are suspect»²⁹.

In keeping with the argument that the scribes of this codex, or even the author of the *laudatio*, sought to strongly link Pamplona's Kingdom, and, more directly, its capital, with the city of Rome, it is possible that *de Roma* was then added³⁰. This element, then, which has confined modern scholars to

to a letter from Constantine) into *sacra* (*CSEL* 71, p. 145). See also Cassiod., *HE* IV 18; *Avell.* 38, 125, 199. The noun *sacra* would continue to have the same meaning in the early medieval period, namely, to refer to the letter by a king or a pope. See Blaise 1975, p. 809; Du Cange et al. 1883-1887, s. u. *sacra* 1, being the last example in an epistle by Gregory IV, bishop of Rome († 844).

²⁷ Suggested already by Sivan 1985, p. 278, 280. For example, *Cod. Theod.* VIII 7.11 (371) is a constitution to «all masters of soldiers, counts, and dukes» (in the *subscriptio*); *Cod. Theod.* I 6.11 (Ravenna, 423). For the imperial laws in the form of letters, see Riedlberger 2020, pp. 64-77.

²⁸ Díaz y Díaz 1979, p. 37; De Carlos 2011, pp. 123-124. There is an autochthonous text of Pamplona in the codex *Vigilanus*, which could probably be attributed to Vigilanus, were Sancho Garcés I is described as *belligerator aduersus gentes Ismaelitarum, multipliciter strages gessit super terras Sarracenorum*, Martín 2003, p. 229. There was, indeed, an (in) tense connection with the Mozarabs and the territory of al-Andalus.

²⁹ So far, Arce's 1999, p. 464, chronological hypothesis, the years 422-423, is the most plausible one.

³⁰ Or modified, if there was the name of another city, such as Ravenna, where Honorius' court was established. This could be compared with the literary practice to formulate or change

a constricted chronological framework leading to an inconclusive date, should not be considered historical.

detulit: the expected meaning of this verb followed by the prepositions *ab*, *de*, *ex* plus abl. would be ‘deliver’³¹ or ‘bring’³². The subject of the verb, however, if rightly interpreted, is the emperor. Even if not explicit, he is mentioned in the main sentence, and the subject would normally be expected to go before the verb.

There are constructions parallel to this one (*defero* + dat.-pers.) in the legal texts where this verb is used in the sense of ‘grant’ or ‘confer’; for example, in *Cod. Theod.* XIII 3.17 (year 414) Honorius and Theodosius «conferred (*detulit*) the privileges and benefits offered by the previous emperors»³³.

It is usually employed in Christian sources with the clause *de caelo*: in a letter sent by Gelasius (*Pont.* 492-496): *qui autem dicunt subtilem hominem Christum ... de caelo hoc detulisse* (*Avell.* 81, *CSEL* 35.1, p. 228).

3. *militiae urbis ... barbarorum*

militiae urbis Pampilonensis: the manuscript clearly has *militie*, the same as in line 10, being, therefore, a dative and the recipient of the letter³⁴.

Demougeot (1956, p. 31) changes it to *miles*, stating that it was a «soldier from the city of Pamplona» who bore the letter³⁵. According to Miranda 2011,

the names of real characters, which was customary during the time of Charlemagne. This influence can also be seen in the *R*; in the *Epithalamium of Leodegundia*, her name might have been invented to create a more romanticised context, Miranda 2011, pp. 301ff.

³¹ Sivan 1985, p. 275; Arce 1999, p. 461; Lanti 2022, p. 10.

³² Demougeot 1956, p. 31; Kulikowski 1998, p. 250. However, the clause *de Roma* right before could be understood as if it had been the emperor himself who brought the letter. In a letter from Pope Leo, from 454, there is the same meaning: *his litteris quas frater et coepiscopus meus Nestorius detulit* (*Ep.* 74, *ACO* Chalcedon IV).

³³ *Cod. Theod.* VI 26.7 (year 396); *Cod. Theod.* II 10.6 (year 422); *quam militantibus ... cinguli praerogatiua detulit*; *Nov. Theod.* 25 (444): *priuilegia, quae militaribus detulit uiris antiqua prouisio*.

³⁴ Nevertheless, this *militiae* has been considered the subject of *detulit*: Sivan 1985, p. 275; Kulikowski 1998, p. 250; Arce 1999, p. 461; Moreno 2011, p. 194.

³⁵ Archan 2009, p. 155 follows her.

p. 298, the recipient of the *EH* is not only the militia of the city, but its citizens too. He states that the letter was intended to acknowledge their fidelity towards the Emperor Honorius.

In the *Codex Theodosianus*, *militia* always has the broad meaning of ‘imperial service’³⁶. To specify the type of service, we find *in militia scriniorum memoriae* («in the imperial bureaus of memorial») (*Cod. Theod.* VI 26.7, year 396); *in armis militiam* («armed imperial service») (*Cod. Theod.* VI 26.13, year 407).

Militia as an ‘army’, ‘troops’ or ‘soldiers’ (the same meaning as in the present text) is regularly employed by Orosius, especially at the end of his work³⁷. Interestingly, Isidore also employs it in the same way in his *Sueb. chron.* (R f. 157v-176v). Even though he has a clear preference for the traditional term *exercitus*, when describing the barbarian invasions, he uses the fixed construction of *Romanae militiae ducem* (23, 24, 85). There, Isidore also refers to the city of Pamplona (*Pampelonam*, R f. 171v) (34), and how it was subdued together with *Caesaraugustam* by Euric, King of the Visigoths (466-484).

As for the name of the city, it is, suspiciously, written using the tenth-century spelling, not that of the ancient period. This would strongly suggest that this name was not in the original text, for if it had been written before, it would have the earlier spelling(s) of the city, like the example from Isidore just mentioned.

Furthermore, Rome, which had always been the *Vrbs (aeterna)*³⁸, is distinctly called only by its name³⁹. Although it can be thus used in legal texts, it regularly appears in the subscriptions (in locative), where the date and place of publication was indicated. Meanwhile Pamplona appears accompanied by it, a

³⁶ See, for example, *Cod. Theod.* VII 3.2 (year 409); I 6.11 (year 423).

³⁷ R f. 157v-176v. Among other examples, Oros., *Hist.* III 1.5: *ducem in hanc militiam*; VII 36.4: *apud Africanam militiam*; VII 40.4: *Constantinus ex infima militia*.

³⁸ Among many examples, those under Honorius’ reign: *Cod. Theod.* I 6.11, 12.5; IX 40.20; XIV 2.3, 3.19. Constantinople was called thus since Constantine: *Cod. Theod.* I 10.4, 15.11. Especially under Honorius, both cities received the epithet of *sacra(tissima)*: *Cod. Theod.* I 6.11; XII 5.32. It was rare, but *urbs* could be used for cities in general: IV 13.5 (358); I 29.4 (Trier, 368); XVI 5.12 (Constantinople, 383); VII 8.5 (Constantinople, 398): *In qualibet uel nos ipsi urbe fuerimus*; *Cod. Iust.* XI 10.4 (Constantinople, 412); *in ea urbe, qua natus est*; *Cod. Iust.* I 3.18 (Constantinople, 418): *Alexandrinae urbis*.

³⁹ Orosius normally just calls the city like this.

construction that was probably not original⁴⁰. This use, however, was common among Christian authors in the fifth and later centuries⁴¹. In the *R* texts both, *ciuitas* and *urbs*, can be found accompanying important cities (Babylon, Jerusalem, etc.), but those of Pamplonese origin only employ the latter⁴².

cum Sabiniano patricio: Demougeot (1956, p. 39) drawing on the fifth-century Gallic aristocrat Sidonius Apollinaris, presents Sabinianus as a member of an Aquitanian aristocratic family, the *Sabiniani*, and, thus, a patrician (p. 42).

Jones (1957) claimed that he was the «first commander of the Spanish army with the rank of a *magister utriusque militiae*» (MUM) and that the army there was temporary upgraded⁴³.

Sivan (1985, pp. 277-278) proposes several options: (1) in the case that this Sabinianus was a military officer, he would have been a *comes*, and not

⁴⁰ Even so, in the legal corpora there is a unique example in *Cod. Theod.* XII 1.61 (year 364): *urbis Vulsiniensium principales*. In fact, the name of the inhabitants in the plural genitive is the direct translation from Greek. There is also a Constantinian inscription (c. 333-335), in which he renames the *ciuitas* of Hispallum to *urbs Flavia Constans* (CIL XI 5265, line 42) to honour his *cognomen* and the *gens Flauia*. Another case comes from a letter from this monarch (year 313) to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse, on the Donatist Schism. Eusebius translated the original into Greek (*HE* X 5.21-24) and then back again into Latin. Thus, there are two Latin versions of this letter, Mansi 1759, II, cols. 466-468; Migne VIII, cols. 485-488. In the first one, Arles is presented as a town: *in Arelatensium oppido* (again in another letter from the same year to Aelafius, vicar of the diocese of Africa: *ad Arelatense oppidum*, see CSEL 26, p. 205). Eusebius' text renders *in urbem Arelatensem*. This translation was made, as Mansi indicates, by (Henricus) Valesius, a seventeenth-century Parisian intellectual. Another similar case befalls a letter from Constantine to the synod of Tyre. The original text was in Greek and there are two Latin versions. The incipits read: *ad sanctam synodum Tyri congregatum* (Migne VIII, col. 561) and *in urbe Tyro* (Mansi II col. 1139).

⁴¹ Oros., *Hist. passim*. Cassiodorus (*HE* III 7.2) translates into Latin Constantine's letter (in Greek) 'to the bishops convened in Tyre (ἐν Τύρῳ)' (in the superscription) as *in Tyrriorum urbe*. Gregory of Tours describes Arles as *Arelatensim urbem* (*Franc.* III 23). Thus, only (religiously) relevant urban centres are called *urbes*. On the other hand, authors from this period onwards would just call Rome just by its name, see Isidore.

⁴² The text *Initium regnum Pampilona* (f. 231r) applies it to Nájera, the second capital of the kingdom. This also reminds of the typical synodal construction in, for example, the *Albeldensis*' canonical texts: *Synodus Carpentoranensis* or *Concilium Arvernense* (*R* f. 227r).

⁴³ See PLRE II, p. 966, *Sabinianus* 2, only attested in this *incipit*.

a MUM; (2) a simple civilian charged with this task by Honorius' chancellor; (3) if he was to be a real patrician, he could have been a *praefectus praetorio* or a *magister officiorum*. At this point, she suggests the *praefectus praetorio per Gallias*, having the Iberian Peninsula under his jurisdiction.

Kulikowski 1998, p. 250 suggests three different possibilities: (1) *Patricius* was his cognomen; (2) as he believes that Honorius' future co-emperor, Constantius, was the only one to have borne this title under Honorius. Thus, Sabinianus would, strangely, be the only other person who was a patrician⁴⁴; (3) the introduction to the text of the *EH* was written later on (mid-fifth-seventh century), when this title was more common.

Kulikowski's argument that the heading must have been composed between the mid-fifth century and the early seventh century, due to the use of the title *Patricius* is highly convincing, but it does not explain the name (*militiae*) *Pampilonensis*⁴⁵. Firstly, why would a fifth-to-seventh century scribe be interested in inserting the name of the city if it was not in the original text of the letter? It is not in the main body of the letter, and it is unlikely that the scribe would have extracted it if it had been in the original text. Secondly, there is evidence that the name *Pampilonensis* was not yet in use at that time; at least, not exactly like that. There is a text from the fifteenth century that could provide a hint about how this name was still written at the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth. Johannes Vasaëus (Brugensis) presented, in his *Chronici rerum memorabilium Hispaniae* of 1552, a synthe-

⁴⁴ Constantius, an Illyrian, was close to Honorius. He demonstrated excellent war and political skills during the barbarian invasions and uprisings of illegitimate emperors. In 417 he married Galla Placidia, Honorius' sister. Among other functions, he was *comes et magister utriusque militiae* of the *Pars Occidentis* from 411 to 421, designated patrician in 415, and proclaimed *Augustus* by Honorius in 421, the same year of his death. He is named *comes* and Patrician in *Cod. Theod.* XV 14.14 (Ravenna, 416), see *PLRE* II, pp. 321-325, *Fl. Constantius* 17.

⁴⁵ Mathisen (1986, p. 46) argues that important fourth-century figures were only said to have been patricians in later sources. Interestingly, Mathisen (p. 49) claims likewise that «individuals, even of low rank, who were sent on important duties within the empire also might have been made patricians». The cases presented by Mathisen are from the sixth century. If this had been the case here, the later compiler might have applied this title considering the importance of the *EH*, which promised the soldiers a pay raise and quartering after having fought, it can be assumed, on an important mission or for a long time.

sis of two late antique chroniclers: Hydatius (c. 460s)⁴⁶ and the anonymous author of the *Gallic Chronicle of 511*⁴⁷. Vasaëus' synthesis-copy was made based on a lost eight-to-ninth-century manuscript (*Alcobaciensis*), considered «the most accurate and valuable branch» within the tradition of the different groups of Hydatius' text⁴⁸. He says:

Euricus ... Lusitaniam depraedatur, ac missis exercitibus, Pompelonem, Caesaraugustam, Tarraconensem prouinciam, ... (-? [469; 87^v])
Gauderit comes Gothorum, Hispanias per Pompelonem, Caesaraugustam uicinas urbes obtinuit. (-? [475; 88^r])⁴⁹

As stated in parenthesis, these lines, referring to the years 469 and 475, were not in Hydatius' text. Even so, according to Vasaëus' quotation, they came from Hydatius and Severus; that is, *The Gallic Chronicle of 511*. Accordingly, as Vasaëus seems to copy exactly what was in the ms, Pamplona was, arguably, still written, at least, as *Pompelo(n)* in the sixth century⁵⁰.

Another, still later, example is in the cosmographical text known as the *Ravenna Cosmographer* (*Anonymus Ravennas*) (end of the seventh century or beginning of the eighth), where the city appears as *Pompelone* (43)⁵¹.

⁴⁶ Hydatius, ordained bishop in 428, is a valuable historical source, if not the most important one, for the fifth-century *dioecesis Hispaniarum*.

⁴⁷ Only transmitted by a thirteenth-century Spanish ms, wherein the text was compiled in Spain in 733, see Burgess 2017b, p. 85.

⁴⁸ Burgess 1993, pp. 16-18.

⁴⁹ Burgess 1993, p. 165 (Vasaëus 1552, p. 88). But Burgess's edition of the *Gall. Chron. 511* presents: *Gauterit comes Gothorum Ispanias per Papilonem* (2017b, p. 99). Only one manuscript, from the thirteenth century, has transmitted this text. It was, in turn, copied from the same manuscript Vasaëus used. The counterargument could be that Vasaëus might have used, for example, the classical spelling used by Strabo, quoted at the beginning of his work. However, in the entry of the year 542 (p. 95), he writes *Pampelonem*, being his source the same *Alcobaciensis*.

⁵⁰ Oroz 1994, p. 22 states that the name *Pampilonensis* already appeared at the third Council of Toledo (in 589). Nevertheless, this could be a later designation. There is a Gallic manuscript from the end of the eighth century (10-B-4, Museum Meermannno, f. 193v-194r), that has transmitted texts from the sixth century, wherein the acts of the third and twelfth Councils of Toledo were copied (c. the first half of the seventh century). In this ms we read *Pampelonensis*, Martínez 1972, p. 640.

⁵¹ Lozovsky 2018. However, it could be that the author was relying on earlier sources, in which the classical spelling was to be found.

Regarding the title of *patricius*, Hydatius (*Chron.* 75) states that in 425 «Theodosius made Valentinian, the son of his aunt Placidia, *Caesar* and sent him against John (a usurper)». Valentinian completed the task executing him in Ravenna with the help of his *duces*. Hydatius continues by stating that Felix, otherwise unknown, «was appointed *patricius* and *magister militum*». Therefore, it seems safe to infer that this Felix was one of his *duces*, and might have been bestowed this title and rank for his distinguished role in the capture of the aforementioned usurper. It could be surmised, then, that the Sabinianus of the *EH* may have been given the title of patrician and a high rank by similar means as this Felix mentioned by Hydatius⁵². Nonetheless, immediately afterwards (*Chron.* 85), he talks about Aëtius, who was *dux utriusque militiae* and later appointed *patricius* in 433 (*Chron.* 94), but he would no longer mention this title, though Aëtius appears several other times⁵³. Among the various military titles mentioned by Hydatius, such as *duces*, *comes* (*Hispaniarum*), *magistri militum*, *duces* (or *comes*) *utriusque militiae*, only four men were designated *patricii*: Constantius (*Chron.* 52) (see note 44), Felix, Aëtius, and Ricimer, who «was made son-in-law and *Patricius*» of the emperor Anthemius in 468 (*Chron.* 241). The first three were *duces*⁵⁴ and Ricimer *comes*—next in rank below the *dux*—before being appointed *patricii*. As presented by Hydatius, it could be argued that the *dignitas* of being a patrician came after being at the highest command level. It is somehow compelling that in 425 an otherwise unknown *dux* had been given the title of *patricius*. Thus, the case could have been the same case with Sabinianus. Consequently, it is reasonable to believe that the title of patrician could have been in the *index* or *titulus* where the name of the emperor(s) and

⁵² Hydatius asserts, for the year 430, that this Felix «was called Patrician» (*Felix, qui dicebatur patricius*) (*Chron.* 84), as if this title was the most relevant feature to point out. Burgess 1993, p. 91, inserts quotation marks to give prominence to this title: «Felix, who was called 'the Patrician'».

⁵³ Hyd., *Chron.* 99, 102, 104, 142, 146, 152: *dux and patricius*. In this last case it could be argued that Hydatius mentions both because he is saying that Aëtius was assassinated by Valentinian and, therefore, it seemed necessary to mention his titles.

⁵⁴ The general leading an army and the highest dignity among the *comites* (Veg., *Mil.* III 10). See also *Cod. Theod.* VI 14.3 (413). Constantius was «Honorius' *dux*» according to Hydatius (*Chron.* 52).

that of the recipient appears⁵⁵. This is even more plausible if we consider that the first years of the fifth century were a period of dramatic turmoil in the Western Roman army, such that being promoted was more easily achieved than being paid one's salary⁵⁶.

<eo>dem tempore e sede: Demougeot 1956, p. 30, following the edition of the text made by M. Charles Perrat, interprets his reconstruction *tempore Arcadii* with the death of Arcadius (*sic* 'Arcadii (?)') in 408.

Tantalizing, though much improbable, is the suggestion made by Archan 2009, p. 155, of «*tempore era CDL*»⁵⁷, which would stand for «by the time of *era* 450». This (*a*)*era* was the so-called «Era Hispánica», a dating system in the Iberian Peninsula normally attributed to the beginning of the Visigothic domination of the territory, but most probably in use by the first half of the fifth century⁵⁸. Accordingly, the year 450 of the *Era Hispana* would be 412 (the starting year was 38 AD when the entire territory was pacified).

Lanti (2022, p. 16) follows Archan's hypothesis, but does not maintain the numbering of the letters. He leaves the text *quodam tempore era* («in a certain time of the *era*»). Calling one's attention is the frequent expression of *tempore era* in several Iberian chronicles from the tenth to the twelfth centu-

⁵⁵ In the *subscriptio* of a letter by Honorius to Symmachus, after the date, *per Aphthonium* is indicated, that is, the one who delivered it (*Avell.* 18). Again, in 516 Emperor Anastasius, as described by the *incipit*, addressed himself to the Roman Senate «through (*per*) Theopompus and Severianus» (*Avell.* 113), both identified in *Avell.* 111 as imperial counts (*comites*). However, I have not found an example with the preposition *cum*.

⁵⁶ Babut 2014, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁷ If these numbers were in the manuscript, we could expect them to occupy more space (like in the last line of this f.: *LXIII pedum*) —or even be in another colour, as in Orosius (*passim*) or Isidore's *Historiae* (f. 156r ff.)— as it can be found in other texts of this and other contemporary mss. Furthermore, Burgess states (2017a, p. 88) that «the Spanish era was not used in north-eastern Spain», where the text of the introduction of the *EH* was probably composed, but mainly in Lusitania and Baetica.

⁵⁸ Burgess 1993, pp. 33-34, convincingly demonstrates that the «Spanish aeras already existed in Hydatius' text of Jerome». Therefore, the (*a*)*eras* would have been added as marginal notes in the copies of Jerome's work made throughout the *dioecesis Hispaniarum*. In turn, Hydatius, who had added his *Chronicle* to Jerome's translation and continuation of Eusebius' *Chronicle*, continued with this counting system, Burgess 1993, p. 6.

ries. The problem is that the ms does not have *era* and, even if this were accepted, there is clearly *de* right before *prelatus*.

e sede: Jones 1957: *erede* (*sic*). The meaning would be: «thus at a certain heir time (?)»⁵⁹. Sivan 1985, p. 278, identifies a vacuum between *e... praelatus*, suggesting that there was «a list of Sabinianus' titles or offices», in the sense of «promoted from».

Fernández (1988, p. 399) suggests that the corrupted «†*erede*†» in the previous editions could be a Hispanism. According to this hypothesis, it would be a predecessor of the modern Spanish adverb 'adrede' ('on purpose'). She offers a possible translation of *erede praelatus* as «sent for this matter»⁶⁰.

There is a rescript from 415 by Honorius and Theodosius to Aurelianus, who is «Praetorian Prefect and Patrician», by which they order, on the one hand, the landholders to pay the required taxes and, on the other hand, the soldiers not to assault and rob from them. The text refers to the Praetorian's scope of action as *magnificae sedis tuae* («your magnificent office») (*Cod. Theod.* VII 7.4)⁶¹.

Finally, this term is typically employed in Christian texts for an episcopal seat or even God's throne.

praelatus: the participle form *praelat-* appears only eight times in the whole *Cod. Theod.*: seven of them allude to the usage of prefixing the document of a letter or constitution, so that everyone would know it and read it. Only once is it used as an adjective, meaning 'being placed above' or 'outranking' someone: *Cod. Theod.* VII 18.16 (Ravenna, 413): «(If someone is absent) for three years, thirty persons will be rightfully placed above (*praelatos*)».

⁵⁹ Livermore (1996, p. 445) who follows Jones's edition, considers Sabinianus «heir of Honorius». For this he compares (maybe not pertinently) him to Constantius, who after rescuing Honorius' sister and marrying her, was upgraded to *Augustus*.

⁶⁰ The argument behind this interpretation hinges on the imperial intervention after disasters such as an invasion. She refers to a passage in Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* V 16.1, year 474), in which the quaestor Licinianus brought the news to Ravenna of the designation of Ecdicius as a patrician and *magister militum praesentalis*. Two years before the latter had defended the city against the Goths with his own sources.

⁶¹ See *Cod. Iust.* XII 53.2 (Ravenna, 417).

In the Visigothic period (fifth-eighth centuries) the term *praelatus* (also *praelatio*) was used to refer to any person who had authority over others. It could be ‘the head’ or ‘superior’ of any group: namely, an ecclesiastical one⁶²; a person who ruled over animals (Isidore of Seville), ecclesiastical authorities or princes⁶³.

In general, during this same period, *praelatus*, used as an adjective, meant ‘preferred’ or ‘elected’; as a noun, either ‘bishop’, ‘superior’ (of an Abbaye or parish); ‘parish priest’, ‘secular leader’, ‘magistrate’, ‘provost’, or ‘judge’⁶⁴. If this introduction was written in the sixth-seventh centuries or later and if *e sede* would be the right reconstruction, then it functioned as an adjective, in the sense of «elected from the / his office», but it could also mean ‘magistrate’ or another such a leader.

An occurrence cited by Hydatius might be significant and worth considering here. He relates that in 431 he was chosen as a delegate and went to the *magister militum* Aëtius in Gaul to ask for support against the Sueves, who were constantly raiding the Gallaecian lands. The following year, successful in his mission, he returned with the *comes* Censurius as an envoy to the Sueves (*Chron.* 86, 88). As presented by Hydatius, biased no doubt, it seems that the reaching of a truce was more thanks to the clerics’ action than to that of the imperial legate⁶⁵.

in <Hi>spaniam: Sivan (1985, p. 278, n. 16) mentions a rather late (589-590 AD) Christian inscription (*CIL* V 5835) found in Cartagena asserting that «Spania and Hispania are juxtaposed». Vives (1942, p. 126) notes that in the second one the letters *HI* had been added at a later stage, presumably to restore the correct spelling⁶⁶. Nonetheless, the omission of the initial vowel was more common in the Early Medieval period. The noun *<Hi>spania* appears in the body of the letter as well.

⁶² For example, Gregory I, see Sessa 2011, pp. 81, 95.

⁶³ Ferreiro 2020, pp. 208ff.

⁶⁴ Blaise 1975, p. 719. There is the noun *praelatura* (‘prelacy’, an ecclesiastical figure), used from the beginning of the eleventh to the thirteenth century.

⁶⁵ Hyd., *Chron.* 91: «After Censurius’ return to the palace, as a result of episcopal mediation and the acceptance of hostages, Hermericus re-established peace with the Gallaecians whom he was constantly plundering».

⁶⁶ Hydatius already elided, most probable, the initial ‘*Hi*’, at least in the case of the city name of (*Hi*)*spalis* and the adjective (*hi*)*spanus*, Burgess 1993, pp. 148, 150-151. The same can be seen in the *Anonymous Ravennas* (1990), *passim*.

*ob infestatione diuersarum gentium barbarorum*⁶⁷: the preposition *ob* is normally followed by the accusative, which is why Sivan (1985, p. 278) describes it as «a rare use of ablative», but it can appear with the ablative in inscriptions⁶⁸. Lewis-Short notes that it is used with the ablative in late Latin. Nevertheless, even though in the manuscript there is no sign of a final contraction, it could have originally been *infestationem*⁶⁹.

The root *infest-* only appears twice in the *Cod. Theod.* X 10.24 (year 405): *delatorum nomen infestum* («the hostile name of the informers») and VII 8.15 (430; 433): *domum infestare* (referring to a person that, under an oath of military service—that is, a soldier—could not ‘assault the home’ of another person). Certainly, the term *infestatio* is often used by late antique Christian authors: Ambr., *c. Aux.* 37: *Arianæ infestationis tempore*; Cassian., *Conl.* 15.10: *cunctis infestationibus daemonum*. More importantly, it is quite often used by Orosius (*Hist.*), whether as a noun, adjective or verb to refer to Roman enemies: first, in contexts of war (books II-V); then, for ill-considered emperors (Book VII); and, finally, for barbarians of his own time (VII 25.3: *ad obseruanda Oceani litora, quae tunc Franci et Saxones infestabant*; 25.4: *cum et Africam Quinquegentiani infestarent*).

Sivan (1985, p. 278) rightly considers the double genitive «inelegant»⁷⁰. She names two contemporary sources with similar constructions. The first

⁶⁷ In *Cod. Theod.* XV 14.14 (Ravenna, 416) the edict by Honorius sent to Constantius («comes et patricius») refers to the barbarian invasions in these terms: *Sub clade barbaricae depopulationis* («Under the devastation of the barbarian pillage»).

⁶⁸ See OLD s. u. *ob*; ThLL IX 2 col. 33, *I c. abl.*: all the examples come from inscriptions and late antique sources, e.g., Iord., *Get.* 24; 141; 146 (year 551): employs *ob* with the ablative, however there is a *varia lectio* (in some mss) in accusative.

⁶⁹ For example, in the body of the letter there is *glosus* without any expansion mark, but it is perforce *gloriosus*.

⁷⁰ Demougeot 1956, p. 30 and Jones 1957 change *barbarorum* to *barbararum*, making it the adjective of *gentium* (*gens*). The *R* presents *barbarorum*, then being a noun («peoples of the barbarians»). While there are few examples of this construction in the feminine (Veg., *Mil.* II *praef.*: *domitori* (emperor Theodosius) *omnium gentium barbararum*), the majority are in the masculine (classical sources: Nep., *Paus.* 2.1; Hyg., *Astr.* 2.6; Tac., *Ann.* 12.55. But it is preferred in late antique texts: Eutr. 8.8: *barbarorum plurimae nationes*; *Cod. Theod.* IX 12.1 (Rome, 319): *saeuitia immanium barbarorum*; *Cod. Theod.* VII 12.1 (323): *aliqua barbarorum incursio*; *Cod. Theod.* V 6.2 (409): *recepta barbarorum praeda*; Hyd., *Chron.* 41: *a plagis barbarorum*).

one is from Salvianus (c. 400-470), bishop of Marseille⁷¹. The other one is an inscription from the first half of the fourth century from Tarragona normally ascribed to Constantine II (337-340)⁷². There are two other inscriptions of similar content and the same emperor, found in the circus of *Emerita Augusta* (Mérida)⁷³. These were made to commemorate the restauration of the circus in 337. It is worth noting that in these three Constantine II is presented as the *Debellator* ('conqueror') and *Victor* over *omnium gentium barbarorum* ('all the barbarian peoples'). In 332, after having defeated the Goths north of the Danube, he signed a treaty with them in favour of the Romans⁷⁴.

Interestingly, in the text *Initium regnum Pampilonam* (R f. 231r) we read: *congregate sunt gentes barbarorum*. However, the ultimately bit of proof that the *incipit* or, at least, part of it was written in the ninth century is found in a letter by Sobon, archbishop of Vienna, in 938, in which he refers to the destruction of a church south-east of Lyon carried out by the «pagans», most probably the Saracens. In it he used this exact same construction: *ob infestatione et uastatione paganorum*⁷⁵.

⁷¹ Salv., *Gub.* 4.61 (CSEL 8, p. 86): *Duo enim genera in omni gente omnium barbarorum sunt*; 4.69 (CSEL 8, p. 89): *omnium denique gentium barbarorum uita uitiositas*.

⁷² *CIL* II 04105 = RIT 0094 = Fita, F. (1913): «Inscripciones constantinianas de Mérida», *BRAH* 62, pp. 576-580: *Deuictori omnium gentium barbararum...*

⁷³ *CIL* II 482 = AE 1975, 473: ... *Con]stanti[no maximo debel]latori e]st uictori / gentium barbararum*; *CIL* II 482 = AE 1975, 474: *[Debellatori et uictori gentiu]m barbararum*. In relation to the *laus* that follows the *EH*, there is also a double gent.: *innumerabilium martyrum reliquiarum* (R f. 190v).

⁷⁴ Similarly, Theodosius' peace treaty with the Visigoths at Sirmium in 382 was publicly presented as a victory and coins were mint presenting the emperor as TRIVMFATOR-GENT-BARB (*Triumfator gentium Barbarorum*).

⁷⁵ Latouche 1931, p. 201. This or similar constructions appear very often in ninth-century works: *Translatio S. Philiberti ert translatio S. Valeriani: ob infestatione[m] Nortmannorum; a barbariae gentis infestatione*; Anonym., *Miracula S. Valeriae Martyris: infestatione peruersorum hominum*, see both in *Codicum Hagiographorum latinorum antiquiorum saeculo XVI, vol. II*, Bruxellis, 1890, p. 233, 402 respectively. Also, in Eulogius Cordubensis, *Actus vel Passio SS. martyrum Georgii monachi, Aurelii atque Nathaliae: infestatione malignorum*; Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon* 883: *a paganorum infestatione*. For these and other references, see the examples offered by the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin (Mittelaltisches Wörterbuch)*. There are currently only letters A-H. Available online: <https://mlw.badw.de/mlw-digital/mlw-open-access.html>.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The circumstances under which the two patently different texts were gathered and entitled *De Laude Pampilon(a)e Epistula* in the Roda Codex are unknown to us. Nonetheless, their resemblance is a rather telling argument in favour of the *laus* drawing, to some extent, on the *EH*, or being compiled because of this⁷⁶.

A comprehensive analysis of the prefatory text to the *EH* in relation, first, to its role in both the *Roda Codex* and the *laus*; and, second, to the historical and literary framework from the fourth and fifth centuries up to the tenth, has provided compelling proofs in support of the following statements: (1) the introduction was written a posteriori and, most probably, underwent further modifications, so that it would portray the city of Pamplona as a major centre favouring the restoration of peace by repelling barbarian / foreign attackers, ever since the Roman period; (2) to accomplish this, an association with the capital of the Roman empire, to which the Kingdom of Pamplona is presented as a direct heir throughout the ms, was necessary; hence the mention of Rome, a symbol and the centre of the Roman empire; (3) directly related to this is the city of Pamplona, the current political and ideological power, thus, assuming the traditional name of *urbs*, applied to Rome, but also to other important cities throughout the *R*. Moreover, the name of both cities is only mentioned in the introduction, and Pamplona appears with its early medieval spelling; namely, from the seventh century on. This argument is somehow fragile, however, as it could be that it was only ‘updated’ when it was inserted in *R*; (4) there is no absolute certainty about the figure of the patrician Sabinianus, but it is plausible that he was a historical figure and was made patrician (by Honorius) specifically for this important embassy⁷⁷; (5) *ob infestatione diuersarum gentium barbarorum*, a medieval (ninth-tenth centuries) construction (see note 75), could have been deduced from the historical knowledge coming from Orosius or Isidore’s *Historiae* (see note 17).

In summary, the paratext to the *EH* is a one of a kind because (1) it provides data that is not in the imperial text and (2) its language clearly resembles a

⁷⁶ Due to a lack of space, I have not further examined Leodengundia’s *Epithalamium* in relation to the *EH-laus*, but there are several points of convergence that could lead to the same source or place.

⁷⁷ Mathisen 1986, p. 41.

medieval Latin. It is but intriguing whence that information came from. Both the philological and historical examination of the production of the *R* and the *incipit* would buttress the idea that the whole paratext was created *ex professo*, to advance the political ambitions of Sancho Garcés II (970-994). The mention of Sabinianus *patricius* is more difficult to explain, but the construction with the preposition *cum* instead of the late antique use of *per* (see note 55), would also favour a medieval form. One could hypothesise and link the *EH-laus* to the *Albeldensis* scriptorium, and even to Vigilanus, who had copied the enormous law collections, wherein he might have even found the *EH*. Accordingly, learned in this type of texts, he or someone from that scriptorium could have written the *incipit* with the intention of including it in the *R*.

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Fecha de recepción de la primera versión del artículo: 03/01/2023

Fecha de aceptación: 17/02/2023

Fecha de recepción de la versión definitiva: 17/04/2023