

# Isidore of Seville and the *Filioque*

## Isidoro de Sevilla y el *Filioque*

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**Abstract:** The introduction and proliferation of the double procession of the Holy Spirit formulae in Hispania is a rich topic. There are aspects of it that have been somewhat marginalized, however. Surprisingly, one of those is the evidence from Isidore of Seville, the most celebrated churchman of the seventh century. He had a role in spreading the double procession / *Filioque* of the Holy Spirit through some of his works and his role in the Fourth Council of Toledo (633). This study for the first time brings them all together to assess the place of Isidore in making normative the *Filioque* in the broader context of Visigothic Hispania. This study intends to contribute to the approaching celebration of the 1700 anniversary of the Creed of Nicaea, 325-2025.

**Keywords:** *Etymologiae*, Fourth Council of Toledo (633), *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, Isidore of Seville, *Sententiae, Liber Differentiarum [III]*, *Historia Gothorum*, *Epistola VI*, *Isidori Claudio Duci*.

**Resumen:** La introducción y proliferación de las fórmulas de la doble procesión del Espíritu Santo en Hispania es un tema muy enriquecedor. Sin embargo, hay aspectos del mismo que han quedado un tanto marginados. Sorprendentemente uno de ellos es el testimonio de Isidoro de Sevilla, el eclesiástico más célebre del siglo VII. Él tuvo un papel muy relevante en la difusión de la doble procesión / *Filioque* del Espíritu Santo a través de algunas de sus obras y de su papel en el Cuarto Concilio de Toledo (633). Este estudio reúne por primera vez estos datos para valorar el lugar de Isidoro en la normativización del *Filioque* en el contexto más amplio de la Hispania visigoda. El estudio pretende contribuir a la próxima celebración del 1700 aniversario del Credo de Nicea, 325-2025.

**Palabras claves:** *Etymologiae*, IV Concilio de Toledo (633), *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, Isidoro de Sevilla, *Sententiae, Liber Differentiarum [III]*, *Historia Gothorum*, *Epístola VI*, *Isidori Claudio Duci*.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Prior to the introduction of the double procession of the Holy Spirit formula and the concise expression *Filioque* in Late Antique Hispania a robust debate already existed externally among some Latin and Greek Church Fathers<sup>1</sup>. Debates raged before the promulgation of the Creed in 325, to its finality in Constantinople in 381. It did not end the debates, however. As long as Arianism persisted and offered a second alternative to Catholics, dissent from the Creed was inevitable. Even after Arianism was long gone, the dispute over the procession became one between eastern and western theologians. Meanwhile, the disputes soon reached the western provinces of the Empire, notably Hispania. The insertion of the double procession into the initial Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creed in Hispania occurred in 589 at the Third Council of Toledo. The recitation of the Creed in imitation of the liturgy in Byzantium was an achievement of Toledo III. In the East the Creed had been introduced into the liturgy, according to John of Biclar, by

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in this special volume of *Isidorianum* on Isidore of Seville. Also, to the personnel of the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca for generous use of their library. To Prof. Dr. Valerie Garver, Northern Illinois University, for bringing to my attention important Carolingian sources and to Prof. Dr. José Carlos Martín Iglesias, Universidad de Salamanca for other sources of Hispania. To Steve Perisho, Theology-History-Philosophy Librarian at Seattle Pacific University for helping me locate critical studies for this essay. To the *Centro Fray Luis de León* for financing my stay in Salamanca. Lastly, to the anonymous readers for valuable constructive suggestions. All conclusions are mine, however. I dedicate this article to our dear friend and colleague Prof. Dr. José Mattoso, you will be missed, RIP.

<sup>1</sup> For a survey of these writers consult, A. Edward SIECIENSKI, *The Filioque. History of a Doctrinal Controversy* (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010; Peter GEMEINHARDT, *Die Filioque-Kontroverse zwischen Ost- und Westkirche im Frühmittelalter* (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 82), Berlin, De Gruyter, 2002; Joel C. ELOWSKY (ed.), *We Believe in the Holy Spirit* (Ancient Christian Doctrine 4), Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2009, the double procession section is at 217-234; the most comprehensive collection is in, Wolfram KINZIG, *Faith in Formulae, A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts*, 4 vols. 1<sup>st</sup>. edition (Oxford Early Christian Texts), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017.

the Emperor Justin I (c. 450-527) to be recited every Sunday<sup>2</sup>. The Third Council of Toledo in imitation of the East directed that the Creed was to be recited every Sunday in Hispania, Gallia, and Gallaecia according to the form of the Oriental Church — *secundum formam orientalium ecclesiarum*<sup>3</sup>. This development must be viewed as a consequence of an extended process in the West.

Most modern scholars today believe that the *Filioque* was first inserted into the Creed at the Third Council of Toledo (589), no one questions that by the seventh century it was a fixture in the Creed in Hispania<sup>4</sup>. No doubt that the double procession was intended to be a corrective to the heretical Arian formula of the Trinity, as Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz instructed, “It was imposed strictly on the Arians the debated doctrine that the Holy Spirit proceeds equally from the Father and the Son and that there is no difference whatsoever between the three persons of the Trinity” and

<sup>2</sup> *Romanorum LIII regnat Iustinus Iunior annis XI. Qui Iustinus anno primo regni sui ea, que contra sinodum Calcedonensem fuerant comentata, destruxit, simbolumque sanctorum CL patrum Constantinopolim congregatorum et in sinodo Calcedonense laudabiliter receptum in omni catholica ecclesia a populo concinendum intromisit, priusquam dominica dicatur oratio*, in Roger COLLINS (ed.), *Iohannes Biclarensis, Chronicon*, (CCSL 173A), Turnhout, Brepols, 2001, 59; Julio CAMPOS, *Juan de Biclara. Obispo de Gerona. Su Vida y su Obra* (Escuela de Estudios Medievales, Estudios 32), Madrid, CSIC, 1960, 78.

<sup>3</sup> *Ut in omnibus ecclesiis die dominica symbolum recitetur — Pro reverentia sanctissimae fidei et propter conroborandas hominum invalidas mentes consultu piissimi et gloriosissimi domni Recaredi regis sancta constituit synodus, ut per omnes ecclesias Spaniae, Galliae vel Gallaeciae secundum formam orientalium ecclesiarum concilii Constantinopolitani hoc est centum quinquaginta episcoporum symbolum fidei recitetur ut priusquam dominica dicatur oratio voce clara a populo praedicetur, quo et fides vera manifestum testimonium habeat et ad Christi corpus et sanguinem praelibandum pectora populorum fide purificata accedant*: José VIVES – Tomás MARÍN MARTÍNEZ – Gonzalo MARTÍNEZ DÍEZ (eds.), *Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos* (España Cristiana. Textos 1), Barcelona – Madrid, CSIC, 1963, 125.

<sup>4</sup> The first full treatment of the *Filioque* in the councils of the Hispano Roman, Suevic-Visigothic period and related documents is in ALBERTO FERREIRO, “The Reception and Diffusion of the Creed and the *Filioque* Before and After the Third Council of Toledo (589) in Hispania”, forthcoming in *Annales Historiae Conciliorum* (2025).

that at Toledo III “It seems to be the first formulation in which the double procession is used.”<sup>5</sup> In the midst of all of these momentous events and its participants, the one who has not been adequately explored in the *Filioque* dissemination is Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636) through some of his many writings and the Fourth Council of Toledo (633) over which he presided<sup>6</sup>.

Isidore was born in Cartagena c. 560 and died on 4 April 636 and was canonized in 1598 by Pope Clement VIII. His Feast is on 4 April. Pope Innocent XIII declared him a Doctor of the Church in 1722. In recent times he is referred to informally as the Patron of the Internet. He and his older brother Leander of Seville exerted a great deal of influence in the sixth and seventh centuries. Leander’s crowning achievement was his part, before and after the historic Third Council of Toledo (589), that led to the conversion of the Visigoths out of Arianism. In the case of Isidore his voluminous writings, notably the *Etymologiae*, spread his

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<sup>5</sup> DÍAZ Y DÍAZ reminded us that, “Se impuso terminantemente a los arrianos la debatida doctrina de que el Espíritu Santo procede por igual del Padre y del Hijo, y que no hay diferencia alguna entre las tres personas de la Trinidad. Para remachar esta aceptación, y acaso para que no se produjeran distorsiones doctrinales, se había acordado la recitación obligatoria del Credo en los oficios de todos los domingos del año (...) Según el texto de las abjuraciones, este credo lleva la fórmula *ex patre et filio procedentem*. Parece ser la primera formulación en que se usa la doble procedencia,” in SAN ISIDORO DE SEVILLA, *Etimologías*. Edición Bilingüe. José OROZ RETA – Manuel-A. MARCOS CASQUERO (trans.) y Manuel C. DÍAZ Y DÍAZ, *Introducción General* (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos), Madrid, BAC, 2004, 27 and note 58. This Spanish edition is based, as stated by the editors, on the Latin text that is reproduced from W. M. LINDSAY, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi. Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX* (Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis 2 vols), Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1911.

<sup>6</sup> The excellent study of Shawn C. Smith is the first to treat the *Filioque* in Isidore by centering his attention primarily on a disputed letter of Isidore that some classify as spurious, the author did not include in this article other relevant writings of Isidore. Shawn C. SMITH, “The Insertion of the *Filioque* into the Nicene Creed and a Letter of Isidore of Seville”, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 22 (2014) 261-286 (<https://doi.org/10.1353/earl.2014.0026>).

influence in the Middle Ages. Isidore contributed at two important councils in Seville II (619) and the Fourth Council of Toledo (633), in the last one as Metropolitan of Seville. The abundant corpus of his writings is well known and have been documented in modern editions<sup>7</sup>. Some have voiced doubts about his scant or no knowledge of Greek which may have affected his treatment of the Creed in general and the *Filioque* specifically. Peter Gemeinhardt is of the opinion that in the seventh century even a highly educated theologian like Isidore of Seville was limited to only knowing Latin<sup>8</sup>. The implication being that it hampered Isidore's ability to use the original text of the Creed as a corrective to any innovations. This argument is not convincing for several reasons. One, there was the ubiquitous presence of the double procession in Hispania in the seventh century and in other Isidorean works. Two, not all scholars believe that Isidore was totally ignorant of Greek, rather he had some knowledge albeit limited. Thomas L. Knoebel maintains that "Isidore grew up learned in classical culture. He certainly was fluent in Latin and knew some Greek and Hebrew."<sup>9</sup> We know from his works, especially the *Etymologiae*, that he knew many classical works. As for the level of his knowledge of Greek, it was not likely to read smoothly through a text but certainly enough to work with phrases and specific words. The Creed at that level would not be an obstacle for Isidore to engage; as a corollary I doubt for the same reason that he was impeded in analyzing the Lord's Prayer in Greek. Three, the presence of Greeks in many capacities was hardly anomalous in the

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<sup>7</sup> A convenient description of Isidorean writings and editions is to be found in Carmen CODOÑER (et al.), *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe: dos épocas en su literatura* (Obras de Referencia 28), Salamanca, 2010, 139-155.

<sup>8</sup> GEMEINHARDT, *Die Filioque-Kontroverse*, very brief on Hispania, 49-56 at 52.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas L. KNOEBEL, Isidore of Seville. *Sententiae* (Ancient Christian Writers 73), New York, NY, The Newman Press, 2018, 2, also see note 5, 219. He stated in another work, "In the episcopal school in Seville, Isidore learned the classical writings, as well as Greek," Thomas L. KNOEBEL, Isidore of Seville. *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis* (Ancient Christian Writers 61), New York, NY, The Newman Press, 2008, 2.

entire Late Antique-Suevic/Visigothic era<sup>10</sup>. Isidore was not engaging and promoting the Creed linguistically blind.

## 2. ETYMOLOGIAE

Isidore is known mainly through his most famous work, the *Etymologiae* and rightfully so. Most scholars think that it was written in 632/633. It became the go to book for many writers in the Middle Ages as they explored a vast array of subject matter. It is arranged in twenty sections containing extracts from Latin and Greek classical writers and earlier Church Fathers. Surviving manuscripts are in the hundreds which testifies to its popularity and endurance. The subject matter covered includes cosmology, geography, history, agriculture, ecclesiology, geology, doctrine, morals, heresy, and other subjects. He gave a copy to his good friend Braulio of Zaragoza<sup>11</sup>. It is appropriate, then, to begin our Isidorean survey on the *Filioque* with the *Etymologiae*.

There are two places where Isidore expressed his support of the double procession / *Filioque* in the *Etymologiae*, Book VII, chapters 3 and 4. The first is in chapter three titled *De Spiritu Sancto* that explained the Holy Spirit's nature and origins, equality of substance and will with the Father and Son. The Holy Spirit proceeding from both, not only the Father, as it was professed in the original Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creed. The text reads: I.

<sup>10</sup> Julio CAMPOS (ed.), *Cronicon de Idacio, Obispo de Chaves (s. IV–V)*, Salamanca, Ediciones Calasancias, 1984, 78-79; Alexandra CHAVARRÍA ARNAU, *A la sombra de un imperio. Reyes, obispos e iglesias en la Hispania tardoantigua (siglo V–VIII)* (Munera 43), Bari, Edipuglia, 2018, 27-28; an important overview travels between East and West is in Maribel DIETZ, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims. Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World, A.D. 300–800*, University Park, Pennsylvania, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005, 168-175. For Martin of Braga and his knowledge of Greek consult Claude W. BARLOW, *Martini Episcopi Bracarensis Opera Omnia* (Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome 12), New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1950. The most comprehensive study on Hispania and Byzantium is Margarita VALLEJO GIRVÉS, *Hispania y Bizancio: Una relación desconocida* (Akal Universitaria, Serie Reinos y dominios en la historia de España), Madrid, Akal, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> For the *Etymologies* and editions see CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 146-149 and 152.

*Spiritus sanctus ideo praedicatur Deus, quia ex Patre Filioque procedit, et substantiam eius habet. Neque enim aliud de Patre procedere potui quam quod ipse est Pater*<sup>12</sup>. This was followed by section 4 titled *De Trinitate* that delves into the inner working and relationship of the three persons of the Trinity. Here again, Isidore taught that only the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son using the double procession expression not the *Filioque* clause as in the previous entry: *Spiritus sanctus solus de Patre et Filio procedit; ideo solus amborum nuncupatur spiritus*<sup>13</sup>. Isidore provided no context here to give reasons why the *Filioque* was necessary to oppose Arianism. He will do so in another text, as demonstrated below.

### 3. DE ECCLESIASTICIS OFFICIIS

The *Filioque* is found once in Isidore's treatise known as the *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, a work consisting of two parts. The first is titled *De origine officiorum* and the second *De origine ministrorum*. The original title of the treatise was actually *De origine officiorum*, the editor Christopher Lawson has informed us that the customary title appears in very few manuscripts<sup>14</sup>. It was written by the best estimates between 610–615 and was dedicated by Isidore to his brother Fulgentius. The first part treats the origins of ecclesiastical offices, festivals celebrated by the Church, the various rites, readings, and prayers for the liturgy. The second is on the clergy with explanations of the sacraments. In short, it is a treatise for clerical formation and ministry. It is in part two where we find the *Filioque: Patrum quoque confiteri ingenitum, filium genitum, spiritum autem sanctum nec genitum nec ingenitum sed ex patre et filio procedentem; filium a patre nascendo procedere, spiritum uero sanctum procedendo non nasci*<sup>15</sup>. It was by now such common knowledge that any

<sup>12</sup> OROZ RETA, *Etimologías*, VII, 3, 1, *De Spiritu Sancto*, 628.

<sup>13</sup> OROZ RETA, *Etimologías*, VII, 4, 4, *De Trinitate*, 634.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher M. LAWSON (ed.), *Sancti Isidori Episcopi Hispalensis, De ecclesiasticis officiis* (CCSL 113), Turnhout, Brepols, 1989, 14–15.

<sup>15</sup> LAWSON, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, II, XXIII (XXIII), *De regula fidei*, 8–11, 99–100 at 99. An English translation is by KNOEBEL, *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*. More details are in CODONER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 142; See also, ELOWSKY, *We Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 226.

mention of Toledo III or Reccared was unnecessary. Teaching the double procession to clergy was a necessary part of their formation to pass it on to their congregations who every Sunday in the liturgy recited the Creed which by now was a fixture in the Visigothic Church. This treatise appears to have enjoyed wide circulation within Hispania, what remains to be determined is how extensively it was used in the ensuing medieval centuries in the West.

#### 4. LIBER DIFFERENTIARVM

This work has been succinctly described by Roger Collins where Isidore explored, “words that appeared similar but were different in meaning, and ones that meant the same but differed in appearance.”<sup>16</sup> It appears that the statements were meant to be memorized. It contains sections on linguistics, doctrine, angels, reason, faith, wisdom, ethics, and much more. The editor of the *Liber Differentiarum* María Adelaida Andrés Sanz (University of Salamanca) dates the composition to after 595 or even 598. Yet, in another section she says that Isidore wrote it when he was a mature writer no later than 610, probably closer to 600. Other authors have proposed alternate dates, in short it is not possible to put forward a precise date. It is safe to say it was in the late sixth and the opening of the seventh century<sup>17</sup>.

The section on the Trinity is where he mentioned the double procession and the clause *Filioque* in two distinct places. The Trinity comprises the opening section that is basically a reworking in a different format of the Creed and the relationship between Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. The segment reads: *Inter personam Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, ita secernitur, quod Pater nec factus nec natus est; Filius natus, non factus; Spiritus uero sanctus nec natus nec factus, sed*

<sup>16</sup> Roger COLLINS, *Visigothic Spain 409-711*, Malden, MA, Wiley-Blackwell, 2004, 163.

<sup>17</sup> María Adelaida ANDRÉS SANZ (ed.), *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi, Liber Differentiarum [III]*, *Isidori Hispalensis Opera*, (CCSL 111A), Turnhout, Brepols, 2006, detailed discussion on its genre, 24, 26-49. CODONER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe* for commentary on this work, 141-142.



*ex Patre [et Filio] procedens est* [bold type is mine]. *Proinde Pater aeternitatem habet sine natiuitate, Filius natiuitatem cum aeternitate; Spiritus uero sanctus processionem sine natiuitate [cum aeternitate]. | Pater ex nullo exordium ducit, Filius ex Patre originem sumit, Spiritus uero sanctus ex Patre Filioque procedit.* The second is longer, I include here the specific passage: **Quomodo Spiritus sanctus de Patre procedit et Filio**<sup>18</sup>. We witness from these concise examples that the clause *Filioque* was gaining more acceptance to express the double procession. After the Visigothic period it will become a permanent fixture in the West; Isidore contributed to this development through this and other works.

## 5. SENTENTIAE

The *Sententiae* had a great impact already during and after Isidore's lifetime. Similar to the *Etymologiae* it enjoyed wide circulation in the Middle Ages. This book is divided into three books, it was conceived as a handbook to teach morals and theology. It was organized into sentences for memorization and into larger themes to facilitate teaching. Isidore generously used of Ambrose, Augustine, and Pope Gregory the Great. The first book addressed divine attributes, creation, evil, and related topics. The second is an array of topics while the third treats of ecclesiastical ministries, Last Judgment, and Justice of God. As with other Isidorean works, dating exactly a book is no easy task. Recommended dates range from 615-619 to 633-636; most agree that it was not written in one sitting, it was in phases<sup>19</sup>. Pierre Cazier on the date says that while it is not possible to give an exact one, the *Sententiae* represents the crowning achievement of his

<sup>18</sup> ANDRÉS SANZ, *Liber Differentiarum* [III], III, 1-8, 10 and *Quomodo Spiritus sanctus de Patre procedit et Filio, nec tamen ab eis praeceditur a quibus procedit?* | *Quomodo tria unum sunt, et unum tria? Quomodo ad se inuicem relatiue tria sunt, essentialiter unum sunt? Quis ista consideret? Quis ista comprehendat? Si enim humanae natiuitatis Christi secreta non capimus, diuinae naturae misteria quomodo capiemus?* ANDRÉS SANZ, *Liber Differentiarum*, [III], III, 20-26, 11-12.

<sup>19</sup> A good discussion is in KNOEBEL, *Sententiae*, 11-16.

life and pastoral teaching<sup>20</sup>. Knoebel is convinced that it likely influenced the writing of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*. Isidore was the first to create this new genre of Christian literature in Latin on faith and morals which perhaps was even a precursor of the *Summa Theologica*<sup>21</sup>. Furthermore, Knoebel adds, regarding the specific text that mentions the *Filioque* that, "This entire chapter on the Holy Spirit is completely Isidore's contribution. It is the only chapter in the three books of *Sentences* for which Isidore does not rely on another author as a source.... Only the sentence of 15:4 relies on a source, and that is from Isidore's own *Etymologies* VII.3.30."<sup>22</sup> Chapter 15 on the Holy Spirit is where the double procession appears but not the clause *Filioque*. Isidore wrote: *Spiritus Sanctus Patris et Filii est, et inde unum sunt Pater et Filius, quia nihil habet Pater quod non habeat Filius. Non enim res una et duorum consubstantialis poterit semel **ab eis procedere et simul inesse** [emphasis mine], nisi unum fuerint a quibus procedit, Sententiae, XV, De Spiritu Sancto, 5-9, 15,2a<sup>23</sup>.*

It became standard to profess that the Holy Spirit is one and the same thing, having all that the Father and the Son possess. The Father, moreover, has nothing that the Son does not have. Importantly for us, the Holy Spirit proceeds from both at the same time; all three are one. Although the emerging standard formulas of *ex Patre et Filio* and its variants and the *Filioque* are absent in this text the double procession is unmistakable in the section on the Holy Spirit. The diffusion of the *Sententiae* and the easy memorization of its content contributed to the proliferation of the *Filioque*.

<sup>20</sup> "Quoi qu'il en soit, même si l'on ne sait pas exactement à quel moment chacune des sentences a été composée, on peut dire avec certitude qu'elles sont le couronnement de toute la vie d'Isidore, de tout son enseignement pastoral", Pierre CAZIER (ed.), *Isidorus Hispalensis, Sententiae*, (CCSL 111), Turnhout, Brepols, 1998, xix.

<sup>21</sup> KNOEBEL, *Sententiae*, 11.

<sup>22</sup> KNOEBEL, *Sententiae*, 229 note 44.

<sup>23</sup> CAZIER, *Sententiae*, 52. A Spanish translation is in Julio CAMPOS RUIZ – Ismael ROCA MELIA (eds.), *San Leandro, San Isidoro, San Fructuoso, Reglas monásticas de la España visigoda Los tres libros de las "Sentencias"* (Santos Padres Españoles II. Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos), Madrid, BAC, 1971, *Caput XV, De Sancto Spiritu*, 267. The English version is in KNOEBEL, *Sententiae*, 62.

## 6. FOURTH COUNCIL OF TOLEDO (633)

After the significant reign of Reccared in the late sixth and seventh centuries the double procession formula and the *Filioque* appear more frequently in the Creed. The Fourth Council of Toledo (633), convened in the third year of King Sisenand on 5 December, Era 671, with sixty-six bishops in attendance from Hispania and Gallia is an example. Isidore presided over the council, and it is agreed by scholars that his influence there was pervasive. The council is in the estimation of many to have influenced profoundly the formation of the Visigothic liturgy in Hispania. This attempt to make the liturgy uniform in Hispania succeeded and continued to undergo changes in the Mozarabic period up until it was repressed by Pope Gregory VII's liturgical reforms for the entire West. A major feature of this council that added to its prestige is that Isidore was by then Metropolitan Bishop of Seville<sup>24</sup>. The section where the Creed is found in the council acts is titled — “On the Evident Truth of the Catholic faith,” — *De evidenti catholicae fidei veritate*. They prefaced the profession by acknowledging that everything they were about to say was “according to Sacred Scripture and the doctrine that we have received from the holy Fathers.”<sup>25</sup> The bishops in unison professed the Creed — not verbatim — in their own words but maintaining the main articles as an expression that all decisions at the council were supported by a firm foundation<sup>26</sup>. In the section on the Holy Spirit it was professed that the Holy Spirit was not created or engendered but instead proceeded from

<sup>24</sup> Extensive commentary is in José ORLANDIS – Domingo RAMOS-LISSÓN, *Historia de los Concilios de la España Romana y Visigoda*, Pamplona, Universidad de Navarra, 1986, 261-298. Archdale A. KING, “Rite of Toledo,” in *Liturgies of the Primatial Sees*, Bonn, Nova & Vetera, 2005, 457-628; Adolfo IVORRA, *Liturgia Hispano-Mozárabe* (Biblioteca Litúrgica 52), Barcelona, Centre de Pastoral Litúrgica, 2017, 28-37, with many more references throughout the volume.

<sup>25</sup> *Secundum divinas enim scripturas et doctrinam quam a sanctis patribus accepimus*, VIVES, *Concilios*, 187.

<sup>26</sup> *Et quoniam generale concilium agimus, oportet primum nostrae vocis sermonem de Deo esse, ut post professionem fidei sequentia operis Dei nostri vota quasi super fundamentum firmissimum disponantur*, VIVES, *Concilios*, 187.

the Father and the Son, the double procession is unmistakable — *sed procedentem ex Patre et Filio profiteamur*. It reflects similar wording from Toledo III with slight adjustment. At this stage it was the most common formula of the double procession. It will take some time for the *Filioque* formula to replace it. It can be affirmed that the double procession was a fixture at the beginning of the seventh century. The council of Toledo that met in 633 was only 44 years after the Toledo council of 589, in the interim other councils referred to the ancient canons but with no profession of the Creed. Isidore, however, at this Toledan council led his fellow bishops in giving their collective support for the double procession when speaking about the Holy Spirit's relationship with the Father and Son. His eminent standing in the Church no doubt encouraged the rapid acceptance of the double procession<sup>27</sup>. This was a public venue where Isidore promoted the double procession through a widely influential council that shaped significantly the Visigothic-Mozarabic liturgy.

## 7. HISTORIA GOTHORUM

There are three main chroniclers from Hispania: Hydatius, John of Biclar, and Isidore<sup>28</sup>. Unfortunately not one of them wrote their chronicles to match anywhere near the detailed accounts of Gregory of Tours and Bede, for example. They are to an extreme brief with their information — Hydatius reads like text message headlines, while Isidore and John of Biclar in general provide but little more information in their entries. We can dispense with Hydatius who did not report on our topic. John of Biclar in his longest entry spoke about Nicaea

<sup>27</sup> *Spiritum vero Sanctum nec creatum nec genitum sed procedentem ex Patre et Filio profiteamur*, VIVES, *Concilios*, 187.

<sup>28</sup> Two of the best surveys on these chronicles is Pedro Juan GALÁN SÁNCHEZ, *El género historiográfico de la chronica. Las crónicas hispanas de época visigoda* (Anuario de Estudios Filológicos 12), Cáceres, Universidad de Extremadura, 1994, for Hydatius, 61-76; John of Biclar, 81-172; Isidore, 175-208 and Suzanne TEILLET, *Des Goths à la Nation Gothique. Les origines de l'idée de nation en Occident du Ve au VIIIe siècle* (Collection D'Études Anciennes), Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1984, Hydatius, 207-252, John of Biclar, 421-457, and Isidore, 463-501.

and Chalcedon, and the triumph of Reccared at Toledo, but not the *Filioque*. There is a veiled allusion when he related that Reccared offered his conversion to the clergy gathered and a *tome* that contained all that referred to the orthodox faith. It was added to the canons of the holy council. This would have included the mandate that the Creed with the *Filioque* was to be professed on Sunday at every liturgy. John hailed Reccared to be greater than Constantine and Maurice because Arianism was extirpated permanently in Toledo unlike at Nicaea and Chalcedon<sup>29</sup>. Gregory of Tours needs to be mentioned since he was well informed about many events surrounding the Sueves and Visigoths and their conversion. He too spoke about the conversion of the Visigoths out of Arianism under Reccared but did not say anything about Toledo III or the *Filioque*<sup>30</sup>.

Of all these chroniclers, however, only Isidore was attentive to include the *Filioque* when speaking of the Third Council of Toledo in his *Historia Gothorum*. Overwhelmingly modern scholars, when speaking about the *Filioque* in this period ignore the key testimony of the *Historia Gothorum* long recension of chapter 53. No one has doubted the authorship of this Isidorean text, it is not an issue. One exception is Andrew T. Fear who alone in his translation of the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium* voiced the briefest reference to this text, "Isidore, HG 53 also mentions the doctrine being adopted at this council."<sup>31</sup> Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford Jr., in their translation of the *Historia Gothorum* used the long recension of chapter 53 with no commentary<sup>32</sup>. Suzanne Teillet in her massive masterpiece, *Des Goths à la Nation Gothique*, when

<sup>29</sup> COLLINS, Iohannes Biclarenensis, *Chronicon*, 91, 81-83. Julio CAMPOS, *Juan de Biclario*, for the text 97-99 and commentary at 148-149.

<sup>30</sup> See for Reccared's conversion before Toledo 589 and the Arians, in Gregorii Episcopi Tironensis, *Libri Historiarum* X. Bruno KRUSCH and Wilhelm LEVISON (eds.), MGH, SRM, Hannover, 1951, IX.15, 429-430.

<sup>31</sup> Andrew T. FEAR (trans. and ed.), *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers* (Translated Texts for Historians 26), Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1997, on the double procession formula, 91-92, note 195. He also mentions there its appearance in Toledo IV (633).

<sup>32</sup> Guido DONINI – Gordon B. FORD Jr., *Isidore of Seville's History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi*, Second Revised Edition, Leiden, Brill, 1970, 25.

she commented about Reccared and the Third Council of Toledo, amazingly said not a word about the Creed or the *Filioque*<sup>33</sup>. There is some disagreement as to the exact date when both recensions of the *Historia Gothorum* were written. Cristóbal Rodríguez Alonso dates them respectively to 619 or 620 for the short and 624 for the expanded one; others put forward for the short redaction around 621 and the longer perhaps 626<sup>34</sup>.

The differences between both versions are striking in their content<sup>35</sup>. The short version is a brief note about the synod [not named]. It was there that the most glorious prince [not named] brought together the clergy [not named] to sign an agreement to condemn the Arian heresy<sup>36</sup>. Rodríguez Alonso admits it is not easy to know why Isidore added more detail in the second version. He thinks it would not be surprising if in Isidore's day a dogmatic dispute surfaced even though Toledo III had left a solid foundation of Nicæan orthodoxy against Arian beliefs<sup>37</sup>. There is no evidence of any Neo-Arianism at this juncture to challenge the Catholics. We know there was a limited Arian resistance immediately after Toledo III in 589 in the Narbonne. A plausible explanation is that Isidore wanted to promote the double procession / *Filioque* not against any actual Arians but those who may entertain rejecting the *Filioque*. Rodríguez Alonso has a discussion on the longer version that is valuable. Institutional Arianism with its own churches and clergy was a thing of the past everywhere by the

<sup>33</sup> TEILLET, *Des Goths à la Nation Gothique*, for the Third Council of Toledo and Reccared, 449-455.

<sup>34</sup> Cristóbal RODRÍGUEZ ALONSO, (trans. and ed.), *Las Historias de los Godos, Vándalos y Suevos de Isidoro de Sevilla* (Colección 'Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa' 13), León, Centro de Estudios e Investigación 'San Isidoro' Archivo Histórico Diocesano, 1975, 25 = PL 83, 1052-1082, chapter 53 at 1072 = MGH XI, Theodore MOMMSEN (ed.), (*Chronica Minora II*), *Isidori Ivnioris Episcopi Hispalensis, Historia Gothorum, Wandalorum, Sæborum*, chapter 53, 289; CODONER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 145-146.

<sup>35</sup> RODRÍGUEZ ALONSO has a discussion on the longer version that is valuable, *Las Historias*, 35-39.

<sup>36</sup> *Synodum etiam ad condemnationem Arrianae haeresis congregavit, cui concilio idem gloriosissimus princeps interfuit suaque eum praesentia et subscriptione firmavit*, RODRÍGUEZ ALONSO, *Las Historias*, 262.

<sup>37</sup> RODRÍGUEZ ALONSO, *Las Historias*, 36.

mid-seventh century. Isidore could not have been motivated by that, there is another plausible explanation. Additions to the long recension with the double procession / *Filioque* was a corrective to anyone contemplating rejection of the double procession. This was a growing trend in the eastern churches. The *Filioque* was to be professed by all Catholics. For a long time, the influence of liturgical practices from the oriental churches had been afoot. Even Reccared's decree in Canon 2 of Toledo III that the Creed would be professed every Sunday in the liturgy was said to conform with the Oriental churches — *secundum formam orientalium ecclesiarum*. Not all things, however, from the eastern churches were adopted wholesale by the Church in Hispania. A good example is Canon 17 of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633)<sup>38</sup>.

There are several things to single out in the long recension. The prince [Reccared] called the bishops of Hispania and Gallia to a synod to condemn the Arian heresy. The most religious prince confirmed the acts and together with those gathered he abjured the perfidious [heresy] that had held [captive] the Gothic people in the teachings of Arius. Rejection of this heresy required professing that in God there is unity of three persons, that the Son has been engendered consubstantially by the Father. The main statement is that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son — *spiritum sanctum inseparabiliter a patre filioque procedere*. Anyone who did not profess the double procession of the Holy Spirit was guilty of adopting an Arian heretical position. The change to the Creed brought about in Toledo by Reccared was henceforth the correct Catholic way of believing about the procession of the Holy Spirit. The near universally neglected longer recension of chapter 53 of the *Historia Gothorum* is absolutely crucial for any discussion about Reccared and Toledo III and the introduction of the *Filioque* into the Creed.

There is a hagiographical account that is germane to our topic because of its description of what transpired under Reccared in Toledo in 589. It was written not too long after the *Historia*

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<sup>38</sup> See note five above. In a separate study titled, Alberto FERREIRO, "Canon 17 of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633): The Book of the Apocalypse - Questions of Authorship and Canon", I will flesh out this topic.

*Gothorum* by an anonymous author. The *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium* was perhaps written originally in 633-638, then revised between 672-680 according to the latest speculations<sup>39</sup>. This is the period when the double procession was already firmly present in various Visigothic councils. The relevant passages are in the *Vita vel Virtutibus Sancti Masone Episcopi*, within the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*<sup>40</sup>. After the Arian King Leovigild died, father of Reccared, he assumed the throne, converted to the Catholic faith which he publicly proclaimed at the council of Toledo in 589. The account is a conflation of events, it does not specifically identify the Third Council of Toledo by name and the role of Leander of Seville. The important section is where it described the Catholic faith that Reccared professed as regards the Trinity to oppose Arianism. Reccared acknowledged the oneness of the Trinity, distinguishing each Person. The Father unbegotten, the Son begotten of the Father, and the procession of the Holy Spirit from both — *Spiritum uero sanctum ex utroque procedere credens*. This is consistent with the profession found in Toledo III<sup>41</sup>. It supports what we find on the *Filioque* in the *Historia Gothorum*. In addition, this hagiography offers testimony that the double procession was embraced rapidly in seventh century Hispania.

<sup>39</sup> Consult on the dates of composition in CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 361 which is echoing the findings of Antonio MAYA SÁNCHEZ (ed.), *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium* (CCSL 116), Turnhout, Brepols, 1992, lvii. Consult my forthcoming study cited in note 5.

<sup>40</sup> MAYA SÁNCHEZ, *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, on the double procession, 80; Joseph N. GARVIN (ed. and trans.), *The Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium* (Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Latin Language and Literature 19), Washington, DC, Catholic University of America, 1946, on the double procession, 230-231; FEAR, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 91-92, note 195.

<sup>41</sup> *Erat enim religionis diuine assertor, recte glorie predicator, defensor omnibus modis catholicam fidem, sanctam Trinitatem coeternam uniusque uirtutis et substantie predicans atque in personarum proprietate distinguens, in natura unum Deum adfirmans, Patrem ingenitum dicens, Filium ex Patre genitum adstruens, Spiritum uero sanctum ex utroque procedere credens*, MAYA SÁNCHEZ, *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, V, IX, 18-23, 80 = GARVIN, *The Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, 230-231. FEAR, *Lives of the Visigothic Fathers*, 92, note 195.



## 8. *EPISTOLA VI. ISIDORI CLAUDIO DUCI*

The last text for this study is a letter alleged to have been written by Isidore. Currently it has been classified as spurious. In a recent study, however, Shawn C. Smith has offered compelling arguments that it was written by Isidore<sup>42</sup>. It is a letter to a Duke Claudius of Mérida titled *Epistola VI. Isidori Claudio Duci*. The letter is an apologetic where Isidore defended the *Filioque*. Gordon B. Ford Jr. in his Latin-English edition of Isidore's letters has no commentary, so we do not know if he thought it spurious or authentically Isidorean. Carmen Codoñer and the authors of the book *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe* believe it is spurious and date it to the ninth century. We are not informed what their conclusions are based upon, nor do they cite any modern study to support them<sup>43</sup>. Smith's article, to my knowledge, is the most recent study to look into the letter in detail. Smith maintains that the *Filioque* was not introduced for the first time in Toledo III, he sides with those who think that it was in Toledo VIII (653). This council that convened sixty-four years after Toledo III has nothing special about it that would warrant introducing the *Filioque* for the first time. The bishops in Toledo III had plenty reasons, not the least the goal to vanquish Arianism once and for all. Another factor is that the *Filioque* was already widespread in the West. Smith unfortunately ignored, like so many others, the long recension of chapter 53 of the *Historia Gothorum*. As has been shown above, Isidore was of the view that it was at Toledo III when the *Filioque* was appended to the Creed. He was in a far better position to know than any of us.

The main interest here is Smith's defense of the Isidorean authorship of letter VI to Duke Claudius of Mérida, with whom I am in full agreement. This article refutes well the main objection to the letter not being authentic: the presence

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<sup>42</sup> Shawn C. SMITH, "The Insertion of the Filioque into the Nicene Creed and a Letter on Isidore of Seville", 269-286.

<sup>43</sup> Gordon B. FORD Jr. (trans.), *The Letters of St. Isidore of Seville*. Amsterdam, Adolf M. Hakkert Publisher, 1970, 30-37; CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 149, 153.

of the Petrine Primacy. Smith seems not to have been aware of my previous research on this topic regarding the letter of Pope Vigilius and Profuturus of Braga and the crucial section seven that promotes the Petrine Primacy. There is also Letter VIII to Bishop Eugenius from Isidore which for the same reason has been considered spurious. This is a vacuous objection that is unsustainable as I have shown in previous articles and in my recent book<sup>44</sup>. The Petrine Primacy was already in wide usage before Isidore wrote anything about it, there are no anachronisms in these letters. The bulk of the letter was dedicated to defending and explaining the *Filioque*, to which we now turn.

Isidore wrote against the objections of some Greeks who claimed that in the synods of Nicaea and Constantinople it was warned under pain of anathema to add or remove anything from the Catholic faith. Isidore added that some Greeks rebuked the Romans [Catholics] for professing, *Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit*. Isidore accused 'some' Greeks because there were those in the East who promoted the *Filioque*. Isidore thought that the double procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, was not an addition, but a clarification<sup>45</sup>.

Isidore said that any concern about violating the prohibition to tamper with the Creed he would dispel. The prohibition Isidore referred to was from Paul to add anything new to the Gospel, "if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to

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<sup>44</sup> Alberto FERREIRO, *Epistolae Plenae: The Correspondence of the Bishops of Hispania with the Bishops of Rome: Third through Seventh Centuries* (Medieval and Early Modern Iberia Series 74), Brill, Leiden, 2020, in Chapter 8, "Petrine Primacy According to Isidore of Seville," 197-215, for the letter of Eugenius at 206-212.

<sup>45</sup> *Item nobis insinuare curasti quorundam Graecorum objectionem, quod in Nicaena vel Constantinopolitana synodo sub anathemate prohibitum legitur in Symbolo, et in illo sancti Athanasii de fide catholica diminuere vel addere aliquid; atque ideo quidam ex Graecis Latinos proterve nituntur reprehendere, quod in professione sanctae fidei Deo corde et ore decantent: Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit [author emphasis], cum in praedictis conciliis fuerit positum ex Patre procedit, et sancta Romana Ecclesia ex Patre Filioque Spiritum procedere approbat atque credit*, FORD Jr., *Letters*, section 4, 30-33.

that which you received, let him be accursed,” (Galatians 1:9) and from John “if anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting” (2 John 1:10). The warning of ‘another doctrine’ was in reference to heresy, for Isidore it did not apply to the *Filioque*<sup>46</sup>. Isidore pointed out how the apostles, martyrs, and orthodox teachers preached many things that were not contradictory because they all tended towards the same one truth of the faith. In other words, the *Filioque* teaching fell under this category<sup>47</sup>.

Isidore clarified that Jesus said in the Gospel of John that the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father, “but the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things,” (14:26) and “when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father” (15:26). Clearly here Jesus had a role in the sending of the Holy Spirit. It is reinforced when Jesus at John 20:22 breathed the Holy Spirit on the apostles after the resurrection. This demonstrates that the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son. In all of this Isidore believed he was clarifying an ambiguity in the original Creed. It was not adding or taking away anything as some Greeks objected<sup>48</sup>. Isidore highlighted that when he spoke about the persons of the Trinity great care was taken not to divide the individuality and essence of God in the Holy Trinity<sup>49</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> *Quae supradicta prohibitio, si subtiliter et recte perspicitur, omnis ambiguitas removetur; cum enim addere, seu diminuere prohibuit, de re contraria intellexit (...) Cum dixit aliam doctrinam, haeresim praecavendo, absque ambiguitate de doctrinae contrarietate nobis voluit demonstrare*, FORD Jr., *Letters*, section 5, 32-33. Canon 7 of Ephesus I prohibited to produce or write or compose any other creed.

<sup>47</sup> *Plura quidem alia praedicaverunt apostoli, martyres et Ecclesiae orthodoxi doctores; sed qui non contraria, prohibitio apostolica huiusmodi non intelligitur contraire, eo quod sint ad unum veritatis finem tendentia*, FORD Jr., *Letters*, section 6, 32-33.

<sup>48</sup> *A Filio vero, cum post resurrectionem suam insufflavisset, et discipulis suis dixit: Accipite Spiritum sanctum*, FORD Jr., *Letters*, section 8, 34-35.

<sup>49</sup> *Dum autem sanctae Trinitatis personas loquendo distinguimus, summopere curemus ne individuum, ac simplicissimam essentiam unius Dei dividere videamur*, FORD Jr., *Letters*, section 10, 34-35.

This letter contains nothing that casts doubt about its Isidorean authorship. It is the only document from Visigothic Hispania that clarified the necessity of the *Filioque* and provides the scriptural theology to justify it. The acts of the Third Council of Toledo (589), Fourth Council of Toledo (633), the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emerentensium*, *Etymologiae*, *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, *Liber Differentiarum*, *Sententiae*, and *Historia Gothorum* did not include any sustained scriptural theological exegesis for the *Filioque*. This Isidorean letter is the only document that does, that in itself makes it a unique and important source.

## 9. THE LEGACY OF ISIDORE: ALCUIN AND THEODULF OF ORLÉANS

The two texts from the *Etymologiae* together with the *Liber Differentiarum* and *Sententiae* in the post-Visigothic period had a noteworthy impact in the Carolingian realms and beyond. In Charlemagne's reign two outstanding theologians that flourished under his watch were Alcuin of York (c. 732-804) and Theodulf of Orléans (750-821). Two theological controversies transpired in their time, the heresy of Adoptionism and the escalating debates with the Orthodox over the *Filioque*. Our focus here is only the *Filioque* and the influence of Isidore. Charlemagne was a major player in encouraging the papacy of his day to embrace the *Filioque* that Pope Leo III (c. 795-816) resisted. He did not, however, prohibit its use in the Church under Charlemagne. In time Rome will again accept the *Filioque* which contributed to the eventual schism with the Orthodox of 1054.

Alcuin and Theodulf when they defended the legitimacy of the *Filioque* they turned to the *Etymologiae*. Alcuin wrote two works where the *Filioque* was upheld. The first is titled *Opusculum Secundum, seu Libellus de Processione Spiritus Sancti. Ad Carolum Magnum*. Alcuin listed Isidore along with other Greek and Latin Fathers as his patristic authorities. In this work he cited specifically one passage from book VII, it is the one from *De Spiritu Sancto*, VII, 3, 1, Alcuin asserted: *Isidorus quoque de processione Spiritus sancti a Patre et Filio in septimo Etymologiarum libro praedictos sequendo Patres in tertio*

ait capitulo: *'Spiritus sanctus ideo praedicatur Deus, quia ex Patre Filioque procedit, et substantiam eius habet. Neque enim de Patre procedere potuit, quam quod ipse est Pater'*<sup>50</sup>. He did not use the second from *De Trinitate*. In his work *De Fide Sanctae Trinitatis et de Incarnatione Christi, Quaestiones de Sancta Trinitate* he promoted the double procession, but no citations were attributed to Isidore<sup>51</sup>. Both works, nevertheless, were a powerful apologetic to persuade Charlemagne that the *Filioque* was the legitimate theological position on the Holy Spirit that should remain in the Creed.

A second reference by Alcuin is a text related to Hispania in the section on Pope Leo I the Great. It is about a letter written 21 July 447 to Turibius of Astorga, who was a staunch opponent of Priscillianism. It was anachronistically interpolated along with the double procession profession —*alius qui de utroque processit*— to the acts of the First Council of Toledo that met in 400<sup>52</sup>. Arianism was not the main agenda of this council

<sup>50</sup> PL 101, 76.

<sup>51</sup> VII. QVOD SPIRITVS SANCTVS COMMVNIS EST PATRIS ET FILII SPIRITVS: *Ergo hoc donum Dei, id est Spiritus Sanctus qui de Patre et Filio aequaliter procedit*, I, VII, 3-4, 26; XIII. QVAE SINT PROPRIA VNICVIQVE PERSONAE IN SANCTA TRINITATE: *Spiritus Sanctus itaque hoc habet proprium: quod ex Patre et Filio aequaliter procedit*, I, XIII, 10-11, 34; XVI. QUID SIT INTER INGENITVM ET PATREM, ET QVOD FILIVS SOLVS SIT GENITVS, SPIRITVS SANCTVS NEC INGENITVS NEC GENITVS: *Sed tantummodo procedere de Patre et Filio salua fide dicendus est — qui tamen non de Patre procedit in Filium et de Filio procedit ad sanctificandam creaturam, sicut quidam male intellegentes credendum esse putabant — sed simul de utroque procedit*, I, XVI, 22-26, 40; XVIII. DE VNITATE SPIRITVS SANCTI CVM PATRE ET FILIO: *qui a Patre et Filio aequaliter procedit*, II, XVIII, 7, 82, in: Eric KNIBBS – E. Ann MATTER (eds.), ALCVINI EBORACENSIS, *De Fide Sanctae Trinitatis et de Incarnatione Christi. Quaestiones de Sancta Trinitate*. (CCCM 249), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012. In his survey, SIECIENSKI, *The Filioque*, ignores the *Opusculum* text.

<sup>52</sup> The text from Alcuin reads: *Idem quoque sanctissimus papa Leo consona verbis canonicae praedictae epistolae de processione Spiritus sancti a Filio testatur in epistola, quam Turbio [Leg. Turribio] Asturiensi scripsit episcopo: Primo capitulo demonstrator quam impie sentiant de Trinitate divina, qui et Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti unam atque eandem asserunt esse personam, tanquam idem Deus nunc Pater, nunc Filius, nunc Spiritus sanctus nominetur: nec alius sit qui genuit, alius qui genitus est, alius qui de utroque processit... Fides enim catholica Trinitatem Deitatis sic homouision confitetur, ut Patrem*

which made the presence of the *Filioque* odd. The *Filioque* was never an issue with the Priscillianist, not one of the articles listed against them at Toledo I and later in the First Council of Braga (561) mention the double procession as something that the Priscillianists denied. In the *Tractates*, furthermore, written by Priscillian and some of his followers, the double procession is never defended or denied. In short, it was never an issue as it was with the Arians. Alcuin was as mistaken as the interpolators back in the fifth century to cite this letter in support of the *Filioque vis-à-vis* the First Council of Toledo. It would have been more appropriate to mention the Third Council of Toledo (589) where the *Filioque* appears in the Creed for the first time in Hispania under King Reccared. It is very likely Charlemagne would not want to share the achievement with Reccared; he must be the sole champion of the *Filioque*.

Theodulf was a prominent member in the Carolingian empire and a court theologian to Charlemagne. He was elected Bishop of Orléans in 775 and became abbot of the monastery of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire in 781. In 800 he was in Rome for Charlemagne's coronation. He thrived after he succeeded Alcuin as the chief theologian in 804. Theodulf emerged as the principal apologist in the disputes over the *Filioque* formula against detractors. He vigorously defended the *Filioque* in his treatise on the Holy Spirit against the Greek theologians who fervently opposed the addition. Isidore is listed by Theodulf in the *catena* of authorities in his *De spiritu sancto, Veterum Patrum sententiae, quod a Patre et Filioque procedat* written to Charlemagne<sup>53</sup>. Isidore's citations are lengthy, it is not necessary to quote them in full. The main title of the work and the pertinent line on the *Filioque* suffices. Theodulf had recourse to the following Isidorean works, the *Etymologiae* (Liber VI, caps. 3 and 4): *Isidorus libro septimo Etymologiarum (cap. 3), quod Spiritus sanctus a Patre Filioque procedat, sic dicit... Spiritus sanctus ex utroque procedit* (PL 105, 271) and in the second also from the *Etymologiae — Item idem in eodem*

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*et Filium et Spiritum sanctum sine confusione indivisos, sine tempore sempiternos, sine differentia credat aequales: quia unitatem in Trinitate non eadem persona, sed eadem implet essentia* (PL 101, 71-72).

<sup>53</sup> The *catena* is in PL 105, 241-242, the Isidore texts 271-272.

*opere (cap. 4), post pauca... Spiritus sanctus solus de Patre et Filio procedit, ideo solus amborum nuncupatur Spiritus* (PL 105, 271). In addition, Theodulf used the text from the *Liber Differentiarum* (Liber II, cap. 3): *Item idem in libro Differentiarum (Lib. II, cap. 3) — Spiritus vero sanctus, nec natus, nec factus, sed ex Patre Filioque procedens... Spiritus vero sanctus ex Patre Filioque procedit... Quomodo Spiritus sanctus de Patre procedit et Filio* (PL 105, 271-272), and the *Sententiae* on the Filioque — *Item idem in libro Sententiarum (Lib. I, cap, 17) — poterit simul ab eis procedere et simul inesse, nisi unum fuerint [edit. fuerit] a quibus procedit* (PL 105, 272). The chapter number is incorrect in the PL it is actually chapter 15, 15a.

Alcuin and Theodulf did not use the *De ecclesiasticis officiis*, *Historia Gothorum*, *Epistola VI, Isidori Claudio Duci*, and the Fourth Council of Toledo (633) where the *Filioque* appears. It is quite evident that Theodulf held Isidore in the highest of esteem by listing him alongside an impressive list of Church Fathers and quoting him generously. Theodulf followed in the footsteps of Alcuin when he too included the letter of Pope Leo I the Great to Turibius of Astorga. He did add that it was written by the pope to oppose the Sabellian opinions —no word of Arians or Priscillianists specifically— although the latter were accused of Sabellianism and more<sup>54</sup>. To sum up this Carolingian phase of the diffusion of select Isidorean writings the following is to be noted<sup>55</sup>. I maintain that the Adoptionist and Greeks challenge was the perfect reason to insist on the *Filioque* as it was earlier in Visigothic Hispania with Arianism. No doubt they knew about Reccared and Toledo III, but no one was going to share the limelight with Charlemagne. Carolingian theologians such as Smaragdus and Ratramnus

<sup>54</sup> *Leo Romanos episcopus, quod Spiritus sanctus a Patre Filioque procedit, sic dicit in epistola, quam misit ad Turibium Asturicensem episcopum (...) nec alius sit qui genuit, alius qui genitus est, alius qui de utroque procedit (...) says it was issued to oppose the Sabellian opinions — quod blasphemiae genus de Sabellii opinione sumpserunt* (PL 105, 269).

<sup>55</sup> For comprehensive background see Barbara C. RAW, *Trinity and Incarnation in Anglo-Saxon Art and Thought* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 21), New York, NY, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

of Corbie also defended the *Filioque* but made no use of Isidore, only Alcuin and Theodulf did so<sup>56</sup>. In conclusion, in neighboring Mozarabic Hispania under Muslim rule, the memory of Isidore was uneven in some writers, but not entirely forgotten. Isidore is mentioned or cited very frequently in some works; however, all of the references to the *Filioque* in Elipandus of Toledo, Álbaro of Córdoba, and Samson of Córdoba are not associated with him<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> SMARAGDUS, *Epistola XIX, ad Leonem III Papam, a Zmaragdo abbate edita* (anno 809) [Ex Mansi Concil. Collect.] (PL 98, 923-929) and RATRAMNUS of Corbie in his *Contra Graecorum opposita* (PL 121, 225-346), specifically at: *id est a me procedit, quia sicut sunt unius substantiae Pater et Filius, sic et de utroque procedendo Spiritus sanctus accepit consubstantialitatis existentiam*, I, III (PL 121, 229), in many places has the *Filioque* and the *Probatum Spiritum sanctum ex Patre Filioque procedere*, I, III (PL 121, 229). They are in the context of refuting the Trinitarian errors of Arius. Long section from the Gospel of John and other scripture, *Liber Primus*, chapters, 3-7 (PL 121, 229-242); chapter 8 on Gospels and Councils, 242-244, Constantinople I; *Liber Secundus*, chapter 1, *Comprobatur ex Patribus Spiritum sanctum a Filio procedere*; chapter 3, 230ff. *Testimonia ex Athanasio et Gregorio Nazianzeno* (PL 121, 247-253); *Ex Ambrosio* (PL 121, 253-259); extensive section on Augustine (PL 121, 273-294). Insightful commentary is in SIECIENSKI, *The Filioque*, 91-109.

<sup>57</sup> ELIPANDUS of Toledo, Archbishop of Toledo, (25 July 717 – c. 800) — *Elipandi Opera*, Tomvs I, *quod est Spiritus Sanctus, a Patre Filioque procedit. Si ita est accipiendum ut tua insania delerat, ergo | ipse Paulus est Spiritus Sanctus, de quo alibi dicit: Spiritus Domini ferebatur super aquas. Si Paulus est, ut asseris, persona Spiritus Sancti, que a Patre Filioque procedit*, in: (I) *Epistola (M)igetio Eretico Directa*, Epistola I, 5, 132-136, 269. CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 252-257. We know nothing of the heretic Migecius other than what is in the letter. ÁLBARO of Córdoba (c. 800 – c. 863) (VIII) *Item Epistola Speraindei Albaro Directa*. CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 269-274. Letter eight was to Abbot Esperaindero who was his teacher: *Absit, quoniam blasfemia Spiritus Sancti non remittetur. Quomodo ergo duo ligna coniuncta missa in fornace ignis et de duobus lignis flamma procedit | inseparabilis, sic de Patris et Filii uirtute processit Spiritus Sanctus (...)* *Sic Pater in Filio et Filius in Patre, Spiritus autem Sanctus ex Patre et Filio procedit, deitatis uirtus et unitas Trinitatis. Finit*. Tomvs I, Epistola, VIII, 3, 140-144, 170-172, 503-505. SAMSON of Córdoba (810-890), *Samsonis Apologeticum Contra Perfidos, Samsonis, Apologeticum I. De Spirito Sancto Quod Deus sit et Ex Patre Procedat et Filio: sed a Patre et Filio procedit*, IIII, I, 3, 554-555, Tomvs II, 956. CODOÑER, *La Hispania Visigótica y Mozárabe*, 288-290, all of them are in Juan GIL (ed.), *Scriptores Mozarabici Saeculi VIII-XI*. (CCCM LXV A, B), *Scriptores*



## 10. CONCLUSION

The *Filioque* is present in some of Isidore's most important works, the most prominent being the *Etymologiae*. These were read far and wide within Hispania and externally. The early Carolingian apologists for the *Filioque*, Alcuin and Theodulf included some Isidorean works in their defense of the *Filioque* to Charlemagne. A complete search of their use as regards the Creed and the *Filioque* in the Middle Ages is pending, it is beyond the intentions of this brief article. Even though we may not be able to account for everyone who read them, we can be sure that many did so in view of their ubiquitous presence. Those instructed on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit were taught the *Filioque* in the works intended for clergy formation and ministry. The disputed letter of Isidore *Epistola VI. Isidori Claudio Duci* is defended in this study as not spurious, the reasons for doubting it have no merit. Its discussion, therefore, of the *Filioque* has a significant place in Isidore's promotion of the double procession. Likewise, the *Historia Gothorum* holds an equally crucial place, there Isidore confirmed that the *Filioque* was introduced for the first time into the Creed by the bishops and Reccared gathered at the Third Council of Toledo (589). The stated goal was to eradicate Arianism permanently. The manuscript evidence that some have pointed to in order to undermine Toledo III on this point is not unassailable nor is it the last word on this issue. There was no other council more suited for this task than Toledo III. That is why the testimony of Isidore in *Historia Gothorum* is of great importance to identify where the *Filioque* was first introduced into the Creed. Lastly, Isidore, to no one's surprise, was a distinguished protagonist in making the *Filioque* a permanent fixture in the western version of the Creed through key works written by him.

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Mvzarabico, Saecvli VIII-XI. *Tomus II*. Turnhout, Brepols, 2020.