3. The Visigoths In Hispania

A. Formation Of The Visigothic Kingdom Of Toledo

409: Suebi, Vandals and Alans invaded Hispania

415: Visigoths, allies of Rome, expelled them

507: Visigoths were expelled from the south of France by the Franks, and established in Hispania (Battle of Voillé)

554: Capital of the Visigothic kingdom in Toletum (Toledo)
B. The Organisation of the kingdom

• Visigoths were a minority (majority, Hispano-romans) but they were privileged landowners, so they ruled.

• Characteristics of their kingdom:
  – Strong monarchy. Based on 2 institutions:
    • **Aula Regia**: Advisory body of the king. Here the councilors gave some advice to the king about daily life issues to make new laws.
    • **Councils of Toledo**: Assemblies convoked by the king to receive advice from the most important people of the kingdom (nobles and bishops) about specially important issues from time to time.
Control of the entire peninsula: they defeated the Suebi, expelled the Byzantines in the 6th century and stopped the Franks.

Same laws and religion for their kingdom: King Liuvigild allowed mixed marriages (between Visigoths and Hispano-romans), king Reccared converted Visigoths to the religion of Hispano-romans (Catholicism) and king Recceswinth established the same book of law for the kingdom (Liber iudiciorum).

In 711 a Muslim army defeated the last Visigothic king, Roderic, and conquered Hispania (Al-Andalus).
VISIGOOTHIC CULTURE

- Rural world. Clergy preserved culture in monasteries.
- Before converting to Catholicism Visigoths were Arians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catholicism</th>
<th>Arianism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They thought Jesus was God who had come to Earth to save humanity (and also the son of God)</td>
<td>They thought Jesus Christ was not God, but only the son of God, just a very important human who had saved humanity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Saint Isidore of Seville**: Member of the Church and the most important intellectual in the Visigothic kingdom in the 7th century. His most important work was *Etymologiae*, one of the first dictionaries or encyclopedias that influenced a lot in medieval culture.

• **Latin** was the language of education and culture, learned in monasteries’ schools and written in books.

• **Romance languages** started to appear: Castilian, Catalan, Portuguese... They derived from Latin and incorporated some Germanic words.
VISIGOTHIC ART

• Art was economically supported by the Church, the Nobility and Monarchy.

ARCHITECTURE

• Visigothic churches:
  – Located in rural areas, small buildings with thick walls of stone blocks, not many windows (small windows)
  – Basilica floor plan (sometimes cross plan)
  – Isolated columns and Corinthian capitals
  – Horseshoe arch
  – Examples: San Juan de Baños and San Pedro de la Nave churches

San Juan de Baños (it has a basilical plan)

San Pedro de la Nave (it has a Latin cross plan)
METALWORK

• Visigothic metalwork: influenced by Germanic techniques. Precious metals (silver, gold) and bronze and iron. Precious stones (agate, rock crystal, gems...)
  – Votive crowns, harnesses and brooches, crosses...
  – Example: Treasure of Guarrazar

Eagle brooch of Alovera

Treasure of Guarrazar