

Pseudo-Isidore's second major statement against chorbishops, Ps.-Damasus, J<sup>3</sup> †571, is constructed from top to bottom as an implicit refutation of Hrabanus's arguments. This is perhaps among Pseudo-Isidore's earliest decretal forgeries, on hand already in the interpolated Hispana of Vat. lat. 1341. Most striking is its appropriation of the personality of Pope Damasus, who, as the alleged author of the *Liber pontificalis*, is the very authority whom Hrabanus Maurus invokes to argue that the chorepiscopate had foundations stretching back to Peter the Apostle. Whereas Hrabanus had filled his letter with biblical exhortations to humility, as well as accusations that his reformist opponents were jealous of pontifical glory and prestige, Ps.-Damasus freights his decretal with parallel moral admonitions, these to the pastoral responsibility bishops bear for their well-being of their flock. He spells out in painful detail precisely what Hrabanus has not understood, namely the abolitionist premise that the clergy is bipartite, with apostles or bishops at the top and the rest of the clergy beneath them. He insists that chorbishops lack a foundation in scripture, striking at the heart of Hrabanus Maurus's insistence that the *Liber pontificalis* could be authoritative in this respect<sup>82</sup>.

This entire polemic lends additional interest to our sole A/B representative of Ps.-Leo, B, which we saw above was copied at Fulda by mid-ninth-century scribes alongside other items from the False Decretals against chorbishops. This dossier does not merely bring abolition-

---

82) Ps.-Damasus, J<sup>3</sup> †571, is ed. HINSCHIUS, *Decretales* (as n. 2) p. 509–515: *DE VANA SUPERSTITIONE COREPISCOPORUM VITANDA*; see also the interpolated Hispana, Vat. lat. 1341, fol. 120va–122vb, transcr. Annette GRABOWSKI: [http://www.benedictus.mgh.de/quellen/chga/chga\\_069t.htm](http://www.benedictus.mgh.de/quellen/chga/chga_069t.htm). On pastoral responsibility: *Nam ... quidam episcoporum propter suam quietem eis plebes suas committere non formidant, et ut illicita atque prohibita agant, id est, ea quae solis pontificibus debentur sibi usurpant et ipsi in sua quiete torpent et curam sibi a deo commissam negligunt... Illi namque episcopi, qui talia sibi praesumunt, videntur mihi esse meretricibus similes, que statim ut pariunt infantes suos, aliis nutricibus tradunt educandos, ut suam citius libidinem explere valeant ...* (ed. HINSCHIUS, *Decretales* p. 510). On the bipartite clergy: *... Non amplius quam duos ordines inter discipulos domini esse cognovimus. Unde iste tertius processerit funditus ignoramus et quod ratione caret extirpare necesse est* (ibid., p. 511) *... Si nec episcopi sunt et plus quam presbiteri ambiunt, per quod ostium intrabunt? Cum hi tantum duo ordines in ecclesia leguntur, nec amplius ad pastorale officium aliquod patet ostium per quod pastor intret* (ibid., p. 515). No scriptural or other authoritative foundation: *Nimis ergo eorum institutio inproba, nimis est prava, quia, ut hi de summo sacerdotii ministerio aliquid praesumant omni auctoritate caret, et sacris canonibus invenitur esse contrarium* (ibid. p. 510); *Et illud adhuc restat, quod eorum ordo non habet in divinis litteris auctoritatem ...* (ibid., p. 512).