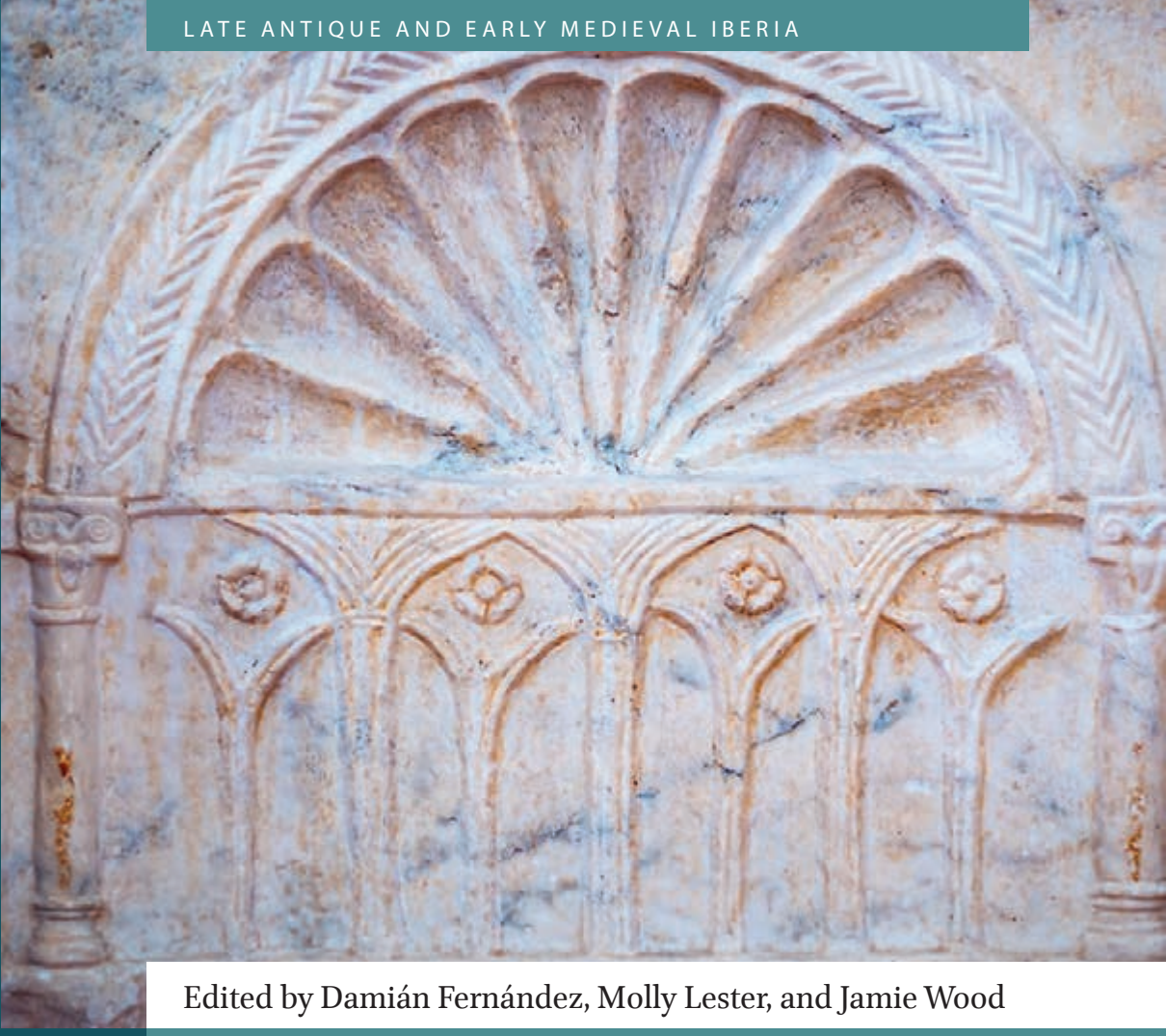
LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL IBERIA



Edited by Damián Fernández, Molly Lester, and Jamie Wood

Rome and Byzantium in the Visigothic Kingdom

Beyond *Imitatio Imperii*

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Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia

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Cover illustration: Roman architectural spolia, reused in the Visigothic period in Mérida. Museo Nacional de Arte Romano, Colección Visigoda.

Cover design: Coördesign, Leiden
Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

ISBN 978 94 6372 641 2
e-ISBN 978 90 4854 465 3 (pdf)
DOI 10.5117/9789463726412
NUR 684

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Abbreviations

Aug. De civ. Dei	Augustine of Hippo, *De civitate Dei*, ed. and trans. by R. W. Dyson, *The City of God Against the Pagans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
Avit. Ep.	Avitus of Vienne, *Epistulae*, ed. by Rudolph Peiper, *Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti Viennensis episcopi opera quae supersunt*. MGH Auctores Antiquissimi, VI.2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1883)
Braul. Ep.	Braulio of Zarazoga, *Epistulae*, ed. by Ruth Miguel Franco and José Carlos Martín-Iglesias, *Braulionis Caesaraugustani Epistulae et Isidori Hispalensis Epistulae ad Braulionem. Braulionis Caesaraugustani Confessio vel professio Iudaeorum civitatis Toletanae*. CCSL 114B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018)
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina
Chron. Muz.	*Chronica Muzarabica*, ed. by Juan Gil, *Chronica Hispana saeculi VIII et IX*. Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis 45 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018)
CILAE	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum Augustae Emeritae. Inscriptiones Hispaniae Latinae* (*CIL II²*), ed. by Antonio Alvar Ezquerra, Jonathan Edmondson, José Luis Ramírez Sádaba, et al. (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2019–), https://cil2digital.web.uah.es/
CIPTP	*Catálogo das inscrições palaeocristãs do território português*, ed. by Maria Manuela Alves Dias and Catarina Isabel Sousa Gaspar (Lisbon: CEC-UL, 2006)
CJ	*Codex Justinianus,* ed. by Paul Krüger, *Corpus iuris civilis*, vol. II, *Codex Iustinianus*. 9th stereotype edition (Berlin: Weidmann, 1914)
Coll. Hisp.	*Collectio Hispana*, ed. by Gonzalo Martínez Díez and Félix Rodríguez, *La colección canónica hispana*, 6 vols (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1966–2002)
Conc.	*Concilios visigóticos e hispano-romanos*, ed. and trans. by José Vives (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1963)
Cons. Caes.	*Consularia Caesaraugustana*, ed. by Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann, *Victoris Tunnunensis Chronicon cum reliquiis ex Consularibus Caesaraugustanis et Iohannis Biclarensis Chronicon*. CCSL 173A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001)

CTh	*Codex Theodosianus*, ed. by Theodor Mommsen and Paul M. Meyer, *Theodosiani libri XVI: cum Constiutionibus Sirmondianis et Leges novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes*, 2 vols (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905)
Fredegar	*Fredegarii Chronicon*, ed. by Bruno Krusch, *Fredegarii et aliorum chronica*. MGH Scriptorum rerum Merovingicarum, II (Hannover: Hahn, 1888)
FW	*Formulae Wisigothicae*, ed. by Juan Gil, *Miscellanea Wisigothicae* (Seville: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 1972)
Gai Inst.	*Gai Institutiones*, ed. by Emil Seckel and Gustav Kuebler (Leipzig: Teubner, 1935)
Greg. Mag. Dial.	Gregory the Great, *Dialogui*, ed. and trans. by Adalbert de Vogüé, *Grégoire le Grand. Dialogues*, 3 vols. Sources Chrétiennes, 251, 260, and 265 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1978–1980)
Greg. Mag. Reg.	Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum*, ed. by Dag Norberg, *S. Gregorii Magni opera. Registrum epistularum*, 2 vols. CCSL 140 and 140A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1982)
Greg. Tur. Decem libri	Gregory of Tours, *Decem libri historiarum*, ed. by Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, *Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis libri historiarum X*. MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum, I.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1951)
Greg. Tur. In gloria confess.	Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria confessorum*, in *Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis Miracula et opera minora*, ed. by Bruno Krusch. MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum, I.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1969)
Greg. Tur. In gloria mart.	Gregory of Tours, *Liber in gloria martyrum*, in *Gregorii Episcopi Turonensis Miracula et opera minora*, ed. by Bruno Krusch. MGH Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum, I.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1969)
HE	*Hispania Epigraphica*
Hist. Wamb. reg.	Julian of Toledo, *Historia Wambae regis*, ed. by Jocelyn N. Hillgarth, B. Bischoff, and Wilhelm Levison, *Iulianus Toletanus. Opera I. Prognosticon futuri saeculi libri tres. Apologeticum de tribus capitulis. De comprobatione sextae aetatis. Historia Wambae regis. Epistula ad Modoenum*. CCSL 115 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976)

Hyd.	Hydatius, *Chronicon*, ed. and trans. by R. W. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana: Two Contemporary Accounts of the Final Years of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)
ICERV	*Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, ed. by José Vives, 2nd ed. (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1969)
Ildef. De viris	Ildefonsus of Toledo, *De viris illustribus*, ed. by Valeriano Yarza Urquiola and Carmen Codoñer, *Ildefonsi Toletani De virginitate Sanctae Mariae, De cognitione baptismi, De itinere deserti, De viris illustribus*. CCSL 114A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007)
Ioh. Bicl.	John of Biclarum, *Chronicon*, ed. by Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann, *Victoris Tunnunensis Chronicon cum reliquiis ex Consularibus Caesaraugustanis et Iohannis Biclarensis Chronicon*. CCSL 173A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001)
Isid. De eccl.	Isidore of Seville, *De ecclesiasticis officis*, ed. by Christopher M. Lawson, *Sancti Isidori episcopi Hispalensis De ecclesiasticis officiis*. CCSL 113 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989)
Isid. De viris	Isidore of Seville, *De viris illustribus*, ed. by Carmen Codoñer Merino, *El 'De viris illustribus' de Isidoro de Sevilla* (Salamanca: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto 'Antonio de Nebrija', Colegio Trilingüe de la Universidad, 1964)
Isid. Etym.	Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, ed. by W. M. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis episcopi Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911)
Isid. Hist. Goth.	Isidore of Seville, *Historia Gothorum*, ed. by Cristóbal Rodríguez Alonso, *Las historias de los godos, vándalos y suevos de Isidoro de Sevilla. Estudio, edición crítica y traducción* (León: Centro de Estudios e Investigaciones 'San Isidoro', 1965)
Isid. Sent.	Isidore of Seville, *Sententiae*, ed. by Pierre Cazier, *Isidorus Hispalensis Sententiae*. CCSL 111 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998)
LI	*Liber Iudiciorum* or *Lex Visigothorum*, ed. by Karl Zeumer, *Leges Visigothorum*. MGH Leges nationum Germanicarum, I (Hannover: Hahn, 1902)

Lib. Const.	*Liber Constitutionum*, ed. by Ludwig Rudolf von Salis, *Leges Burgundionum*. MGH Leges nationum Germanicarum, II.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1892)
LRV	*Lex Romana Visigothorum*, ed. by Gustav Haenel (Leipzig: Teubner, 1849)
Mart. De trina	Martin of Braga, *De trina mersione*, ed. by Claude W. Barlow, *Martini episcopi Bracarensis opera omnia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
Nov. Just.	*Novellae Justiniani*, ed. by Rudolf Schöll and Wilhelm Kroll, *Corpus iuris civilis*, vol. 3, *Novellae*. 4th stereotype edition (Berlin: Weidmann, 1912)
Oros. Hist.	Orosius, *Historiae adversus paganos*, ed. and trans. by Marie-Pierre Arnaud-Lindet, *Orose. Histoires contre les Païens*, 3 vols. Collection des universités de France. Série latine, 291, 296, and 297 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1990–1991)
PH	*Pasionario Hispánico: introducción, edición crítica y traducción*, ed. and trans. by Pilar Riesco Chueca (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, Secretaría de Publicaciones, 1995)
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus. Series latina*, ed. by J. P. Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1844–1865)
Proc. Bell.	Procopius, *Bella*, ed. by Jakob Haury, rev. by Gerhard Wirth, *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, 2 vols (Leipzig: Teubner, 1962–1963)
Prud. Peri.	Prudentius, *Peristephanon*, ed. by Maurice P. Cunningham, *Aurelii Prudentii Clementis Carmina*. CCSL 126 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966)
Sid. Apol. Carm.	Sidonius Apollinaris, *Carmina*, ed. by André Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire. Poèmes*. Collection des universités de France. Série latine, 161 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1960)
Sid. Apol. Ep.	Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epistulae*, ed. by André Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire. Correspondence*, 2 vols. Collection des universités de France. Série latine, 198 and 199 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1970)
VA	Braulio of Zaragoza, *Vita Aemiliani*, ed. by Ignazio Cazzaniga, 'La Vita di S. Emiliano scritta da Braulione vescovo di Saragozza: edizione critica', in *Bolletino del Comitato per la preparazione della Edizione Nazionale dei Classici Greci e Latini* 3 (1954), pp. 7–44

Val. Ord. quer.	Valerius of Bierzo, *Ordo querimonie prefati discriminis*, ed. by Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, *Valerio del Bierzo. Su persona, su obra* (León: Centro de Estudios e Investigación 'San Isidoro', 2006)
VF	*Vita Fructuosi*, ed. by Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, *La vida de San Fructuoso de Braga. Estudio y edición crítica* (Braga: Empresa do Diário do Minho, 1974)
VSPE	*Vitas sanctorum patrum Emeretensium*, ed. by Antonio Maya Sánchez, CCSL 116 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992)

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Acknowledgements

This book originated at a workshop held at Princeton University on 3–4 May 2019, 'Rome, Byzantium, and the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo: Imitation, Reinvention, or Strategic Adoption?'. We would like to thank the Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity, the Center for Collaborative History, the Program in the Ancient World, and the Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies, all at Princeton University, for their generous support. In particular, we would like to give thanks to Helmut Reimitz for co-ordinating this workshop and to him and Stefan Esders for helping to bring the project to fruition. Northern Illinois University History Department also provided financial support for the production of this volume. Special gratitude must also go to Erin Dailey at Amsterdam University Press for his expert editorial oversight. Erik Goosman of MappaMundi Cartography made an excellent map of the Iberian peninsula, while Sarah Longair traced the map of Mérida in Graham Barrett's chapter from the original. Finally, the anonymous reviewers provided invaluable and constructive feedback.

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Other sites:

1. Ambérieux
2. Carouge
3. San Martín de Asán (?)
4. Haro
5. Vergegio
6. Peña Amaya
7. Castrum Petrense (?)
8. San Juan de Baños
9. San Juan de Hornija
10. Mogarraz
11. Alange
12. Puebla de Sancho Pérez
13. Vallclara

Figure 1: Map of Visigothic Gaul and Spain

Introduction

Damián Fernández, Molly Lester, and Jamie Wood

As western Roman society refashioned itself into multiple 'little Romes' in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, the Visigothic kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo actively preserved and transformed much of the Roman world that preceded them. They were not alone in this, as several other kingdoms, including the eastern Roman empire, explored the legacy of Rome while navigating the social, political, and economic shifts that accompanied the transition to the early medieval period. The 'Romanness' of such kingdoms, as well as what being Roman actually meant in the post-Roman west, frequently plays a pivotal role in debates about the 'transformation' of the Roman world, functioning for some scholars as a key marker of continuity and change across the period.[1]

In post-Roman Iberia and southern Gaul, scholarly debate over the legacy of Rome in the Visigothic kingdom has long grappled with the survival of Roman (or so-called Germanic) identities and practices and with the importation of Roman traditions from other polities. To a large extent, the modern origins of this debate trace back to discussions of the nature of Visigothic institutions, particularly the controversy over the putative Roman or Germanic origins of Visigothic law.[2] Those who stressed the Visigoths' *romanitas* were also particularly interested in Visigothic relations with the empire in the east. As Céline Martin explores in her contribution to this volume, art historians and archaeologists have long spoken of a 'Byzantine imprint' on Iberian evidence, a characterization which scholars eventually extended to political culture as well. In the twentieth century, the political and diplomatic policies of the Francoist regime strongly shaped Spanish scholarly insistence on Iberian uniqueness within the western

1 Some notable recent contributions to this debate from different perspectives are Conant 2012; Arnold 2014; Pohl, 2014; Pohl, Gantner, Grifoni, and Pollheimer-Mohaupt 2018; Kaldellis 2019; Fafinski 2021; Papadopoulos 2021.

2 Some fundamental works are Zeumer 1898a, 1898b, 1899a, 1899b, 1899c, and 1901; Torres López 1926; Sánchez Albornoz 1942; D'Ors 1960; King 1972; Alvarado Planas 1997.

Fernández, D., Lester, M. & Wood, J. (eds.), *Rome and Byzantium in the Visigothic Kingdom: Beyond* Imitatio Imperii. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2023
DOI: 10.5117/9789463726412_INTRO

Mediterranean and on the markedly 'imperial' influences on Visigothic art, culture, and institutions.[3] Outside of Spain, many Anglophone scholars argued for a strong imperial presence within the Iberian peninsula as well, such as P. D. King's statement that there are 'plenty of examples [...] of the constant Byzantine influence in practically every walk of Visigothic life'.[4] For those advocating for imperial models, however, the source of these models was far less clear, and scholars debated whether the Visigoths drew on the late Roman empire,[5] the Byzantine political centre of Constantinople,[6] the 'East' more generally,[7] or closer Byzantine societies such as Ravenna, southern Iberia, or northern Africa.[8]

In particular, the relationship between the Visigothic kingdom and the Byzantine empire has been the subject of much recent work.[9] The Byzantine empire was certainly a rival for the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo, and Byzantine presence in southern Iberia led to tension, and even conflict, between the two states. Yet the relationship between Toledo and Constantinople was one of exchange and dialogue as well as conflict. Numerous studies have suggested that, over the sixth and seventh centuries, eastern Roman imperial practices and ideas were adopted in the Visigothic kingdom, a process sometimes referred to in scholarly literature as *imitatio imperii*. Michael McCormick's influential *Eternal Victory*, for instance, argued that some rituals of military victory in Toledo were modelled after Byzantine political ceremonies.[10] Others have suggested that Visigothic kings' reforms of the Visigothic monarchy were in conversation with late Roman and Byzantine emperorship,[11] and several scholars have argued that Toledo became a smaller version of Constantinople in its topography and its conception as a capital city.[12] Studies of the intellectual, religious, and material culture of the Iberian peninsula have also emphasized the strong cultural and economic ties that bound Hispania to Byzantine territories, especially Africa, as well as the impact of Byzantine religious debates

3 Linehan 1993; Salvatierra Cuenca 2015, 250–52; Moreno 2019.

4 King 1972, 12, n. 6.

5 Claude 1971.

6 Stroheker 1963.

7 García Moreno 1972.

8 See Céline Martin's chapter in this volume.

9 Vallejo Girvés 1993; Arrese 2002; Pérez Martín and Bádenas de la Peña 2004; Vallejo Girvés 2012.

10 McCormick 1986, 297–327.

11 Hillgarth 1966; Díaz and Valverde 2000; Valverde Castro 2000, 181–95; García Moreno 2008, 81–95.

12 Velázquez and Ripoll 2000; Martin 2003, 205–68.

on Iberian ecclesiastics.[13] Finally, some have suggested that Visigothic anti-Judaism in the seventh century was related to a desire to imperialize the monarchy or even to emulate the anti-Jewish policies of Byzantine emperors such as Heraclius.[14]

As suggested by recent characterizations of Visigothic Iberia as imperial or 'Byzantinizing',[15] however, scholars must continue to question and refine their assumptions about the nature of Visigothic engagement with Rome more broadly and with Byzantium in particular. As a case in point, the popular characterization of Visigothic practices as *imitatio imperii* risks conceptually simplifying a dynamic process of exchange. The idea of 'imitation' can lead to misrepresenting people of post-imperial Iberia as passive recipients of Byzantine norms, and many features of Visigothic cultural and political life as derivative mirror images of Byzantine models. Such a conceptualization of the relationship could lead to applying outdated 'Romanization' models to the post-Roman kingdoms, with Constantinople replacing Rome as the imperial centre acting upon a range of provincial peripheries. Such a position is incompatible with the historical evidence, and recent scholarship has increasingly begun to demonstrate that while individual and collective actors certainly adopted Roman and Byzantine ideas and practices, they did so via a process of intelligent, creative, and strategic adaptation.[16] Iberian actors were not simply preserving or importing imperial traditions and legacies: they resignified these ideas and practices within contexts specific to Visigothic society. In other words, Visigothic customs were not an uncritical adoption and *imitatio* of contemporary Roman models (an 'acculturation' model), but unique interpretations of a common pool of symbols, practices, and institutions that formed the legacy of Rome.

We must also be wary of oversimplifying what was 'Roman' about the Roman models for Visigothic kingdoms. As mentioned above and explored more fully in Martin's contribution, scholars have historically considered multiple Romes when searching for origins and models of imperializing tendencies. Although 'Rome' could certainly relate to the contemporary eastern Roman empire or to the Roman empire of the past, it could also refer to various parts of the eastern empire outside of the Constantinopolitan centre.[17] Nor was Rome exclusively associated with empire in the early medieval world: the city of Rome and the

13 Herrin 1986, 229–33; Collins 2004, 147–61; Castillo Maldonado 2005; Vizcaíno Sánchez 2007; Reynolds 2010; García Vargas 2011; Fernández Fernández 2014; Ihnat 2019.

14 Gil 1977; Saitta 1995, 35–40; Esders 2018, 109–15.

15 Arce 2004; Koch 2008; Arce 2020.

16 Wood 2012; Walker 2016; Fernández 2017; Esders 2019.

17 García Moreno 2002, 2011.

Roman popes, both past and present, had their own unique relationships with the Iberian peninsula.[18] And ultimately, characterizing Visigothic practices as *imitatio imperii* leans towards presenting Rome as outside of or even oppositional to Visigothic culture. We must recall the deep history of Visigothic relations with Romans, and that a range of different 'Gothic' groups had been part of the Roman world for several centuries.[19] Exchange long predated the foundation of the kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo. Although we should be wary of over-Romanizing the Visigoths and indirectly implying Roman cultural superiority, any discussion of *imitatio imperii* must acknowledge the rich web of traditions and customs that were already present in Gothic societies, including the long-established Roman provincial traditions of Gaul and Spain.

The essays in this volume seek to explore engagement with Rome and Byzantium in the Visigothic kingdoms without falling back onto *imitatio imperii* as a blanket explanatory model. Instead, the authors emphasize how Iberian and Gallic actors continually resignified and redefined Rome over the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries and uncover the multiple meanings and uses of Rome that circulated in the Visigothic worlds. Authors have taken a variety of approaches and draw on a wide range of sources, from the legal and canonical sources that have long been the staple of Visigothic studies to under-appreciated texts such as the *passiones* and material artefacts that speak to everyday and elite interactions with the Byzantine world. We do not claim to be comprehensive in our coverage, but we have tried to be inclusive as part of an effort to capture the rich variety of Visigothic-era engagement with Rome and Byzantium.

Several authors explore how Visigothic rulers used and interpreted Roman customs and legacies. Beginning in the Visigothic kingdom of Toulouse, Ian Wood and Merle Eisenberg investigate how Visigothic kings engaged with the traditions and practices of the fifth-century western Roman empire. Long before the reign of Leovigild, whom traditional historiography considered as the 'imperializing' king par excellence, Ian Wood traces developments in court etiquette in Toulouse that were rooted in contemporary Roman practices, focusing in particular on resonances between Roman (imperial, provincial, military) and Visigothic royal banqueting. Moving to the early sixth century, Eisenberg problematizes scholarly categorizations of 'imitative' and 'pseudo-imperial' Visigothic coinage, arguing that despite formal similarities in numismatic imagery, Alaric II's minting and monetary reforms

18 Madoz 1951; García Moreno 2002; Deswarte 2010; Ferreiro 2020; Martín-Iglesias, Díaz, and Vallejo Girvés 2020.

19 Heather 1996; Berndt and Steinacher 2014; Kulikowski 2015; Delaplace 2015.

were due to internal transformations of the Visigothic state in southern Gaul rather than to a basic desire to mimic Roman practice.

Royally driven engagement with Roman and Byzantine traditions continued in the sixth- and seventh-century kingdom of Toledo. By comparing imperial and Visigothic laws prescribing the punishment of exile, Margarita Vallejo Girvés suggests that Visigothic reliance on Roman law in royal legislation did not preclude selective adaptation and even abandonment of Roman punitive practices to adapt law to a new economy of punishment. Such adaptability also characterizes elite consumption of Byzantine material culture, and in her exploration of the incorporation of a deluxe (perhaps even imperial) Byzantine cross into King Recceswinth's famous votive crown, Cecily Hilsdale demonstrates how the original meaning and usage of the cross was simultaneously activated and redefined in its new setting. Damián Fernández re-evaluates sixth- and seventh-century applications of Roman and Byzantine notions of capitalhood in the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo. He argues that terminological similarities in references to Rome, Constantinople, and Toledo as *urbes regiae* in Visigothic sources does not mean that Visigothic actors had the same understanding of capitalhood as their Roman predecessors and contemporaries. Instead, they relied on Roman terminology for specifically local purposes.

Iberian churchmen, of course, availed themselves of Roman legacies as well, and the contributions of Molly Lester, Erica Buchberger, and David Addison focus on ecclesiastical and clerical actors who plumbed the Roman past—and present—to articulate and address contemporary concerns. Turning to the Christian liturgy, Lester examines Iberian adoptions of eastern and Roman liturgical practices to unpack when and why bishops proudly identified Roman antecedents for their rites as well as when they obscured them. Erica Buchberger explores how Isidore of Seville maintained and massaged classical Roman ethnic terms and categories to apply the Roman past to his post-Roman reality. David Addison turns to the Visigothic-era *passiones* of Roman martyrs to demonstrate how early medieval hagiographers recreated an urban Roman and Christian past. By making this past come alive for Visigothic audiences, Addison reminds us that Roman-era martyrdoms remained a living memory long after they had ceased in practice, reshaping how that past was viewed by contemporaries.

Connections with the Roman past and the Byzantine present were not restricted to royal and episcopal elites—they also found expression in multiple local and regional contexts. Hagiography has long been recognized for its potential to unmask the workings of the small worlds of Late Antiquity, and Santiago Castellanos advises us to look beyond explicit Visigothic

recognition of Roman heritage to understand how Roman institutions and social structures implicitly shaped Iberian saints' worlds. While Castellanos explores Romanness (or lack thereof) in the lives of sixth- and seventh-century saints, Jamie Wood and Graham Barrett encourage us to move beyond the centre, focusing on urban elites and humble consumers. Barrett reappraises evidence associated with the bishopric of Mérida and its interactions with the Visigothic kings in the late sixth century, concluding that conflicts that have long been viewed as confessional in origin may be better interpreted as the result of late Roman-style factional politics within the city. Jamie Wood deploys ceramics, inscriptions, and hagiography to explore connections between the southwestern cities of Mérida and Mértola and the Byzantine worlds of North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean, arguing that we must look to local and regional elites if we are to understand the mechanics of interactivity.

Finally, Iberian adaptation and resignification of Roman legacies did not end with the collapse of the Visigothic monarchy in the early eighth century. While later Arabic and Latin textual accounts respectively advocated for sharp breaks and strong continuities with the Roman and Visigothic past, Ann Christys uses early Andalusi Arabic coins and lead seals to explore how Arab and Berber actors selectively mobilized eastern Roman minting practices. Like the Visigoths before them, Andalusi elites navigated several Roman models, including the Byzantine East, the formerly Byzantine North Africa, and Visigothic Hispania itself.

Individually, the essays make significant interventions, but the volume as a whole makes three major contributions. First, it builds on recent scholarship to disaggregate further what 'Rome' could mean in a Visigothic context. Instead of concentrating on one particular model of Romanness, the essays present multiple temporally and spatially diverse visions of Romanness that Iberian actors used to understand, mould, and influence their social worlds. Some contributions explore Visigothic engagement with the Roman past, showing how classical and imperial memories and concepts were put to work in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries. Others consider Visigothic relationships with contemporary Roman polities, examining how practices, materials, and institutions from the fifth-century western empire and the sixth- and seventh-century eastern empire simultaneously evoked their original context and, when recontextualized in Hispania, generated new meanings. In particular, the volume reinforces the idea that Byzantium was not, nor was it regarded as, a homogenous entity identified exclusively with Constantinople. In North Africa, Iberia, and Italy there were western Mediterranean iterations of the Byzantine empire, the inhabitants of which

interacted with the people of Visigothic Hispania across the period. And finally, the city of Rome exerted a strong conceptual and ecclesiastical presence in the early medieval world, and Visigothic Christians and rulers continually had to negotiate their relationship to the Apostolic See. Taken together, the chapters remind us that the Visigoths had before them a constellation of 'Romes' across the Mediterranean and that such imperial, provincial, and local reimaginings of Roman past and Byzantine present were not mutually exclusive of one another.

Second, the volume suggests that unpacking the concept of *imitatio imperii* requires not only a disaggregation of 'Rome' as a source for and a product of resignification, but also a disaggregation of 'Visigothic Hispania'. Studies of Visigothic Hispania frequently focus on royal and ecclesiastical centres and authorities. Of course, kings and bishops are the best documented actors in Visigothic history: they have certainly not been ignored in past scholarship, and several essays in this volume speak to ongoing royal and episcopal engagement with Roman traditions and legacies. But like the Byzantine empire, the Visigothic kingdom was not monolithic. The fifth-century kingdom of Toulouse differed in many ways from the sixth- and seventh-century kingdom in Iberia. Moreover, Visigothic scholarship is increasingly interested in individual bishops and local elites outside of Toledo, who had their own agendas and contexts that did not necessarily align with political and ecclesiastical centres. Outside of capital cities and powerful urban centres such as Toledo, Braga, and Mérida, actors in what are often considered peripheral areas interacted with the Roman and Byzantine worlds, their day-to-day contacts inscribed in saints' lives and material culture. By exploring areas that were not under direct Visigothic control and the experiences of local and regional elites, what begins to emerge are a multiplicity of centres and peripheries operating at a variety of levels across the peninsula.

Finally, the essays illustrate the wide variety of mediums through which Visigothic engagement with the Roman and Byzantine worlds took place. As indicated above, scholarship has traditionally prioritized examining *imitatio imperii* in political and material terms, and several authors in this collection of essays take up these threads from a variety of perspectives. From practices such as banqueting, lawgiving, the minting of coinage, and rhetorics of capitalhood, many essays look at royal reuse of the Roman-Byzantine legacy and its present instantiations. This focus on kings carries through in examinations of material culture, particularly the material production of votive crowns and coins. But material culture went beyond the royal centre, and noble production of seals in post-Visigothic Iberia and

local trade can demonstrate how more lowly actors in provincial contexts interacted materially with the worlds of Rome and Byzantium. Finally, many essays move beyond political and material considerations. From religious ideologies and practices to conceptions of ethnicity and the underlying social structures of the Roman world, the chapters in this volume show that the engagement with 'Rome' was far more diverse and complex than models based on concepts of influence or imitation allow.

The mediums of engaging with Romanness, and the explicit uses as well as eloquent silences, reveal that Gallic and Iberian actors did not have a fixed—or necessarily a very clear—idea about what 'Rome' was in the past or the present, or about the uses to which it could be put. If anything, the contributions to this volume show that they may have had multiple, coexisting, and highly contingent notions of 'Rome'. It should be clear that this volume was not designed to find the 'true' Rome, or to discover a single Visigothic view, conceptualization, or experience of the late antique or Byzantine empire. The chapters reveal the plurality and flexibility of the concept of *romanitas*, and the production of new discourses in rapidly changing contexts in southern Gaul and Hispania across the course of three centuries.

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1 Visigothic Spain and Byzantium

The Story of a Special (Historiographical) Relationship

Céline Martin

Abstract

Most late twentieth-century studies dealing with the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo mentioned its alleged imitation of Byzantium as its hallmark, singling it out from the rest of barbarian Europe. This was not a general *imitatio imperii*, but an imitation of the only Roman empire contemporary to the Gothic polity: eastern, Greek-speaking, exotic Byzantium. This chapter discusses the origins of Byzantinism in Visigothic historiography, its occasionally scant grounding in the evidence, and the ideological functions it fulfilled for historians. In the twentieth century, the Byzantinist paradigm produced well-arranged yet often contradictory narratives of one of the longest-lived post-Roman kingdoms in the West. Only lately has political and scientific globalization dispelled both the illusion of the uniqueness of Spanish features and the necessity for grounding it in Byzantinism.

Keywords: historiography; Byzantium; late antique archaeology; ritual; Mediterranean; Germanism; Romanism; National Catholicism; Marxism

In one of his last articles, the late Gilbert Dagron pointed out how Byzantium was purposely 'forgotten' in historiographical constructions of Europe stretching back to the First World War and continuing through the *Annales* school. The racist myth that Europe was produced by a merger between an exhausted Romanity and a young and vital Germanity was then replaced by the idea that Europe had emerged out of the mosaic of peoples in Charlemagne's empire. Significantly, in this new narrative, Charlemagne's Europe had moved to the north, away from the Mediterranean area, and Byzantium

Fernández, D., Lester, M. & Wood, J. (eds.), *Rome and Byzantium in the Visigothic Kingdom: Beyond* Imitatio Imperii. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2023
DOI: 10.5117/9789463726412_CH01

had no further role in European memory.[1] This historiographical perspective left aside not only Mediterranean Byzantium, but also the Iberian peninsula, which had entered the European community fairly late, just as, centuries before, it stood on the margins of the Carolingian sphere of influence. It should hardly be surprising that, whereas the rest of Europe built a collective memory by deliberately forgetting Byzantium and the Mediterranean, Spain used Byzantium to work out parts of its own memory.

Still, such diverging paths do not account enough for the fact that, for several decades, many historians of the Visigothic kingdom were seemingly so fascinated by the Byzantine empire that they strove to uncover similarities between both polities, or even the imitation of the latter by the former—an obsession we will call 'Byzantinism'.[2] This term evokes the 'neogothicism' displayed by early medieval authors of Christian Iberia who were eager to rely on their alleged Visigothic roots in order to legitimize new political constructions. The concept of 'Byzantinism' also stresses the label itself; when modern historians emphasize the similarities between Visigothic Spain and its contemporary, the eastern Roman empire, they almost always speak of 'Byzantium', however debatable that terminology is.[3] Even if scholars frequently use the term 'Byzantine' for the sixth and seventh centuries, it is more accurate to refer to the 'proto-Byzantine' period or the eastern Roman empire before Leo III's accession in 717.[4] This distinction avoids an otherwise deceptively stable representation of the eastern Roman empire.[5] Moreover, in the work of some historians, the comparison between the Visigothic kingdom and 'Byzantium' added overtones of exoticism, refinement, and independence from the papacy, in striking contrast with the northern, barbarian Frankish kingdom (which nonetheless outlived its Visigothic neighbour and ended up creating an empire of its own type, closely bound to the pope.) Given its problematic nature, where did this paradigm come from, and what was its enduring appeal? In the following pages, I will recover the origins of what we could call the historiographical vogue for Byzantinism, and what functions it

1 Dagron 2007, 150–54.

2 In López Pérez's words, in art history at least, Byzantinism can be seen as an explanatory model very close to 'historiographical legendarism' (López Pérez 2012, 213).

3 Arce 2004, 101.

4 Haldon 1990, 1; Ducellier 1988, 15.

5 See McCormick 1987, 217: 'In part, Byzantium's ideology of continuity combined with historians' love of their subject to foster the assumption of Byzantine civilization's unchanging superiority over the contemporary West at all times and in all respects, with the further implication that medieval westerners shared that appreciation.'

may have fulfilled among the historians of the second half of the twentieth century.

I will start with an overview of the most important reference works on the Visigothic kingdom available to scholars in the last three decades of the last century: Thompson's *The Goths in Spain*, Claude's *Adel, Kirche und Königtum*, Orlandis's *Historia de España. España visigótica*, Collins's *Early Medieval Spain*, and García Moreno's *Historia de España visigoda*.[6] As indicated in its title, Edward Thompson's book recounted the history of the Gothic dominance over the Iberian peninsula. Although a historian with a Marxist background, his scope was less social than ethnic: the bulk of his narrative rests on the relations between a small Gothic elite and the Roman population. In his view, a policy of 'separation of nationalities' prevailed under Leovigild which allowed for a 'joint administration' of the kingdom.[7] This separation had disappeared by the end of the sixth century, when the Goths experienced a gradual Romanization and were nearly absorbed by Romans.[8] The reforms of the mid-seventh century under Chindaswinth and Recceswinth, however, 'almost completely ousted' the Romans from the government of the realm, which finally stayed in Gothic hands.[9] Although almost devoid of bibliographical references and making the controversial choice to rely only on primary (largely legal) sources,[10] Thompson's book did rely on secondary literature especially for archaeology, culture, and religion—areas in which he had little interest.[11] Given the authority he was to have on Visigothic studies for the rest of the century, it is important to stress this point. Thompson dealt only indirectly with the 'involved question of Byzantine influence on the Gothic kingdom', as put by a seemingly sceptical Byzantinist colleague.[12] With regard to archaeology, Thompson relied mainly on the work of Hans Zeiss[13] and argued that Germanic elements had been replaced by 'peculiarly Spanish varieties of what had once been the tastes and styles of Byzantium' in the material culture of the seventh century.[14] In the field of art history, he

6 Thompson 1969; Claude 1971; Orlandis 1977; Collins 1983; García Moreno 1989.

7 Thompson 1969, 312.

8 Thompson 1969, 109.

9 Thompson 1969, 313.

10 As noted by reviewers at the time. See Hillgarth 1973; Orlandis 1969, whose furious review rested on Thompson's alleged disregard of Spanish scholarship; yet an overview of his footnotes mostly reveals Thompson's lack of interest for bibliography in general.

11 Markus 2001, 691.

12 Walter 1970.

13 Zeiss 1934.

14 Thompson 1969, 152.

followed Helmut Schlunk in pointing out that some rural Hispanic churches resembled the North African version of Byzantine architectural style.[15] In the field of numismatics, Thompson followed Díaz y Díaz and Hillgarth in noting the Byzantine nature of the legend *Regi a Deo vita* in a coin minted under Hermenegild.[16] Most strikingly, he described without any textual support Leovigild's reform of royal ceremonial as an 'introduction of Byzantine ceremonial'.[17] In this claim, Thompson was probably following Stroheker's work,[18] even if he did not refer to him explicitly, since the only evidence that might suggest such reform (a much discussed passage of Isidore of Seville) does not give any support to the idea of a Byzantine imitation.[19]

In 1971, two years after Thompson's monograph, the German historian Dietrich Claude published his *Adel, Kirche und Königtum im Westgotenreich*. Claude did not intend to uncover Byzantine connections in the political and social history of the Visigothic kingdom, despite his familiarity with Byzantine sources.[20] He advanced the idea of an imperialization of the Gothic monarchy, but only as an inward-looking phenomenon: in his view, the imperial ritualization of the monarchy was meant to be displayed *inside* the kingdom, not outwardly to Francia or the empire itself.[21] Even if Claude admitted that King Erwig, possibly the son of a Byzantine exile, could have exerted some limited eastern Roman influence towards the end of the seventh century,[22] he argued that the main model for the kingdom of Toledo was the late Roman empire, not the contemporary eastern Roman polity.[23] In his mind, the imperial imprint on Visigothic Spain was so strong that the kingdom 'appeared, after Byzantium, as the most centralised state formation in the early Middle Ages, a fact which should primarily be ascribed

15 Thompson 1969, 331. Cf. Schlunk 1945, 203.

16 Thompson 1969, 68. Cf. Díaz y Díaz 1958; Hillgarth 1966.

17 Thompson 1969, 109.

18 Stroheker 1965, 230. See below.

19 'Aerarium quoque ac fiscum primus iste auxit, primusque inter suos regali ueste opertus solio resedit, nam ante eum et consessus et habitus communi ut genti ita ac regis erat' (Isid. Hist. Goth. 51: 'He was the first to increase the treasury and the fisc, and the first to sit on a throne among his peers dressed in royal wear, for before him the seat as well as the garment were common to the people and the king'). On this topic, cf. Arce 2004, 106–7.

20 Claude 1969.

21 Claude 1971, 74–75.

22 Claude 1971, 76 and 125.

23 E.g., in coinage, where he held that the mentions of military victories or the epithets *pius* or *felix* referred to the fourth and fifth centuries, not to contemporary monetary practices (Claude 1971, 71–72).

to the monarchy'.[24] This key idea led Claude to situate the kingdom on a par with Byzantium and therefore to suggest a strong exceptionalism of late antique Hispania within the West. He did not conclude, however, that the Visigothic kingdom followed a Byzantine model.

Unlike Thompson's book, José Orlandis's *Historia de España. España visigótica* (1977) paid close attention to bibliography.[25] An Opus Dei priest and a professor of legal history, Orlandis was one of the major twentieth-century specialists in Visigothic studies. He argued for the existence of strong Byzantine influences in the arts and culture of the Visigothic kingdom as well as in Suevic Gallaecia.[26] He believed that King Leovigild had deliberately imitated a range of Byzantine aspects beyond the ceremonial,[27] and he concluded that the Iberian peninsula underwent a 'genuine orientalization' in the sixth and seventh centuries.[28] José Orlandis appeared far more convinced than Claude and Thompson that in Visigothic times, the Byzantine imprint on Spain had been decisive.

Such was not the view of Roger Collins, who published in 1983 a reference work on the Visigothic kingdom in English.[29] Contrary to the then popular idea of the 'isolationism' of Visigothic Spain, Collins emphasized the peninsula's deep integration into the Mediterranean world. Rather than a 'Byzantine influence', he detected a 'great continuity' with the late Roman world in chronological terms and with the wider Mediterranean environment in geographical ones.[30] I will come back later to the isolationist position, but for now, it is sufficient to note that it was often associated (paradoxically enough) with the idea of Byzantine influence over late antique Hispania. Conversely, asserting the integration of the Iberian peninsula within the Mediterranean world could undermine the paradigm of Byzantinism.

Finally, in 1989 Luis A. García Moreno published an overview of the sixth and seventh centuries that stands as a historiographical landmark of Visigothic Byzantinism.[31] He argued that during the two centuries of Gothic

24 'Das Westgotenreich erscheint – nächst Byzanz – als die am stärksten zentralisierte frühmittelalterliche Staatsbildung, was in erster Linie auf das Königstum zurückzuführen ist' (Claude 1971, 208).

25 Orlandis 1977.

26 Orlandis 1977, 102 and 207.

27 Orlandis 1977, 104 and 196.

28 Orlandis 1977, 198.

29 Collins 1983.

30 Collins 1983, 90 and 104. Collins had already challenged the 'unfounded belief in Spanish isolationism, especially in the seventh century' as well as the very idea of Byzantine influence in an anterior important publication (Collins 1980, 203–5).

31 García Moreno 1989.

dominance over the Iberian peninsula—that is, from the Ostrogothic period to the end of the seventh century—the monarchy underwent a process of 'imperialization' (a concept already put forward by Claude) which consisted mainly in imitating contemporary Byzantium.[32] García Moreno alleged that the reign of Leovigild, a king literally 'obsessed by the Justinianic model', had been a key milestone in this process.[33] He also traced Byzantine imitation throughout the reigns of Reccared, Sisebut, Chindaswinth, and Recceswinth in the military, administrative, religious, artistic, and architectural fields.

This brief survey of important historical synthesis works is illustrative of different approaches to the Byzantine paradigm in Visigothic studies, although these studies are only a glimpse into the topic. We can gain further insight into the question from the set of publications that led those historians, primarily Thompson, Orlandis, and García Moreno, to identify parallels between the Visigothic kingdom and the Byzantine empire, and, on some occasions, to affirm that the former had deliberately imitated the latter.

Dating back to the discovery of the treasure of Guarrazar in 1858, archaeologists and art historians were the first to draw parallels between both ends of the late antique Mediterranean world. Amador de los Ríos coined the category of 'Latin-Byzantine' in early medieval sculpture to describe the objects from the treasure, and most of these scholars followed him in identifying conspicuous Byzantine features in the Hispanic findings of the period.[34] In the twentieth century, Hans Zeiss, Helmut Schlunk, and Theodor Hauschild continued this trend.[35] These scholars were positive that they recognized a much more marked 'Byzantine' imprint in the peninsula than, for instance, in Merovingian Francia. Nevertheless, as early as 1945, Schlunk warned against simplifications, arguing that such an imprint was most probably connected not to the Justinianic occupation, but rather to a sixth-century influence from Ravenna.[36]

Initially restricted to cultural and art history, Byzantinism subsequently extended to political history. The German historian Karl Friedrich Stroheker provided a strong impetus in that direction in two important articles, both republished in a 1965 book.[37] The first piece, from 1939,[38] presented King

32 García Moreno 1989, 99, 112, 120, 136, 148, 322 and so forth.

33 García Moreno 1989, 322–23.

34 Amador de los Ríos 1861. On all this topic, see Martínez Jiménez, Sastre de Diego, and Tejerizo García 2018, 30–35.

35 Zeiss 1934; Schlunk and Hauschild 1978. See also Hilsdale in this volume.

36 Schlunk 1945.

37 Stroheker 1965.

38 Stroheker 1939, in Stroheker 1965, 134–91.

Leovigild as the genuine creator of a unitary Visigothic state, crediting him, and not his Catholic son Reccared, with having deeply reorganized the kingdom. In Stroheker's narrative, Leovigild entrenched his power by drawing freely on a Justinianic model, associating his sons with the throne, altering the royal ceremonial and monetary types, buying peace from the Byzantines in a proper Byzantine way, and founding a new city, Reccopolis, with the name of his son. In 1963, Stroheker reapproached the subject from a broader perspective and sought to demonstrate how contacts with the Byzantine empire had affected the inner functioning of the Visigothic kingdom.[39] According to this article, Justinian's intervention in Hispania made the direct relationship between both polities possible, with the result that Leovigild's Visigothic political construction relied far more on the Byzantine than on the western Roman model. Byzantine military aggression added another reason for Leovigild's state building, namely a political self-awareness that led him to pursue a political, ethnic, and religious unity similar to that which the eastern imperial efforts strove to achieve.[40]

Stroheker's significant impact on Visigothic studies epitomizes the powerful influence that German academics had in Spanish scholarship since the beginning of the twentieth century, not only in archaeology, but also in legal history and history in general.[41] References to Stroheker's writings are recurrent in all the general surveys mentioned above, as well as in the more specific studies of Barbero, King, or, somewhat later, Díaz, along with many others.[42] However, attributing the success of Byzantinism to one scholar would be an oversimplification. A crucial factor to this success was the condition of the Visigothic historiographical field in the central decades of the twentieth century.

As is well known, European scholarly interest in the early medieval period was often related to modern national claims over the historical heritage of preceding medieval polities.[43] Hence, in contrast with German scholarly interest in *all* of the so-called 'Germanic kingdoms', the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo was predominantly studied by Spanish historians, and the historiography of Visigothic Iberia is intrinsically connected to the

39 Stroheker 1963, in Stroheker 1965.

40 Stroheker 1965, 229–33.

41 In the Visigothic field, the two main figures were Felix Dahn (Dahn 1870 and 1885) and Karl Zeumer (Zeumer 1944, a collection of his articles translated into Spanish published in the review *Neues Archiv* from 1897 to 1900).

42 Barbero 1970, 249–50: Leovigild strove to imitate Justinian not only in political issues, but also in religious ones; King 1972, 11–14; Díaz 1998, 185.

43 The classic reference is Geary 2003. See also Wood 2013.

contemporary history of Spain. Although the history of Byzantinism has deeper roots, a crucial moment for its development within the Spanish national context happened in 1943, when the Francoist regime imposed National Catholicism on university teaching through the University Law.[44] Whether this was forced or not, adhesion to this ideology entailed the endorsing of a narrative which emphasized the construction of political and religious unity. Spain, as expressed by the fascist leader José Antonio Primo de Rivera, was 'a unity of destiny in the universal' ('unidad de destino en lo universal'). In an essentialist fashion typical of the period, Primo de Rivera claimed that the essence of Spain had transcended over the course of the centuries, connecting modern Spain directly with the Visigothic era. Moreover, post-war Spanish historians championed the already deep-rooted idea of Spain's historical uniqueness, a position particularly advanced in the 1940s and 1950s by Menéndez Pidal.[45] The well-known and heated debate between Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz over the essence of Spain did nothing to modify these ideological premises, since they were essentially shared by both authors.[46] The idea of the specificity of Spanish history was then (and to a surprising point, still is) quite widespread, not only in Spain, but also among non-Spanish scholars. As I mentioned above, Dietrich Claude advanced a similar notion of distinctiveness for the Visigothic period.

In addition to Francoist ideology, Spain's international isolation after the Second World War and the defeat of other fascist states heavily conditioned Spanish medieval studies of the 1940s and 1950s. Not only had Menéndez Pidal projected the contemporary situation of Spain onto his vision of medieval Spanish culture,[47] but the nation's diplomatic isolation also engendered a moral need to build a peculiarly Spanish history outside of the general evolution of Europe. In this context, Spanish scholars wholeheartedly embraced the Byzantinist paradigm, which presented Spain as a unique case in the West, comparable only to Byzantium, a distant and prestigious polity totally foreign to Europe. But not only Francoist ideology and diplomatic isolationism worked in favour of Byzantinism. It also fitted well in the Romanist current the Spanish authorities favoured from the 1950s onwards.

44 National Catholicism, a combination of nationalism and Catholicism, is the name usually given to the ideology of the Francoist regime. Cf. De la Rasilla 2018, 271–72.

45 Cf. Bonch Reeves 2016, 26–30.

46 On this debate, which he correctly labelled 'ahistorical', see Díaz 2007.

47 Catalán 1982, 61–62. Cf. Bonch Reeves 2016, 56–57.

Given the strong German influence on Spanish historiography, the Romanism and Germanism dispute strongly shaped Spanish research for decades, especially in the fields of archaeology and legal history, where debates over the prevalence of Germanic or Roman heritage framed historiographical agendas. Whereas the Germanist approach had prevailed until the middle of the twentieth century, in the 1950s the tide began to favour Roman influence. In 1954, archaeologist Julio Martínez Santaolalla, who had been the main representative in Spain of the previously German orientation of research that had focused on 'national' or 'racial' origins, was dismissed from the position of *Comisario General de Excavaciones*. In line with the contemporary 'liberal-catholic' turn in the political sphere, the Francoist regime ceased to support an approach so close to Nazi ideas and promoted existing scholarly interest in the Christian ('paleocristianos') origins of Spain.[48] Pere de Palol, an expert on Christian archaeology and a self-proclaimed Romanist, dominated Spanish archaeology roughly from 1950 to the end of the 1980s. In his view, Spain's Christian substrate had brought about a synthesis of Latin and Germanic elements, which merged into a 'Hispano-Visigothic' profile with strong Byzantine influence.[49] Thus, Palol accepted the Byzantinist paradigm, but contrary to Stroheker and the Germanists, he attributed the main role in the alleged Byzantinization to the first Catholic (i.e., Nicene) king, Reccared, and not to his Arian father Leovigild.

The evolution of legal history or 'institutional history' during the same years followed a similar pattern. At the end of the 1950s, Germanist legal historians were either liberal (Sánchez-Albornoz, who was then living in exile in Argentina) or supporters of the fascist Falange (Torres López), who had become political opponents of the Francoist regime.[50] As mentioned earlier, the intellectual orientation of Franco's dictatorship had departed from Germanism and had begun to promote the (not so new) Romanist notion of a Visigothic kingdom deeply rooted in the Mediterranean world and unified through Catholicism. Prominent Romanists such as Martínez Díez and the above-mentioned Orlandis (who were also members of the clergy) dominated the field of legal history, and the academic tradition they

48 See the illuminating exposition by Tejerizo García (2016), drawing on prior categorization by Olmo (1991) of the Spanish archaeological approaches of the first half of the twentieth century.

49 Tejerizo García 2016, 152–55. See for instance Palol 1955, 125.

50 The opposition of some members of the (highly divided) fascist Falange to Franco's dictatorship began even before the end of the Spanish Civil War and became only broader in the following years, for a variety of reasons.

initiated continued into the twenty-first century.[51] In Martínez Díez's view, the political functioning of the kingdom of Toledo was purely Byzantine, a characterization that explained the seeming peculiarities of the relation between the civil authority and the church. In his interpretation, Chindaswinth's judicial reform of the mid-seventh century that gave bishops an intermediate judicial authority between the count of the city and the king followed Justinian's novel 86 issued nearly a century earlier.[52] Moreover, he argued that the 'subordination' of the general councils of Toledo to the Visigothic king was a distinctly Byzantine feature, possibly adopted through the mediation of Leander of Seville, who had lived in Constantinople for three years before playing a decisive role in Reccared's conversion and presiding over the Third Council of Toledo.[53]

Consciously or unconsciously, ecclesiastical historians of the early 1950s likely associated the situation of the Visigothic church with their own contemporary situation.[54] As pointed out by Díaz,[55] these historians of Visigothic Spain could not ignore the arduous negotiations between Spain and the Holy See to reach a new Concordat, which Franco finally signed in 1953.[56] Facing the post-war papacy's lack of enthusiasm for Franco's regime, Spanish historians may have found some comfort in the memory of the uncompromising attitude that Braulio of Zaragoza and Julian of Toledo had shown toward the popes of the seventh century.[57] The Visigothic church's obedience to Rome seemed tenuous, a fact that post-war Spanish scholars attributed to an essential, ahistorical feature of Spanish Christianity rather than to a characteristic of western Christianity before the Gregorian Reform. Moreover, the conflict between the papacy and the Byzantine empire, the best known early medieval case of a clash between Rome and a state, contributed to explaining that the relative independence of the Visigothic church was properly Byzantine.

José María Lacarra's classical exposition of this topic in 1959 is probably the best example of this approach.[58] Lacarra drew a close parallel between the Visigothic and the Byzantine churches, both of which were in his view equally centralized. In the seventh century, he argued, Byzantium and the

51 García Moreno 1990b.
52 Nov. Just. 86. Cf. Martínez Díez 1960.
53 Martínez Díez 1971.
54 In Linehan's view, such association was deliberate (Linehan 2011, 61).
55 Díaz 2007, 39, n. 168.
56 Payne 1987, 420–21.
57 Braul. Ep. 16; Hillgarth 1976, ix–xi.
58 Lacarra 1960.

Visigothic kingdom were the only polities to hold one single faith, canon and civil law, and liturgy. According to Lacarra, by the end of the Isidorian period, relations between Spanish bishops and the papacy became infrequent, probably because of the papacy's rapprochement to the eastern empire. In response, the Visigothic kingdom closed ranks with the king, even if his supervision was inconveniently closer than that of the pope. The rise of the metropolitan see of Toledo by the time of Julian mirrored the status of Constantinople in the East, the *Nea Roma*. It was not a coincidence that Erwig, the son of a Byzantine exile in Spain, granted the primacy of Toledo.[59] Lacarra adopted Stroheker's idea that Visigothic Byzantinism was to a large extent the result of a political self-awareness induced by Byzantine aggression, but he transposed it to the ecclesiastical field.[60]

A few years later, British scholar Jocelyn Hillgarth followed Lacarra's idea, albeit with important nuances. He detected a strong integration between Visigothic church and state since the conversion to Nicene Christianity in 589, an integration which led to Hispania's growing isolationism and which motivated papal suspicion: 'Toledo had become the Spanish Byzantium, almost the Spanish Rome.'[61] Yet in his view, such an imitation of Byzantium was 'artificial' and short-lived, as Toledo lacked Byzantium's sufficient 'armature' to fight the 'advance of feudalism'.[62] He developed this idea further only many years later, at the end of the lecture he delivered in 1989 at the very official symposium that commemorated the Third Council of Toledo of 589. On that occasion, he claimed that the strong Byzantine influence in Visigothic Hispania could not prevail because of the kingdom's lack of schools to integrate elites.[63]

To sum up, the political context in 1950s Spain as well as the country's diplomatic situation encouraged scholars to present the Visigothic kingdom as a self-contained polity strikingly distinct from its northern neighbours, and where the Roman, Christian substrate was much stronger than the Germanic contribution of the fifth and sixth centuries. From premises quite different from those defended by historians and archaeologists in previous decades, these scholars retained the Byzantinist paradigm that first appeared in a Germanist environment. However, Byzantinism was now in the service of the idea of Spanish

59 Lacarra 1960, 376–79.
60 See above n. 40.
61 Hillgarth 1966, 500.
62 Hillgarth 1966, 500–501.
63 Hillgarth 1991.

history's uniqueness. In contrast to the rest of Europe, which had been significantly influenced by Germanization, the Iberian peninsula had preserved the legacy of the Roman empire so well that its only peer could be another empire, the Byzantine empire, with which Spain shared even its conflictual relationship with the pope. As suggested in Hillgarth's remarks, comparing Spain with Byzantium seemed less audacious and more acceptable than drawing a direct comparison between a former Roman province and Rome itself.

While remaining external to the lingering politically charged Spanish debates over the supposed Germanic or Roman nature of the Visigothic kingdom, scholars outside of Spain usually accepted the paradigm of Visigothic Byzantinism. For example, P. D. King, whose 1972 study on Erwig's version of the Visigothic code stands as a landmark work in Visigothic legal history, agreed with the idea of an 'extreme Byzantine influence upon Visigothic Spain'.[64] Relying mostly on Stroheker and Thompson, King attributed this influence to Justinian's occupation of Spain, with the exception (following Schlunk) of the architectural field.[65] In matters of church and state, King followed Lacarra's views on the existence of a close parallel between the Visigothic kingdom and Byzantium.[66] Yet curiously enough, Byzantine influence was not a key idea of King's book even though he opened his work with a strong assertion of Byzantinism.[67] Instead, he identified different legal influences on Visigothic law of which the Byzantine element was only one among others.[68] One gets the impression that his adherence to Byzantinism was motivated more by respect for other scholars in fields outside of legal history than by genuine conviction.

King's approach mirrored that of many other non-Visigothicists, who frequently applied the Byzantinism paradigm to Iberia without overstressing Byzantine parallels or their uniqueness. In 1963, in a comprehensive study of western *sedes regiae* and capitals of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, Eugen Ewig grouped Toledo into a general thesis on early medieval urban centres, claiming that '[o]n the threshold of the Middle Ages, cities-residences seem to have been more or less exact replicas of the "capitals" of the late Roman empire. The continuity was obvious at Ravenna, but the imperial model exerted an influence in the other germano-latin kingdoms

64 King 1972, 197.

65 King 1972, 197, n. 8.

66 King 1972, 123–24.

67 'There will be plenty of examples in the pages which follow of the constant Byzantine influence in practically every walk of Visigothic life' (King 1972, 12, n. 6).

68 E.g., King 1972, 121.

as well.'[69] In this vein, he asserted that Saints Peter and Paul, the titulature of Toledo's *ecclesia praetoriensis* (which he labelled a 'palatine chapel'), echoed the dedication of Constantinople's Holy Apostles. Ewig's assertion was probably shaped less by evidence and more so by prevailing ideas of Visigothic imitations of Byzantium, as Constantine's Holy Apostles were the Twelve, not Saints Peter and Paul, while the closest, western examples of Toledo's precise titulature were churches in Rome and the Paris basilica erected by Clovis.[70] Finally, Ewig claimed that the primacy that Toledo gained in 683 was 'borrowed from the rights of Constantinople's patriarchate' ('empruntée au droit patriarcal de Constantinople').[71] Despite these statements, Ewig did not accord Visigothic Spain any special kind of Byzantinism in comparison to the rest of the Mediterranean south, and situated Toledo at the same level as Ravenna or Pavia.

A similarly nuanced approach (admittedly with better attention to sources) can be observed twenty years later in Michael McCormick's comprehensive study of triumphal rulership. The chapter he dedicated to Visigothic Spain stressed imperial influence on celebrations of victory and liturgy.[72] More accurately, he identified Visigothic rituals as both a preservation and transformation of the Roman tradition and a conscious borrowing and adaptation of some elements of the contemporary Byzantine ceremony. He explained the latter by the analogous political conditions of 'insecurity' both polities experienced from the lack of a dynastic monarchy (unlike the Franks),[73] and argued that a similar political experience drove historical actors to adopt similar solutions. At the same time, McCormick rejected some insufficiently grounded assertions of Byzantine imitation, such as Leovigild's alleged Byzantinization of ritual.[74] His position can be summarized in his statement '[w]hen legitimacy was in question, Byzantium provided reassurance. This was nowhere truer than in Visigothic Spain.'[75] In the particular field of rituals of rulership, McCormick identified important parallels with Byzantium, sought to explain them, and set those parallels

69 'À l'aube du Moyen Âge, les villes-résidences semblent avoir été les répliques plus ou moins exactes des "capitales" du Bas-Empire. La continuité est évidente à Ravenne, mais le modèle imperial exerçait son influence aussi dans les autres royaumes germano-latins' (Ewig 1963, 70). See Fernández in this volume.

70 Greg. Tur. Decem libri 10.2.43.

71 Ewig 1963, 35.

72 McCormick 1986, 297–327.

73 McCormick 1986, 316.

74 McCormick 1986, 298–300. See above n. 19.

75 McCormick 1986, 393.

within a continuum, but he did not suggest any striking specificity of the Visigothic kingdom in that respect.

Turning back to specifically Visigothic historiography, the political evolution of Spain in the 1970s led to the field's gradual diversification. Not only did the field become more ideologically diverse, but it also included a growing number of scholars from non-peninsular countries.[76] Even before Franco's death in 1975, Marxist historiography surfaced in Spain. In Visigothic studies, Marcelo Vigil and Abilio Barbero led the way with works that offered a new perspective on the transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages in the Iberian peninsula.[77] However, their firm support for the concept of feudalism in Spanish medieval history did not entail a shedding of old narratives. Barbero and Vigil stuck to Byzantinism for a variety of reasons, one of which was possibly their respect for Thompson's work. Furthermore, despite their direct opposition to Sánchez-Albornoz's institutional approach and despite rejecting his arguments for the lack of feudalism in medieval Spain, they did not totally dismiss the deeply rooted idea of Spain's historical singularity. In the field of military organization, they asserted that the Visigothic kingdom had set up a *limes* facing the Byzantine area and had maintained another one, originally Roman, in the north of the peninsula against the 'northern barbarians' (Astures, Cantabri, and Vascones).[78] The Visigoths supposedly improved these *limites* following a Byzantine model, 'not only because of the superiority of [Byzantine] state administration and their prestige of being the heir to Rome, but also due to the precise historical fact that they occupied part of the Iberian peninsula'.[79] Vigil and Barbero essentially relied on the current or past scholarship on Byzantine military organization, especially the works by Haussig,[80] and deemed central to their argument the appearance of *castra* in Visigothic sources, such as Isidore of Seville's *Historia Gothorum*,[81] or even more importantly Julian of Toledo's *Historia Wambae*.[82] At least in military affairs, they endorsed the

76 The growing number of scholars 'from outside Spain' in Visigothic studies was underlined in 1994 by García Moreno (1994, 117).

77 Mainly Barbero and Vigil 1978.

78 The idea of a *limes hispanus* against the 'northern barbarians' made up by Barbero and Vigil is now outdated. See, among others, Novo Güisán 1993; Menéndez Bueyes 2001, 198–206; Kulikowski 2004, 338, n. 56.

79 '[N]o solo por la superioridad de su administración estatal y su prestigio de ser el heredero de Roma, sino también por el hecho histórico concreto de que ocupó parte de la Península Ibérica' (Barbero and Vigil 1974, 71).

80 Haussig 1957.

81 Isid. Hist. Goth. 42 and 47.

82 Hist. Wamb. reg. 10 and 11.

idea that the prestige of Byzantium and the circumstantial border with the Byzantine province of Spania induced Visigothic authorities to imitate Byzantine organization in order to confront dangers that the Roman empire itself had previously faced in the peninsula.

Barbero and Vigil's works exerted a significant influence on Visigothic studies in the 1980s. The above-mentioned Luis García Moreno, a student of Vigil, not only authored several reference works, but he also wrote multiple studies on very diverse issues. In his academic production of the 1970s and 1980s, Visigothic Byzantinism was a key topic, as reflected in his *Historia de España visigoda*.[83] Although he soon refrained from taking sides in the thorny debate over the *limes* against the northern barbarians, García Moreno stated that the Visigoths had erected a peninsular *limes* against the Sueves, which he described as a 'real military border of late Roman type'.[84] The fullest articulation of his support for Byzantinism appeared in a major study on Visigothic administration released in 1974,[85] an influential article that promptly became the classic exposition of the subject. Two main ideas drove his thorough examination of Visigothic judicial, fiscal, and military organization: a very strong Late Roman and Byzantine imprint, and a high degree of feudalization affecting not only the economy and the society, but also the administration. The administration's growing militarization during the seventh century paralleled, and to a large extent imitated, the process experienced in the contemporary Byzantine empire, admittedly with a poorer result in strengthening the monarchy.[86] García Moreno, like other scholars at the time, maintained that Visigothic authorities had implemented eastern solutions in order to solve political and social problems similar to those faced by Byzantium. His deliberately exhaustive discussion of the sources led him to apply this idea to many aspects of Visigothic society, and the momentous influence he exerted on Visigothic studies ensured Byzantinism a privileged position until the end of the twentieth century.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the question of Byzantine influence was also at the centre of a controversy between two other specialists of Visigothic Spain, Jacques Fontaine and Jocelyn Hillgarth. Their debate is interesting because it includes a French philologist (Fontaine) and a British historian (Hillgarth), which shows that the Byzantinism question was not limited

83 See above.

84 '[U]na auténtica frontera militar de tipo tardorromano' (García Moreno 1990a, 463). See also García Moreno 1987.

85 García Moreno 1974.

86 García Moreno 1974, especially 152–55.

to the peninsular context. As mentioned earlier, Hillgarth defended the position that the Visigothic regime had imitated Byzantium in a number of aspects, although such imitation was short-lived and contrary to the social evolution of the kingdom. Fontaine, on the other hand, was very sceptical of the mere existence of such parallels, and he energetically supported the idea of nationalism among Hispano-Gothic authors (which, in turn, Hillgarth deemed an 'anachronism *par excellence*'). In 1969, during the seventeenth *Settimana di Studio* in Spoleto, Fontaine questioned Hillgarth's allegation of Byzantine influence in political theology. Instead, he argued in favour of a common late antique legacy, mediated especially, in the case of Hispania, through Orosius.[87] Their discussion shows that Visigothic Byzantinism, although closely related to the early twentieth-century essentialist views of Spanish identity, could also be maintained from a position that rejected such views. The controversy was still alive nearly two decades later when Suzanne Teillet, a disciple of Fontaine, published her dissertation in a book arguing for a distinctive nationalism among the writers of the Visigothic period (her book was in turn subject to a very harsh review by Hillgarth).[88] Hillgarth attacked Fontaine's views again at a multidisciplinary conference that took place in 1988 (*The Seventh Century: Change and Continuity*), a conference that was co-directed by Fontaine and Hillgarth.[89] On that occasion, Hillgarth also defended Visigothic Byzantinism following Averil Cameron's lecture,[90] but once again, Fontaine kept a prudent distance in his own conclusions to the conference.[91]

I will conclude this tour through the vicissitudes of Visigothic Byzantinism in twentieth-century historiography with a choice morsel that illustrates several of the points already made and provides a final variation of the topic. In 1990, the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique organized a conference on *Europe, Heir to Visigothic Spain* at the Casa Velázquez of Madrid.[92] Spain and Portugal had joined the European Union four years earlier, as pointed out by Jacques Fontaine in his introduction to the meeting: it was time for Europe to amend its selective memory and to acknowledge

87 Hillgarth 1970, 347–52.

88 Teillet 1984; Hillgarth 1988.

89 'To introduce the term "nation" into a discussion of Late Antiquity is to mislead the reader of today by inducing in him a false feeling of familiarity with a world very different from that of the late twentieth century' (Hillgarth 1992, 230).

90 Cameron 1992.

91 Fontaine and Hillgarth 1992, 282.

92 Fontaine and Pellistrandi 1992.

its debt to the historical legacy of Visigothic Spain.[93] Michel Rouche's lecture on that occasion partially adopted the form of a metaphor. He asserted that, in the seventh century, Visigothic Spain had been completely isolated diplomatically. The eastern empire, through its Spanish province, was its only link with the outside world, and the Visigothic kingdom kept its eyes fixed on the 'light from the east' because 'the light comes from the East, be it politically, religiously, or cosmically'.[94] Spain's 'splendid isolation' was related to Visigothic obsession for internal unity and finally led the kingdom to a 'crisis of civilization'. In the end, 'when instead of the light from the East came the devastating fire of Islam, the shock was such that it opened Spanish Christians' eyes on their [European] neighbours'.[95] In the face of catastrophe, Visigoths stopped staring at the eastern mirage and raised their eyes to the Pyrenees: Spain opened to Europe and started to reassume its European heritage, paid attention to Rome, and quietly submitted to the Carolingians. The year 711 marked the end of Visigothic Byzantinism. Rouche assumed that the 'genuine orientalization' of Spain alleged by Orlandis[96] had finally led to its destruction, an annihilation that was only prevented when the country accepted northern dominance.[97] For him, Visigothic imitation of Byzantium was not synonymous with prestige or national pride; it was a historical mistake, fortunately dispelled at the beginning of the Middle Ages.

To conclude, the most outstanding aspect of the Byzantine paradigm in Visigothic studies was probably its enduring character. It persisted through Germanism, Romanism, Marxism, deep religious convictions, Spanish nationalism, and opposition to Spanish nationalism, and responded until recently to the agendas of diverse historians. Aside from Collins's unobtrusive but clear criticism of 1980,[98] Byzantinism was first denounced overtly at the beginning of the twenty-first century by Javier Arce, who harshly deemed the Visigothic imitation of Byzantium as a 'historiographical myth'.[99] He was followed by Manuel Koch, who criticized not only Byzantinism, but

93 Fontaine and Pellistrandi 1992, 5–7.

94 'La lumière vient de l'Orient, que ce soit sur le plan politique, religieux ou cosmique' (Rouche 1992, 46).

95 'Lorsqu'au lieu de la lumière venue de l'Orient, cefut le feu dévastateur de l'Islam, le choc fut tel qu'il ouvrit les yeux des chrétiens espagnols sur leurs voisins' (Rouche 1992, 50).

96 See above, n. 25.

97 In Rouche's view, Einhard's assertions in *Vita Karoli* 16 on Alfonso II's vassalic submission to Charlemagne were real (Rouche 1992, 50).

98 See above n. 29.

99 Arce 2004, 115. See also Arce 2001.

even the mere idea that Leovigild undertook an 'imperialization' of the realm, an idea which endured in the literature of the 2000s.[100] This idea was still supported by Margarita Vallejo in 2012,[101] although her book, dedicated to relations between the Byzantines and the Visigoths, strove mainly to reposition Visigothic Hispania in a broader Mediterranean context rather than highlight its Byzantine influences. In art history, scepticism against the Byzantine paradigm now seems to be established.[102] In numismatics, the imitation of Byzantine iconography starting from Leovigild's coins is not questioned, but it has been noted that such an imitation declined throughout the seventh century.[103] A very recent general study of Visigothic coinage reasserted the idea, defended by Collins since the 1980s, that Hispania was deeply integrated into the Mediterranean.[104] This position accounts for a number of so-called Byzantine parallels and is likely to retain support from most scholars in the near future: the 'Spanish exception' has lost the intellectual appeal it used to have. Since the 1990s, political and scientific globalization have both decreased the isolation of Spanish scholars and undermined the notion of Visigothic solipsism, and the intellectual necessity of a separate Spanish history is less apparent to scholars. Increased contacts with specialists in other geographic areas, notably Frankish Gaul, have cleared up the false impression of the uniqueness of the Spanish features, thereby integrating the Visigoths into a global, post-Roman world to which Byzantium also belonged by its own right. Visigothic Byzantinism is probably out of fashion now, but it remains as a major historiographical milestone of twentieth-century historiography of the early Middle Ages.

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100 Koch 2008. About 'imperialization' in Leovigild's times, García Moreno (2008, 81–92) still maintained the same line as in 1989, with some new arguments (celebration of the king's *decennalia*) but also with outdated mentions of 'cesaropapism' (at p. 92).

101 Vallejo Girvés 2012, 232–33.

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