Edited by Sabine Panzram and Paulo Pachá

The Visigothic Kingdom

The Negotiation of Power in Post-Roman Iberia

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Cover illustration: Statues of the Visigothic kings (Athaulf, Euric, Liuvigild) on the south side of Plaza de Oriente, Madrid. Photo by Laurent Callegarin.

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AE	*Année Epigraphique*
cf.	*confer*
cit.	cited
Ep.	epistle
frag.	fragment
sc.	*scilicet*
seq., seqq.	*sequens, sequentes*
sg.	singular
s.v.	*sub verbo*
Metric units	cm, centimetre/s; g, gram; km, kilometre/s; m, metre/s (1 m = approximately 37.37 inches); m², square metre/s; mm, millimetre/s; ha, hectare/s (1ha = 2.47 acres)

Preface and Acknowledgements

The fascination of Toledo – the Visigothic kingdom's capital – lies in what little we know of it. The Toletum of late antiquity was superbly defensible due to its size of just 5 ha, its rock formations, and being surrounded by the Tagus river (Tajo). It was well-situated geographically with its roads vital for connecting north to south and northeast to southwest, connecting Barcino (Barcelona), Caesaraugusta (Zaragoza), Hispalis (Seville), and Merida (Mérida), and could thus be easily managed. Economically, Toledo used its position for widespread trade, both for agriculture and the movement of livestock. Toletum is barely known, however, with regard to its urbanism, architectural features, and social structure. What elements are known consist of a few bishops and the churches in which councils are recorded to have taken place: the Basilica of Leocadia outside the walls (today known as Cristo de la Vega) and the church of the Apostles Peter and Paul – also called the *ecclesia Praetoriensis* – to which the *palatium* and *praetorium* were added in the first half of the seventh century. Researchers suspect that the *suburbium* was developed in this period through residential buildings, while *intra muros*, *in Toletana urbe*, an episcopal palace was constructed alongside a basilica dedicated to Mary the Mother of God (now the cathedral). This remodelling and expansion of the town through the type of complexes found in Rome and Constantinople likely shaped the city in the style of an *aemulatio imperii*.

Indeed, Toledo is all but unknown archaeologically. It may be this invisibility that has furthered both the city's and the kingdom's mythical status. Until three decades ago, little archaeological evidence accompanied the comprehensive documentation, the records from the provincial and general councils, chronicles, legal collections, tracts, biographies and lives of the saints, letters from bishops, monks, and kings, papal decretals, and finally epigraphic monuments such as burial and dedicatory inscriptions. Yet this lack did not prevent the establishment of a narrative for the period from 507 to 711, the central element of which is the establishment of Toledo's primacy. It has been especially helpful in pinpointing Liuvigild's reign from 569 onwards, as well as Reccared's conversion at the III Council of Toledo in 589, as preconditions for the glorious period of the *reges Visigothorum* in the seventh century. However, recent studies, analysing structural developments across epochs and taking into account late antique city foundations (Recopolis, Eio), as well as burial grounds and open-area excavations of rural settlements, raise the question how 'such a fragile construction' could have held together for 200 years.

Such contradictions plead for knowledge. Toletum, the 'Network for Research about the Iberian Peninsula in Antiquity' (www.toletum-network.com), funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft since 2011, hosts an annual workshop in Hamburg's Warburg-Haus, in which constitutive elements of the Iberian Peninsula's urban world are discussed from the perspective of both ancient and medieval history, classical, provincial Roman, and early Christian archaeology, as well as from the point of view of architectural and Islamic studies. In 2013 the workshop focused on the sculptural embellishment of public and private spaces; in 2014 on the entertainment sites of theatre, amphitheatres, and circuses surrounding places of civic identity; in 2016 on *suburbia*; and in 2017 on communication paths. While the gatherings had previously concerned the period between the Republic and the year 711, and thus with questions of continuity and change, in recent years transformation processes between the fourth and eighth centuries have come to the fore. It was a logical next step to take Paulo Pachá's suggestion (at that time from the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Rio de Janeiro) and to organize a workshop on 'The Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo: Concepts and Forms of Power', which took place in Hamburg's Warburg-Haus as an international conference from 25 to 27 October 2018. Researchers from Brazil, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Austria, Spain, and the USA discussed negotiations of power in this post-Roman *regnum*. Themes included the many ways in which power relations were created, transformed, and exerted. Among these themes, some contributors discussed both ideas about central and local power as well as the development of their reciprocal relations in those 200 years. Other papers focused on the crucial links between power and identity – thinking about and beyond of ethnicity –, as well as the diverse ways employed in the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo to represent ideas of and about power. Also discussed was the church's role as a powerful historical agent – albeit a very complex one and constituted by inner divisions and conflicts.

The present volume gathers most of the contributions to this Hamburg conference, supplemented by articles by Jaime Vizcaíno Sánchez, Luis A. García Blánquez, Sebastian Steinbach, Rafael Barroso Cabrera, and Julián M. Ortega Ortega. The editors have reworked the papers presented to reflect the diversity of questions and the form in which they were addressed only in a purely editorial sense; the responsibility for the content and images rests with the respective authors. Finally, the editors want to fulfil the pleasant duty of offering thanks to all those who participated in Toletum IX for their lively and provocative discussions, to Florian Klein (Hamburg) for his help preparing the manuscript for print and for preparing the index, to Timothy

Wardell (Hopewell, New Jersey) for assistance with copyediting, and to Jamie Wood (Lincoln) for suggesting the 'Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia' series of the Amsterdam University Press as a home for this volume. The editors also want to thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive criticism, which helped to improve both individual contributions and the volume as a whole.

As we planned the conference and this collected volume, it seemed natural to us that we would continue our collaboration. However, at the present moment a personal exchange among colleagues at an international conference seems far from possible. The Corona pandemic is not just restricting citizens' fundamental freedoms and leading to the closure of borders, but also to the closing of schools and universities. History shows that humans have found answers to structurally similar challenges, be it the plague under Justinian or the Middle Age's 'Black Death'. Perhaps those solutions can inform us, yet preserving a system for its own sake cannot be a viable one – as the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo exemplifies in an excellent way.

Sabine Panzram and Paulo Pachá
Hamburg – Rio de Janeiro, spring of 2020

1 The Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo

Current Perspectives on the Negotiation of Power in Post-Roman Iberia

Sabine Panzram

The legacy of history

Visigothic kings remain present in Madrid to this day. Athaulf, Euric, Liuvigild, Swinthila, and Wamba face each other on the Plaza de Oriente; Gundemar and Chintila can be spotted in the Retiro Park by the 'Paseo de las Estatuas'; Alaric, Reccared II, Erwig, and Theodoric meanwhile grace the balustrade of the royal palace's eastern facade. These carefully crafted, life-size statues of white rock (*Piedra de Colmenar*), obviously part of some programme, are haphazardly spread across the city, which leads us to the mid-eighteenth century. After Real Alcázar burned to its foundations on New Year's Eve, 1734,[1] Philipp V charged the Benedictine Martín Sarmiento with developing a new palace design. He saw the destruction of the Arabic residence, previously redesigned by the Trastámara and renovated by the Habsburgs, as an opportunity to fulfil his desire for a new and imposing form of self-display. The Bourbon faced the challenge of combining his French dynasty with the older Spanish one in order to demonstrate legitimacy. By suggesting his so-called *Sistema de adornos del Palacio Real* (1743), Sarmiento offered a form of display in which sculptures, frescoes, and carpets would complement each other in order to display the Catholic and secular virtues of the Spanish monarchy since antiquity – virtues such as security, strength, continuity, and piety.[2] The sculptures were to represent the kings – in chronological order – and serve to crown the palace.[3] They were to be a symbol, visible to all, of sovereignty's continuity, and to

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1   Chueca Goitia 1998; Sancho Gaspar 2013.
2   Álvarez Barrientos and Herrero Carretero 2002.
3   Ibid., pp. 244–271.

transform the palace into a place of remembrance from which Spain could be envisioned (*pensar España*).[4] The Benedictine described in detail what the statues were to resemble, their clothing as well as such things as their types of crowns and weaponry. The faces were not be idealized, but true to nature. This enthusiasm for documentation and didactism can be seen in the figures of martyrs, saints, and city patrons, such as San Lorenzo, San Juan de la Cruz, San Isidro, Santa Leocadia, and Santa Teresa, as well as poets such as Martial, Quintilian, and Lucan, and philosophers such as Averroes and Maimonides or 'military types' such as Viriathus, the Cid, and Cortés.[5] Sarmiento had stones fetched from every quarry in Spain for the construction, so that the representation of the Iberian Peninsula's thirty-two provinces could be realized through a presence from across the kingdom. The elaborate iconographic programme reflects Sarmiento's understanding of his nation's continuity, which was contingent on its territory, geography, and ultimately its history. The didactic impetus is obvious: the Benedictine was convinced of architecture's ability to unleash positive effects in the beholder and educate him through the need for guidance and moral emulation.[6] When Charles III reached Madrid, in December 1759, he found himself facing a huge construction site. He gave priority to completing the residence, which had been delayed for years, and was able to move in at the end of 1764. Iconographically, Charles III distanced himself significantly from his predecessors' guidelines. First, he had the statues of all the Spanish kings who had been erected on the facades as part of Sarmiento's programme removed, an order he gave on February 1760, even before his ceremonial entrance to Madrid.[7] They were then distributed across the city's gardens – Plaza de Oriente, Sabatini, Retiro, Glorieta de las Pirámides – with some sent to various cities: Toledo received a few, Burgos, Ronda, Vitoria, Logroño, and San Fernando de Henares others, while Aranjuez, El Ferrol, and Pamplona received a few. Charles was not attempting to make the nation an ideological centre of his sovereignty by didactically instrumentalizing the royal palace. Rather, his rule sought to raise a universal claim by means of eulogies and self-dramatization to harken back to antiquity. The discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii in the 1740s was propitious, as it served to validate his *buon regno*.[8] The prologue of the luxurious volume *Antichità di*

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4   For this slogan, see Álvarez Barrientos 2006.
5   Álvarez Barrientos and Herrero Carretero 2002, pp. 118–154.
6   Santos Puerto 2002; see also Panzram, in press.
7   Morterero 1972, p. 68.
8   Panzram 2012; Pisani 2013.

Ercolana – which published the paintings, statues, and bronzes – was gifted to members of the European aristocracy,[9] and celebrated him as Hercules. Charles also secured the services of the notable Anton Raphael Mengs to decorate the royal palace with ceiling frescoes and historic images.[10] This Dresden court painter's iconography was rooted in an inventory of images related to Trajan. Meanwhile, Charles's generous renovation and beautification, even re-design, of entire neighbourhoods in the capital,[11] induced Ramón Pignatelli y Moncayo to compare his achievements with those of the first Roman empire – perhaps surpassing Augustus![12] Finally, Charles was inspired by the Roman street network when developing his Spanish example. In 1787 he organized the colonization of Sierra Morena, in celebration of which a medal was minted showing him as Romulus, the city founder.[13] In contrast to Sarmiento, Charles was not concerned with presenting the past as an entirety, as a closed system in order to display a national identity. By referring to antiquity, he modeled an entire epoch as the starting point of socio-political transformations at a time of political conflict and social change, presenting the past as an open frame of reference.[14]

The nineteenth-century nation state was long in search of itself. After the Napoleonic wars, those with political responsibilities in European states strove to accomplish political unity by means of cultural identity.[15] Questions arose as to whether a nation defined itself more as a state or a culture, whether laws and institutions were the crucial elements by which citizens could govern themselves, or whether a community's members needed to possess the same ethnic culture and history. In any case, the origins of nationalism flourished in parallel with the rise of liberal forces. The founding edict of the Real Academia de la Historia, which Philipp V had founded as early as 1738 in response to universities' untenable conditions,[16] charged it with 'purging' the nation's *fábulas* by publishing a *Diccionario Histórico-crítico-universal de España*, and preparing a 'verdadera Historia

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9   Cf. Bayardi, *Prodromo delle Antichità d'Ercolano*, pts. I–V, 1752, pp. v–xlviii, as well as the *praefatio* of the introductory volume on the publication of the papyri found in Herculaneum by Carlo Maria Rosini, *Dissertationis isagogicae ad Herculanensium Voluminum explanationem*, pt. I, 1797.

10   Roettgen 1999 and 2003; Ehrmann 2010.

11   Moleón Gavilanes 2017.

12   Blech 2009, pp. 355–356.

13   Almagro-Gorbea 2012.

14   Späth 2015.

15   Esdaile 2000; Álvarez Junco 2001; Álvarez Junco and Fuente Monge 2013.

16   Almagro-Gorbea and Maier Allende 2003; Anes y Álvarez de Castrillón 2010.

Nacional'.[17] Yet the necessary profession that would establish the search for 'objective truth', with the instrument of positivism, only developed in the course of the nineteenth century. Modesto Lafuente y Zamalloa's *Historia General de España desde los tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días*, published in Madrid in thirty books between 1850 and 1866, became paradigmatic for the developing genre of historical writing. The politically active journalist-historian claimed that he had been motivated by the lack of a national history. Until deep into the twentieth century, his work was accounted 'la historia nacional por antomasia';[18] his periodization of Spain's history into *edades* – 'Antigua, Media, Moderna y Contempóranea' – remains valid to this day. The localization of Spain's transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages in the early eighth century, rather than in the fifth as in the rest of Europe, is due to his work; he considered the Arabic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula of more impact than the fall of the West Roman Empire. He places the beginnings of modernity in the year 1492 and not, as was customary, in 1453 with the fall of Constantinople, and judged the Catholic kings' conquest of Granada, the expulsion of the Jewish inhabitants, and Columbus's discovery of America to be of more significance. And lastly, he did not initiate 'contemporary history' with the French Revolution of 1789, as was common practice, but rather with the Spanish rebellion against Napoleon's troops in 1808. Even the Spanish nation's founding date, which he cites as the III Council of Toledo in 589, in the fourth book of his *opus magnum*,[19] is still occasionally considered valid.[20] As such it was the Visigoths who founded Spain as a nation. Lafuente y Zamallao believed that 'Spaniards' had existed before the arrival of Rome, and that it was this culture that 'hispanicized' the Romans and Visigoths and converted the latter to the Catholic faith. It was, however, the Visigoths who created a *monarquía española* by introducing the relevant institutions. Liberals consider not just political, religious, and territorial unity fundamental, but also the juridical unity gained through the *Fuero Juzgo*. Councils functioned like a parliament; it was the Hispano-Gothic kingdom in which Spain established its constitutional foundations as those of a 'state'.

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17   Sempere y Guarinos, *Ensayo de una biblioteca española de los mejores escritores del Reynado de Carlos III*, vol. 1, 1787, pp. 63–71. – Almagro-Gorbea 2010.
18   Álvarez Junco and Fuente Monge 2013, esp. 264–283, here p. 265.
19   Lafuente y Zamalloa, *Historia General de España desde los tiempos más remotos hasta nuestros días*, 1887.
20   Cañizares Llovera 2008 is an illustrative example.

The possibility of faithfully reproducing an event – whether contemporary or historical – such as Reccared's conversion found in historical paintings or those awarded at the national fine arts exhibits, which took place from 1856, promoted the development of an artistic style, of which the state became the most important patron.[21] José Martí y Monsó's *Concilio III de Toledo* (1892) shows Reccared in a church's apse, evidently at the moment when his conversion was announced to members of the council with Leander's presence.[22] By royal decree, the picture was hung in the senate on 11 November 1878. In contrast, Antonio Muñoz Degrain's *La Conversión de Recaredo* (1888) captures the moment in which the Visigothic king swore off Arianism in the presence of his wife, Queen Badda, and Bishop Leander, in St. Leocadia of Toledo's basilica on 8 May 589. The artist was concerned about the realization of the topic: he believed that 'todo asunto histórico exige [...] un estudio detenido, no sólo de la historia política y social, sino también de los costumbres, la indumentaria, la manera de ser y los detalles más nimios', although he considered his knowledge of the Visigoths limited.[23] And yet he still executed the piece, as it was a commission that was to grace the senate's Salón de los Pasos Perdidos alongside at least three other pieces: Francisco Pradilla y Ortiz' *La rendición de Granada* (1882), José Moreno Carbonero's *La entrada de Roger de Flor en Constantinopla* (1888), and Juan Luna y Novico's *El combate naval de Lepanto* (1887). The conspectus of these events – Reccared's conversion at the Council of Toledo, Granada's fall, Roger de Flor's march into Constantinople, and the naval battle of Lepanto – as well as the associations they evoked, such as the first political-religious unity, the crown of Aragón's victory in the Mediterranean, the end of the *reconquista*, unity under the Catholic kings, and the height of imperial power in Europe, created a reference to a 'panegírico del nacionalismo español'.[24] Not just the senate but also the house of representatives was decorated with historical paintings. The genres of historiography and historical painting reveal the search for, and ultimate spread of, a specific conception of the nation developed through concepts such as autonomy and centralism. An independent Spain was propagated as one that faced its 'invaders' – in Sagunt, Numantia, or Covadonga, in Zaragoza, or on the 2 and 3 May in Madrid; a centralized Spain had its roots in Reccared's conversion, fought for in the

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21   Reyero Hermosilla 1989; Díez 1992; Pantorba 1980.
22   López Henares 1980, p. 129; Reyero Hermosilla 1999a.
23   López Henares 1980, pp. 130–131; Díez 1992, pp. 436–437, see also pp. 378–387; Reyero Hermosilla 1999b, p. 290; cf. Rodríguez García 1966; García Alcaraz 1996.
24   On this, see Reyero Hermosilla 1999c, p. 229; López Henares 1980, pp. 125, 130–131, 132–133, 136–137; Peréz Vejo 2015, esp. pp. 71–77.

battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, or one won from the Catholic kings, and the 'triumphant' Spain whose discovery of America became a favourite among painters. At the end of the long nineteenth century, the view of the past again embodied a closed system, in which illustrious historical moments served to construct a national identity.

It is not surprising that the declaration of the Spanish nation's founding date should fall in Visigothic times. The history of *goticismo* began virtually at the moment when the Visigothic kingdom of Toledo was ended by the Umayyad's *conquista*, i.e. the beginning of the eighth century.[25] The Christian *Asturorum regnum* claimed its immediate succession, the Castilian crown viewed itself as part of its tradition, nobles sought to trace their genealogies back to the Visigoths, and artists attempted to visualize Visigothic daily life. Muñoz Degrain's reflections, however, point to the problem that almost no material evidence from the period existed. The interior of St. Leocadia's basilica in *La Conversión de Recaredo* resembles that of Sant'Apollinare in Classe and the Visigothic royal couple's garments echo those of Justinian and Theodora in San Vitale in Ravenna;[26] Recceswinth's crown was the only element the painter could base on an original. In 1858, the so-called treasure trove of Guarrazar surfaced not far from Toledo: votive crowns, crosses, gems made of gold, studded with semi-precious stones and pearls appear as artistic craftsmanship in the Byzantine tradition but were made at Toledo's court.[27] A number of the twelve crowns and eight crosses went to Paris, but the majority became part of the royal collection. Archaeologist and art historian José Amador de los Ríos, who headed the Real Academia de Historia in Madrid and was responsible for the transfer, described them as representative examples of early medieval, Spanish Catholic art, as the essence of seventh-century Spanish culture.[28] The treasure trove unleashed a lasting enthusiasm for Visigothic archaeology: Scarcely fifteen archaeological digs were conducted until the 1940s. The research of the 1930s, led especially by the prehistorian Julio Martínez Santa Olalla, following his return to Germany and his appointment as head of the Comisaría General de Excavaciones Arqueológicas, focused on the 'época de las migraciones germánicas'; this was clearly a sign of political alliance with national-socialist Germany.[29] This association became marginalized after his removal from office in the

25   Álvarez Junco 2001, esp. pp. 35–45 and 420–424; Linehan 2012.
26   Cortés Arrese 2012, esp. pp. 32–43.
27   Perea 2001; Eger 2010; Moreno Martín 2017.
28   Amador de los Ríos 1861, esp. pp. 151–161.
29   Olmo Enciso 1991; Gracia Alonso 2009; Tejerizo García 2017, esp. pp. 123–136.

50s, with scholars subsequently stressing Christianity's importance for the Visigothic kingdom's development.[30]

The legend of Spain's origins and its unique status was strengthened in following decades. Concepts of unity between church and state were paradigmatically expounded by the universal scholar and intellectual Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo in his *Historia de los Heterodoxos españoles* in 1877 (concepts that later allowed Franco to build on). Menéndez Pelayo's unity of *patria* and Catholicism stem from the proselytizing of the apostles, the uniqueness of the Middle Ages in its succession of *conquista* and *reconquista*, the strong manifestation of the Counter-Reformation, and the hegemony of a modern, extremely conservative form of Catholicism.[31] Franco propagated *dux* Reccared's conversion to Catholicism, which had brought about not just the dominion's territorial unity but also, subsequently, its denominational unity as the origins of the history of a Spain that understood itself as 'one, great, free and Catholic', led by a *caudillo*. This was accompanied by the privileging of the region of Castile, in which *hispanidad* had developed in the *reconquista* period. The scholarly tradition supporting this imaginary was not laid to rest until Franco's death in 1975. Yet even someone in exile such as the historian Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz viewed the Middle Ages as the key epoch. In his significant volume *España, un enigma histórico*, he located the roots of Spanish identity in ninth-century Asturia, which had regarded itself as the bastion of the last Visigoth kingdom.[32] An 'historiographical revolution' in the study of Spanish history, and thus of antiquity, was unleashed by the dictator's death.[33] A democratic Spain, after all, could never utilize what the dictatorship had propagated as an historical benchmark of national identity – the Visigothic period and Castile. Instead, the reference was to Rome – as a Roman province now able to imagine a future as a region within the European community.[34] The first systematic archaeological digs, begun in the 1980s in Tarragona, Córdoba, and Mérida, carved their way not just into remnants of the provincial capitals of Roman Hispania, but to Europe as well.

The scientific interest in the Visigothic period was therefore free – without any clear aim such as creating identity, legitimizing socio-political organizational forms, or institutional pressure regarding methodological

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30 Díaz-Andreu García and Ramírez Sánchez 2004; Tejerizo García 2016.

31 Menéndez Pelayo 1948, pp. 507–508, also Kamen 2006.

32 Sánchez-Albornoz 1956.

33 On this see Díaz-Andreu García 1993 as well as 1995; Bowes and Kulikowski 2005.

34 Porcel 1992; Díaz-Andreu García 1993; Wulff Alonso and Álvarez Martí-Aguilar 2003.

guidelines.[35] Urban archaeology's activities were linked with a conceptional debate that called into question ancient history's periodization on the Iberian Peninsula and demanded a paradigm change. In 1982, the ancient historian and archaeologist Javier Arce, in his *El último siglo de la España romana (284–409)*, presented sketches of the political, bureaucratic, military, economic, and religious history of a century that had not even counted as worthy of history.[36] He wrote provocatively and critically, demanding an interpretation of the archaeological evidence freed from historiographical transmission. This former interpretation had referred to the latter and had confirmed the dominating interpretational pattern of the so-successfully Romanized Hispanic province's decay and decadence as early as the late third century, instead of its functioning as a correcting force. He postulated continuity, not change – up to and even past 409 AD. He argued that the Hispanic provinces should be inserted into the context of the empire, rather than classifying them as an imperial annexation with no relevance for Rome. The archaeological findings and epigraphic evidence underline the necessity for a shift in perspective, since continuity can be verified for the supposedly 'crisis-laden' third century, while a 'slow change' seems to have dominated the fourth, finally followed by the transformation of urban topographies in the fifth.[37] The dimensions of the finds made interdisciplinary work the condition *sine qua non*;[38] the traditionally separate research of the centuries through different disciplines – i.e. the *romanistas* jurisdiction over Roman Spain and the *mundo germánico* specialists for the following centuries – proved obsolete. If archaeologists and construction researchers, epigraphists, and historians (whether of pre-, early, ancient, or medieval history) fail to work together, neither the constructional nor socio-historical developments can be studied *à la longue*. The centuries after the invasions of the Suebi, Vandals, and Alans in 409, and after the III Council of Toledo in 589, which scholars had previously viewed as the pre-history of the glorious period of the seventh-century *reges Visigothorum*,[39] now became part of the '(post-)history' of the Roman Empire. Only once the years 284, 409, and 589 had lost their status as all-decisive turning points was any analysis of transformation processes from an ancient-history perspective up to the year 711 (and beyond) possible.

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35   Linehan 2012, esp. 44–47; Álvarez Junco and Fuente Monge 2013, esp. pp. 405–437.
36   Arce 2009 [orig. 1982].
37   See also the case studies in Beltrán Fortes and Rodríguez Gutiérrez 2012.
38   For extensive information on this development, see Panzram 2017 and 2019.
39   For example, Orlandis Rovira 1987; García Moreno 1989; Thompson 1969; Collins 2004.

A paradigm shift, new approaches

This volume locates itself in this tradition of 'breaking away' and wants to provide a contribution to Visigothic research on the Iberian Peninsula in two respects, thematically and methodologically. Its perspective is that of a young, dynamic research field open to developments at the intersection between late antiquity and the early Middle Ages that has been developing internationally since the 1990s and consistently works in an interdisciplinary manner. Thematically, the 'negotiations of power' point to the revision of a central category – 'power' – which has traditionally been used to postulate the establishment of Toledo's hegemony, yet has failed to explain why the central power's expansion went hand in hand with a weakening of its hegemonic structures, which made possible the Umayyad's *conquista*. On the basis of an understanding of 'power' in the sense of Max Weber, these contributions seek to understand afresh the relationship between the centre and the periphery, between the monarch and the aristocracy, by positing agency for everyone involved in this process and inquiring into its realization. Methodologically, this volume is breaking new ground by taking seriously the Mediterranean world's unity from Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad, already postulated by Peter Brown in the early 1970s, and implementing it on the foundation of new approaches to periodization. If one sets the 'long late antiquity' as one's period of study,[40] then it is only consistent to examine the causes of the 'power question' in the Visigothic period from Roman late antiquity to the time of the Umayyads, in order to critically question the current debate about the end, change, continuity, or transformation of Roman antiquity.[41]

The contributions that accept this challenge of revising the traditional narrative come from four different research fields – 'Concepts of Central and Local Power', 'Power, Identity, and Ethnicity', 'Representations of Power', 'Power and Church'. They are introduced with a prologue by Laurent Brassous and concluded with an epilogue by Julián M. Ortega Ortega, with Paulo Pachá finishing with an analysis of this thematic and methodological shift in perspective. The picture the classical archaeologist Laurent Brassous paints of the Iberian Peninsula 'the day before', that is, before the arrival

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40   Brown 1971; cf. the more recent Brown, Bowersock, Cameron et al. 1997; Cameron 2002; Marcone 2008.
41   A convincing narrative of the Iberian Peninsula in the 'long late antiquity' can be found in Arce's trilogy of Arce 2007, 2011; see also, now, the archaeological perspective of Martínez Jiménez, Sastre de Diego, and Tejerizo García 2018.

of Germanic ethnicities in the early fifth century, in many ways points to the Hispania of the imperial period, but in others to post-Roman Iberia. The constituents of Rome's power – those approximately 400 cities – continued to function as references; they retained their traditional acceptance of agency and at most gradually adapted to the unique aspects of their region. Their respective hinterlands continued to determine the territory's division; their elites dominated political discourse and occupied key positions in the socio-economic constellation. The cities neither decadently crumbled in the 'crisis of the third century', nor did they suffer from the 'barbarian' invasions and be eleminated by the Vandals, Visigoths, and other ethnicities. Their strength and importance as carriers of sovereignty remained unbroken in these centuries. Their urbanism was characterized, not by destruction, but transformation; their social elites' functions, not by change, but continuity. Confronted by this new picture, which the archaeological evidence especially suggests, the ancient history scholar Javier Arce takes a detailed look at the arrival and settlement of the Visigoths, in the first article from the 'Concepts of Central and Local Power' research field. He utilizes literary findings to ask not just when and how many came, but for what reasons, where and how they settled, as well as who they actually were. He believes they were a poly-ethnic grouping – thanks to the length of their migration and their stay in Aquitania (more than a hundred years) – and argues that it is hardly possible to speak of Goths in Hispania. They fully took on the 'Roman way of life' in the sixth and seventh centuries, while only the elite retained any awareness of a Gothic identity. The archaeologists Jaime Vizcaíno Sánchez and Luis A. García Blánquez also question the established consensus, in this case in relation to the Visigoths' territorial spread. New findings from graves in Senda de Granada (Murcia), in the vicinity of the Roman provincial capital Carthago Nova, suggest that Visigoths settled in southeastern Hispania as early as the late fifth century. Researchers have so far assumed that they only arrived in the context of the Byzantine expansion in the mid-sixth century. Paulo Pachá and Sebastian Steinbach both examine questions of challenges of central and local power, Pácha with a focus on the bishops and Steinbach through the example of the military. The ancient historian Paulo Pachá argues that the councils called in by the Visigothic church from 400 AD onward in Toledo served one primary function – to politically integrate the local powers, which at that time were mostly the episcopal sovereignties that had politically established themselves in the cities. Using the example of Mérida, Seville, and Córdoba he utilizes an analysis of the council records to show that the bishops relinquished their political independence in the course of the seventh century. Yet this attitude was not the result of any

imposition by Toledo, but the product of a negotiation process between the powers that had been going on for centuries. The medieval historian's case study of the magnate Paulus's rebellion against King Wamba in 673 shows that strong separatist efforts nevertheless existed in the empire: Paulus knew that Septimania and Tarraconensis were behind him. However, Julian of Toledo's description of the events leaves no doubt of the rightful king's victory, who also practised *clementia* and refrained from executing the rebels.

The contributions from the second research field –'Power, Identity, and Ethnicity' – take up the current debate about identity and ethnicity, focusing on power relations in the Visigothic kingdom. Herwig Wolfram, medievalist, questions how one could stay Gothic without a Gothic king and answers 'by looking for a new one' – a Gothic magnate, a foreign king, or else the Roman emperor. A series of factors had proven decisive for the formation of identity, factors such as the *lex Gothica*, which guarantied juridical and socio-economic status, language, faith, and more, but not only a monarchical institution. Manuel Koch, an ancient historian, answers the question of who the Visigoths in the kingdom of Toledo were on the basis of a case study of the *Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium*, written around 635. Although researchers have traditionally assumed that the ethnic grouping of Visigoths ruled as elites over Hispano-Romans nominating such characteristics as names, religion, and laws, recent scholarship has shown that this supposed ethnic boundary dissolved quickly, if it ever existed at all. The term '*Gothus*' manifested an awareness of a Visigothic identity, but one that rested not on genealogy but through membership in the kingdom's social and political elite. That is, one was not part of the elite because one was Gothic, but one could become Gothic if a member of the elite. Lastly, Christoph Eger postulates the existence of a Visigothic kingdom without Visigoths. The pre-historian postulates this on the basis of a revision of archaeological findings: the grave fields of Meseta. Although the burials there cannot be wholly identified with a Visigothic ethnic identity, elements of the garb and burial practices should be taken as evidence of the presence of emigrated barbarians, at least in the occupancy's early phase. This, he argues, questions not just what relationship existed between them and the Visigoths, but what we actually know about clothing and its significance in Visigothic Hispania: who wore or could wear certain garb of foreign provenance. These questions turned the examination of the so-called Visigothic grave fields of Meseta into a challenge, one that must be faced if one is to adequately grasp its historic significance. Javier Martínez Jiménez moves this array of questions to urban contexts. The classical archaeologist postulates the existence of a civic identity as a form of self-representation beyond any ethnic duality, one

more attractive because it was open and integrating rather than closed and exclusive, and thus open to change. Urban communities, he argues, were ultimately more significant social groupings than ethnically rooted ones. For a fundamental understanding of how the Visigothic state functioned, he suggests replacing Gothic-Roman duality with that of monarchy-citizen.

While the first two section's contributions ask how power was negotiated and how the Visigoths manifested these structures in their relationships with various social groupings, the third section is concerned with the reproduction of power in representative forms: the organization of a landscape, the minting of coins, the development of a literary form, and the development of an 'epigraphic habit'. The archaeologist Lauro Olmo Enciso shows that the new founding of Recopolis in 578 AD signified a political act, a demonstration of power in a moment of political consolidation and the development of a tax system. However, the city's founding also re-structured the territory through the installation of a new road network, rural settlements, and the reorganization of the agrarian system. Recopolis was to become the region's dynamic urban centre for almost two and a half centuries, uniting political, administrative, and fiscal functions, and 'disciplining' the landscape as a social space. Liuvigild doubly manifested his power. As a numismatician, Ruth Pliego lays out the various possibilities for depicting power offered through the minting of coins. The Visigoths' minting hewed closely to that of Rome; they imitated and transformed Roman iconography with innovative characteristics that reflect the *regnum*'s development in the years from the first settlement to the Ummayad *conquista* from around 418 to about 71. The *tremissis* first consisted of *romanitas* (Victory motif), but then adopted Christian motifs (such 'Cross-on-steps' motif) revealing a desire to express 'sanctified' power. The emergence of a specific type of literature proves as significant as that of city founding and coin minting: Michael J. Kelly analyses the *Liber Iudiciorum* (also known as the *Lex Visigothorum*) that Recceswinth enacted in 653 as a 'legal-literary text'. The medieval historian postulates that this body of laws represents a literary character, part of a historical narrative inherent to law. He compares two versions of this narrative – those of Recceswinth and Ervig – and how strongly these depended on concrete historic circumstances, as the *Liber Iudiciorum* is significant not just as a juridical text but also as a historical narrative. In addition to the power of individual books stood that of inscriptions both in public and in restricted spaces. The epigraphist Javier de Santiago Fernandéz shows how the Visigothic kingdom's elites – both ecclesiastical and civil – used epigraphic monuments for the purposes of self-representation. Both sought to display their privileged social position in the medium of grave, construction,

or dedicatory inscriptions, thus building on Roman tradition. Workshops made use of traditional techniques, using iconographical elements but also occasionally composing the texts in verse to draw reader's attention. Different forms of representing power have their own codes and specific impacts. A city founding or an epigraphic monument is always both a representative form of power and a given power relationship.

These forms of power are equally true for the institution of the church, whose relationship the fourth research field – 'Power and Church' – addresses. The prehistorian Rafael Barroso Cabrera examines the relationships between political power and episcopal authority in the early Visigothic kingdom of Toledo, positing the significance of Theudis for its genesis instead of what researchers have usually attributed to Liuvigild's military successes and Reccared's political talent. Although Theudis did not succeed in establishing a kingdom within the *diocesis Hispaniarum*'s borders, his cooperation with the bishops first made Toledo into the Carthaginensis's metropolitan seat and then gave it primacy over Hispania. Isabel Sánchez Ramos and Jorge Mórin de Pablos examine the capital from an archaeological perspective and trace both the city's administrative and its ecclesiastical topography (*officium palatinum*, *praetorium*/episcopal see of St. Mary, the *ecclesia praetorensis* of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and the martyrial basilica of St. Leocadia). They also make reference to the surrounding land's *villae* (Los Hitos, Melque, and Guarrazar), to monasteries known only from literary transmissions, but also to so-called private churches. They argue Byzantium's influence on architecture and sculptures to a greater extent than has been usual. The classical philologist Markus Mülke's article on Martin of Braga refers to the Visigothic kingdom as a member of diverse networks. The bishop of Dumio and Bracara, who guided the Arians to the Catholic faith, was held up as a model for Suebi and Visigoths alike for his *fides catholica*, due to classic tradition and, spatially, to his relationship to Gaul, Rome, and Constantinople. His 'internationality', rooted in his literary production (*Capitula Martini*, *Apophthegmata Patrum*, *De trina mersione*, *De ira*, and the three extant pieces of verse), differed significantly from that of his contemporaries. Finally, the ancient historian Jamie Wood examines bishops as key figures in the transition from Roman to post-Roman Hispania. He compares bishops in Byzantine with those in Visigothic Spain. Both, he argues, fought for authority and secured external help. This, however, was less about defending themselves from external oppression and more about pressure coming from various parties within their own cities. He writes that episcopal elections are particularly well suited to revealing the potential fragility of local power structures. His analysis of the *Vitas Sanctorum*

Patrum Emeritensium, as well as of several letters exchanged between Pope Gregory I and John, Byzantium's representative in Spania, make clear that bishops were forced to permanently negotiate their positions – between church and state, between central and local powers.

For 'the day after' the Ummayads conquered the Iberian Peninsula, the Islamic scholar Julián M. Ortega Ortega paints a picture of the affected regions that has next to nothing to do with the 'savage kingdom' (*regnum efferum*) spoken of in an anonymous chronicle from 754. Instead, events such as the distribution of booty, the closure of agreements, the distribution of land to veterans, and the establishment of a tax system indicate the complexity of a system of distribution that was the result of an elaborate process of negotiation. The locus lay in negotiating power not just between conquerors and the conquered, but also between various groupings (Arabs and Berbers, the army and the emirates, the emirates and the caliphs).

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