

Damián Fernández/Molly Lester/Jamie Wood (eds.): *Rome and Byzantium in the Visigothic Kingdom. Beyond Imitatio Imperii*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2023 (Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia 12). 374 p., 16 ill., 1 map, 1 table. € 141.00/£ 128.00/\$ 156.00. ISBN: 978-94-6372-641-2.

The modern scholarly term *imitatio imperii* is a problematic phrase due to its origins in the mid-twentieth century with the German academics Percy Ernst Schramm and Karl Hauck.¹ Its link to the imitation and emulation of elements of imperial rule by the Barbarian rulers of the fifth to the eighth centuries has become widely accepted by the academic community, despite its complicated roots. Nevertheless, what should be uncontroversial is that we find elements of imperial rule in the Visigothic Kingdom. The more interesting question, however, is how far these elements of the Roman and Byzantine legacy found in Visigothic customs and institutions were simply imitations, or whether they were something beyond facsimilia and instead unique interpretations of a shared cultural and historical model. In this regard, the editors Damián Fernández, Molly Lester, and Jamie Wood have compiled a particularly illuminating work to help guide studies of the Visigothic Kingdom away from a model of ‘acculturation’ and toward a unique interpretation of the common elements that formed the legacy of Rome. The editors themselves come from a varied research background including studies of social and economic history, orthodoxy and heresy, as well as hagiography and the role of bishops in social functions.² The individual chapters combine a variety of approaches focused on different types of evidence, ranging from numismatics and archaeology to new analyses of hagiography to champion

1 P. E. Schramm: *Sacerdotium und Regnum im Austausch ihrer Vorrechte. Eine Skizze der Entwicklung zur Beleuchtung des “Dictatus papae”*. In: *Studi gregoriani per la storia di Gregorio VII e della riforma gregoriana* 2, 1947, pp. 403–457; K. Hauck: *Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa*. In: *FMS* 1, 1967, pp. 3–93.

2 For a select bibliography see D. Fernández: *Aristocrats and Statehood in Western Iberia, c. 300–600 C.E.* Philadelphia 2017 (Empire and After); M. Lester: *The Ties that Bind: Diagnosing Social Crisis in Julian of Toledo’s Historia Wambae*. In G. Heydemann/H. Reimitz (eds.): *Historiography and Identity II. Post-Roman Multiplicity and New Political Identities*. Turnhout 2020 (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 27), pp. 269–296; J. Wood: *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain. Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville*. Leiden/Boston 2012 (Brill’s Series on the Early Middle Ages 21).

a convincing argument that the idea of *imitatio imperii* needs to be reconsidered in light of the historical circumstances in which we situate the evidence.

Opening with an introduction (pp. 17–28) that delves into the concepts and differences emerging between ‘Romanness’ and ‘Gothicness’ in the West following the collapse of imperial authority in Italy, the situation in Iberia is contextualised to show that the influences the empire had on the Visigothic Kingdoms of Toulouse and Toledo are not as clear cut as generally thought. As well as reopening the problems surrounding scholarship on this topic emerging from the post-Franco era, the editors highlight how the idea of *imitatio imperii* needs to change to fully visualise the Visigothic monarchy during and even after its collapse in 711. Céline Martin’s first chapter on “Visigothic Spain and Byzantium” (pp. 29–51) quite aptly commences the volume with discussion of “The Story of a Special (Historiographical) Relationship”. Her treatment of ‘Byzantinism’ and engagement with pivotal twentieth century scholarship highlights the difficulties in navigating the post war dynamics of scholarship in Spain and Europe as a whole. The summary of arguments that Spain had a distinctly unique experience to that of the rest of post-Roman Europe helps to situate the rest of the chapters of this volume in the scholarship of a politically fragmented academic tradition, reinforcing the need for a fresh look at such topics. While her analysis of these scholars and their works is particularly beneficial, the extension of her study to publications produced at the turn of the millennium could have provided more refinement of a breakdown of the especially troublesome discourse surrounding it.

The next five chapters focus on the Visigothic Kingdom in Toulouse, with Ian Wood (“The Development of the Visigothic Court in the Hagiography of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries”, pp. 53–72) beginning these connected sections of the volume. Wood’s investigation concerns the development of the Visigothic court through the lens of both hagiography and archaeology, while also underlining the difficulty with the primary sources we have for the period in question. Despite this, he manages to articulate very well the uses of previously underused texts to support his argument (pp. 54–55). Nevertheless, some evidence comes across as wanting. A lack of certainty about his inference that a Gothic king resided in something as explicitly named as a *triclinium*, based on said king hosting mimes as entertainment, means that more explanation is needed (p. 56). Yet, even with some evidence needing more corroboration, Wood makes an interesting point about the

Burgundian *magister militum* Chilperic possibly being Nicene as opposed to Arian (pp. 59–60) – something that warrants more discussion in future research. Considering this, the chapter ends with some valid and good discussion of the importance of barbarian banquets or *convivium*, before presenting a short but prudent conclusion suggesting the use of non-traditional *imitatio* in the fifth to sixth centuries.

Merle Eisenberg’s chapter concerns “Experiments in Visigothic Rulership” and in particular “Minting and Monetary Reforms under Alaric II” (pp. 73–95). His study is primarily a numismatic one with a clinical breakdown of the legal aspects of coinage and this article should be regarded as an integral part of discourse into *imitatio imperii* as well as the Visigothic Kingdom itself. Eisenberg begins by shedding new light on the study of Visigothic coinage by challenging the implication that simply because a coin is stylistically worse it is therefore Visigothic (pp. 77–79). This is a view of note and should be considered more widely by numismatists analysing Visigothic coinage. Continuing in this combative vein, his refutation of traditional scholarly interpretations offers well needed refreshment of relatively old numismatic studies (pp. 79–82).³ While moving through a detailed account of monetary elements found within the *Breviary of Alaric*, Eisenberg eventually finishes by visiting an interesting concept whereby the Visigoths seemingly legally viewed themselves as Romans, indicating perhaps a wider trend that ought to be reviewed further (p. 88).

Next, Margarita Vallejo Girvés’ chapter (“A Comparison of Roman and Visigothic Approaches towards Exile”, pp. 97–122) investigates the penalty of exile by examining legal texts, hagiography, and other contemporary literature. Beginning with an outline of the use of exile in Roman law (“Exile in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine World”, pp. 98–100), she challenges Álvaro D’Ors’ interpretation as to how exile seemingly ‘disappeared’ from the legal tradition, and provides a convincing alternative theory

3 See chiefly W. Reinhart: Die Münzen des tolosanischen Reiches der Westgoten. In: Deutsches Jahrbuch für Numismatik 1, 1938, pp. 107–135; Additionally see X. Barral i Altet: La circulation des monnaies suèves et visigotiques. Contribution à l’histoire économique du royaume visigot. Zurich/Munich 1976 (Beihefte der Francia 4); L. Mordechai/A. M. Stahl: Late Antique and Early Medieval Imitations and the FLAME Database. In: Nordisk Numismatik Årsskrift N. S. 2, 2021, pp. 103–132.

(pp. 100–101).⁴ However, there is some dissonance in the organisation of the chapter, as after moving on with consideration of the legal and hagiographical evidence, only mid-way through does discussion of the definitions of terms like *exilium*, *relegatus* and *deportatus* in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* come in where logically one would expect it at the beginning (pp. 104–105).⁵ Moreover, one particular argument that exile was the most common punishment for treason does not hold up (pp. 106–108). While exile clearly was passed as a judgment for a range of crimes, *decalvatio*, amputation of the hand and ultimately execution appear more common.⁶ Unfortunately, this seems to link to other arguments in this chapter, suggesting there is some element of confirmation bias in the way primary sources, such as Isidore of Seville, the *Lives of the Fathers of Mérida* (henceforth VSPE) and John of Biclaro, are used as evidence for some of her claims. Nevertheless, the chapter finishes on a high by importantly highlighting that the influence of Justinianic Law on the Visigothic legal system was not as considerable as traditionally thought, despite the Byzantine conquest of the southern coast (pp. 108–115).⁷

4 See Á. D'Ors: *El Código de Eurico*. Edición, Palingenesia, Indices. 2nd ed. Madrid 2014 (Leyes Históricas de España).

5 Isid. *etymologiae* v. orig. 5.28–31.

6 On punishment for treason see P. D. King: *Law and Society in the Visigothic Kingdom*. Cambridge/New York 1972 (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought. Third Series 5), pp. 40–44, 151–152; On *decalvatio* see E. A. Thompson: *The Goths in Spain*. Oxford 1969, p. 104 (= 1985, p. 123); King (note 6 above), pp. 46, n. 6, pp. 89–90, 130–147; S. Teillet: *Des Goths à la nation gothique. Les origines de l'idée de nation en Occident du Ve au VIIe siècle*. Paris 1984 (Collection d'études anciennes), pp. 100, 445, 595; R. Barroso Cabrera/J. Morín de Pablos/I. M. Sánchez Ramos: *Gallaecia Gothica*. From the Conspiracy of Dux Argimundus (AD 589/590) to Integration in the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo. Translated by R. López Fernebrand. Oxford 2023, pp. 5–6; On amputation see: King (note 6 above), pp. 90–91, 111, 135, 186, 194; J. Arce: *Esperando a los árabes. Los visigodos en Hispania (507–711)*. Madrid 2011 (Estudios), pp. 154–157.

7 For traditional viewpoint see A. M. Jiménez Garnica: *El origen de la legislación civil visigoda sobre la prohibición de matrimonios entre romanos y godos: un problema de fundamento religioso*. In: *AHDE* 55, 1985, pp. 735–747; E. Osaba García: *Reflexiones en torno a las leyes visigodas*. In: *Monteagudo* 8, 2003, pp. 51–72; A. Dubreucq: *Le mariage dans la loi des Wisigoths*. In: M. Aurell/T. Deswarte (eds.): *Famille, violence et christianisation au Moyen Âge. Mélanges offerts à Michel Rouche*. Paris 2005 (Cultures et civilisations médiévales 31), pp. 29–56; J. Alvarado Planas: A

Cecily Hilsdale's essay ("The Roman Jewel in the Visigothic Crown. A Reassessment of the Royal Votive Crowns of the Guarrazar Treasure", pp. 123–149) brings a fascinating and unique interpretation into the study of the Visigothic Royal Votive Crowns with which scholars of Late Antiquity would do well to familiarise themselves. Beginning with a solid contextualisation of the crowns found in the Guarrazar Treasure (pp. 123–126) – particularly useful for those who may not be well versed in their history – Hilsdale underscores an often-overlooked point: that the modern term 'Byzantine' simply meant 'Roman' in this period (pp. 129–130). Her intricate detailing of both the imperial and religious reasons as to why the gemstones inlaid on items such as the crowns are important is crucial context for what comes next. Though admitting herself that the claim has "no definitive proof" (p. 133), her hypothesis that the largest crown in the hoard, adorned with the sapphire and pearl cross, may have originally belonged to Galla Placidia is an extremely tantalising proposal (pp. 132–135). This is important as it opens several discourses regarding *translatio imperii* and Byzantine influence. Finally, Hilsdale's argument behind the votive crown's construction is an intriguing and refreshing line of analysis that outlines the crown's place as an example of a uniquely Visigothic phenomenon beyond that simply of Byzantine *imitatio*.

The sixth chapter and the final part of this themed section is by Damián Fernández ("Capitalhood in the Visigothic Kingdom", pp. 151–177). Fernández's discussion of Toledo's rise as an important city in the Visigothic Kingdom leads to his highlighting that it had an "imagined" (p. 157) past rather than simply having been chosen as a royal city. His idea that the presence of a city, and as such its use, in literature does not mean evidence for its function as an *urbs regia* (pp. 157–159) is useful not only for the study of Visigothic *imitatio* but also for the smaller barbarian kingdom in Spain – the Suevi – where the use of Mérida and Braga as *sedes regiae* has had considerable discussion in recent years.⁸ Moreover, some healthy scepticism on the use of

modo de conclusiones: el *Liber Iudicum* y la aplicación del Derecho en los siglos VI a XI. In: MCV 41, 2011, pp. 109–127.

- 8 For Mérida as capital of the Suevic Kingdom see J. Arce: Mérida Tardorromana, 300–580 d.C. Mérida 2002 (Cuadernos emeritenses 22), pp. 185–187; Id.: The Enigmatic Fifth Century in Hispania: Some Historical Problems. In: H.-W. Goetz/J. Jarnut/W. Pohl (eds.): Regna and Gentes. The Relationship Between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World. Leiden/Boston 2003 (The Transformation of the Roman World 13), pp. 135–159,

the canons to VII Toledo, as well as the works of Ildefonsus and Julian of Toledo, lays the groundwork for understanding how Toledo was becoming the *urbs regia* most would see it as today (“Towards an *Urbs Regia*”, pp. 159–164). Finally, Fernández advances the concept of a careful balancing act between the increase of royal power alongside that of ecclesiastical power in Toledo seen in this period (“Ecclesiastical Politics and the Status of Toledo”, pp. 164–168). Engagement with the works of Isabel Velázquez and Antonio González Blanco help to support this discussion and overall further development of this topic is needed in future.⁹

As one of the editors, Molly Lester begins the second half of the volume with her investigation into the Roman and Byzantine traditions embedded within Iberian Christian liturgies (“Making Rite Choices. Roman and Eastern Liturgies in Early Medieval Iberia”, pp. 179–203). Lester’s work is valuable not only for religious studies but also that of cultural exchange within the Mediterranean. Unfortunately for modern scholars, the information we now possess of Christian liturgy of this period comes almost entirely from much later sources, a point which Lester does well to highlight as a problem in research of this area. Her reinforcement of arguments posed by the likes of José Janini, Michael Huglo, and Kenneth Levy emphasises the largescale continuing exchange of ideas between the flourishing states of the post-Roman Mediterranean (“Liturgical Drift in the Mediterranean World”, pp. 182–

esp. pp. 153–154; P. Ubic: The Church in the Suevic Kingdom (411–585 AD). In: J. D’Emilio (ed.): *Culture and Society in Medieval Galicia. A Cultural Crossroads at the Edge of Europe*. Leiden/Boston 2015 (The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World 58), pp. 210–243, p. 216; P. Mateos Cruz: La Mérida tardorromana: de capital de la *diocesis hispaniarum* a sede temporal de la monarquía sueva. In: J. López Quiroga/A. M. Martínez Tejera (eds.): *In Tempore Sueborum. El tiempo de los suevos en la Gallaecia (411–585). El primer reino medieval de Occidente. Volumen de estudios*. Ourense 2018, pp. 253–257, p. 253; Id.: Augusta Emerita in Late Antiquity: The Transformation of Its Urban Layout During the Fourth and Fifth Centuries CE. In: M. J. Kelly/M. Burrows (eds.): *Urban Interactions. Communication and Competition in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Binghamton, NY 2020, pp. 223–264, p. 239.

- 9 See A. González Blanco: El decreto de Gundemaro y la historia del siglo VII. In: *A&Cr* 3, 1986, pp. 159–169; I. Velázquez: *Pro patriae gentisque Gothorum statu* (4th Council of Toledo, Canon 75, A. 633). In: Goetz/Jarnut/Pohl (eds.): *Regna* (note 8), pp. 161–217.

185).¹⁰ Moreover, her inclusion of a section on liturgy in the Suevic Church (“Roman *Auctoritas* in the Suevic Kingdom”, pp. 185–189) is a welcome addition to a chapter on religious aspects in the Visigothic Kingdom, something which should be more common given their conversion to Catholicism before that of Reccared I in 587. If anything, there is, in fact, far too much high-quality discussion to be commented on within a review such as this but honourable mentions include further examination of the Gallaecian church and discussion of the Visigothic creed after Toledo III. Therefore, a final note will be on the particularly thought-provoking concept Lester advances that *imitatio* within liturgy of the Visigothic (and Suevic) Kingdom was of an idealised perception of imperial or ‘Roman’ traditions rather than of anything material.

Erica Buchberger’s chapter on “Ethnicity and *Imitatio* in Isidore of Seville” (pp. 205–222) is an excellent example of an exploration of key pieces of literary evidence for the Visigothic Kingdom while connecting two hotly debated topics of Late Antiquity. As a key supporter of the Visigothic monarchy – especially of a united Catholic-Gothic Kingdom – Isidore’s bias can sometimes skew the benefits of his works, yet Buchberger manages to navigate this extremely well. Beginning with a deep dive into the meanings of ethnicity in the works of Isidore of Seville, she offers some striking examples of the bishop’s inconsistencies while indicating that the important legal and religious aspects within his texts still shine through. Discussion of theories surrounding *imitatio* through the coopting of earlier texts to produce a more substantial Visigothic historiography and support the kingdom’s legitimacy will be of great interest to scholars involved in the study of ethnogenesis amongst the barbarian states.

David Addison’s chapter (“Re-imagining Roman Persecution in the Visigothic Passions”, pp. 223–251) presents an effective reassessment of martyr passions in the context of Visigothic society in the sixth and seventh centuries. Addison begins with the bold claim that most historians believe that most passions’ historical veracity is lacking, despite their obvious use as

10 J. Janini: Roma y Toledo. Nueva problemática de la liturgia visigótica. In: J. F. Rivera Recio (ed.): Estudios sobre la liturgia mozárabe. Toledo 1965 (Publicaciones del Instituto Provincial de Investigaciones y Estudios Toledanos. Serie 3: Estudios introducciones repertorios 1), pp. 33–53; M. Huglo: Les *Preces* des Graduels aquitains empruntées a la liturgie hispanique. In: Hispania sacra 8, 1955, pp. 361–383; K. Levy: Toledo, Rome and the Legacy of Gaul. In: Early Music History 4, 1984, pp. 49–99.

wider contextual evidence, before moving to situate these texts in the period of their creation. Articulating clear and convincing arguments, he manages to offer a proposal on when many sets of Iberian martyr passions were in fact authored (“The Passions and the *Pasionario*”, pp. 226–230). Furthermore, the ideas that many Roman civic texts, such as poetry, both influenced and were chastised by religious authors of the day highlights an interesting duality in the passions (“Oblivion and Eternity”, pp. 230–234). Addison’s closing sections purport a fascinating point linking Christian urban change with martyr cult sites in Iberia (“Topographies of Martyrdom”, pp. 234–238; “The Roman Crowd and the Christian Congregation”, pp. 238–242), connecting well with the following two chapters.

As such, Santiago Castellanos’ contribution on “Romanness in Visigothic Hagiography” (pp. 253–275) draws together complementary research on a wider view of the concept *imitatio* to be found within the Iberian hagiographical tradition. Discussion of hagiography within the context of the sixth and seventh centuries helps to show the differences between the dating of the texts themselves and that of the individual author’s motives (“Historical Contexts of Holy Men and Hagiographers”, pp. 255–259). Moreover, Castellanos’ examination of the concept that being ‘Roman’ enhanced prestige for characters within texts such as the VSPE without denigrating the sense of ‘Gothicness’ or showing ethnic conflict (“The Direct Use of Romanness”, pp. 259–261). Connected with arguments presented in the previous chapter, the idea that ‘Roman’ topography was still very much ‘alive’ in the sixth and seventh centuries is a crucial point that sometimes can be missed in the background of hagiographical texts (“Other Romanness: Roman Topographies”, pp. 262–266). Close analysis of the VSPE allows for Castellanos to put forward a particularly convincing and exciting argument that Roman social structures were coopted or replaced in the Visigothic Kingdom in the context of hagiographical texts to emphasise the positive traits of their main characters (“Becoming Non-Roman from a Roman Starting-Point: The Use of Social Structures”, pp. 266–269). This chapter is a remarkably strong addition to the volume and scholars of Iberian literature would benefit by familiarising with its treatment of the topics.

The last, and by no means least, chapter in this small series of related contributions concerns “Empire and the Politics of Faction. Mérida and Toledo Revisited” by Graham Barrett (pp. 277–315). Barrett’s addition is one of the highlights of the volume. Starting off especially strong, the presentation

of clean, convincing, and well laid out arguments based on textual analysis and even inscriptions from Mérida for the dual authorship of the VSPE itself is striking (“Authors and Agendas”, pp. 279–284). Of note is the appealing hypothesis that the archdeacon Eleutherius may have held the high reputation and position that Masona is claimed to have had within Book 5 of the VSPE (pp. 282–283). Barrett continues in this theme of re-evaluation, connecting effectively with Lester and Wood’s contributions on the exchange of cultures across the Mediterranean, with illuminating suggestions regarding the origins and details of the so-called ‘Masona faction’ including that of Paul, Fidel, and Masona himself (“Greeks and Gifts”, pp. 284–288). The final two sections combine hagiographical analysis with archaeological considerations through discussion of the spatial topography of both cities (“Martyrs and Miracles”, pp. 288–292; “Relics and Rulers”, pp. 292–297). Through this it is highlighted that important Christian locations and relic holding sites became a battleground between competing factions, as well as underscoring the ulterior motives of the second author of the VSPE.

The penultimate contribution to this volume comes from the last of the editorial troika, Jamie Wood (“The Agents and Mechanics of Connectivity. The Mediterranean World and the Cities of the Guadiana Valley in the Sixth Century”, pp. 317–344). Wood’s investigation into the connections between the upper Guadiana valley and Byzantium uses textual sources alongside archaeological evidence to show that the influence of the Eastern Empire was very much alive in areas other than Toledo and the province of *Spania*. Beginning with sound discussion of trade links and the interconnectedness of southwest Iberia and the Mediterranean, he importantly highlights that in the sixth century much of the peninsula wasn’t under consolidated Visigothic rule (“The Guadiana Valley”, pp. 321–323). While presenting textual analysis on the provincial capital of Mérida, Wood offers convincing suggestions about the role of Bishops as civic administrators in terms of foreign relations and economic management (pp. 324–329). Moreover, from the archaeological view, he gives evidence of economic imports flowing through and into Mérida from the Mediterranean (pp. 329–331). Though the analysis itself is strong, one would have liked to see a comparison to that of the Atlantic coast where strong imports have been identified by the likes of José Carlos Quaresma and José Carlos Sánchez Pardo as it may have shown fur-

ther evidence of the same connectivity that this chapter aims to highlight.¹¹ Wood goes on to give a stimulating, if short, section on the wealth of the lesser acclaimed city of Mértola (“The Port on the River: Mértola”, pp. 332–335) and its links with the Mediterranean by way of fascinating archaeological evidence found within the city. Finally, the last section of the chapter on communications in the Guadiana Valley (“Maintaining and Controlling Communications in the Guadiana Valley”, pp. 335–337) opens attractive research and discourse on the defensive sites built in the southwest. This is of particular use, as the potential links to a frontier or *limes* between the Suevic and Visigothic kingdoms in this period is something that is deserving of more exploration.¹²

The closing chapter belongs to Ann Christys (“Staying Roman after 711?”, pp. 345–367) and her alternative views of *imitatio* beyond that of the Visigothic Kingdom. The discussion itself is sound, including a grounding introduction that includes mentions of a variety of textual works from the Arab world. A note of particular interest is the idea that Islamic coins were not accepted because they didn’t look ‘Roman’ enough, showing that *imitatio imperii* was a concept not only belonging to the study of the post-Roman barbarian kingdoms. The important treatment of the Islamic lead coinage seals is of pertinence to an assortment of modern political and scholarly debates surrounding the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula after 711. The main drawbacks to this chapter are not the analysis itself, only of its fit with the title of the volume and, one might argue, its relevance or connection to the rest of the chapters found within. Nevertheless, it is overall a particularly thought-

11 J. C. Quaresma: Late Contexts from Olisipo (Lisbon, Portugal): Escadinhas de São Crispim. In: M. Duggan/S. Turner/M. Jackson (eds.): *Ceramics and Atlantic Connections: Late Roman and Early Medieval Imported Pottery on the Atlantic Seaboard*. International Symposium. Newcastle University, March 26th–27th 2014. Oxford 2020 (Roman and Late Antique Mediterranean Pottery 15), pp. 108–134; J. C. Sánchez Pardo: Late Antique Atlantic Contacts: The Case of Galicia. In: *Ibid.*, pp. 94–107; See also R. Portass: *The Village World of Early Medieval Northern Spain. Local Community and the Land Market*. Woodbridge/Rochester, NY 2017 (Royal Historical Society Studies in History. New Series 96); A. P. Magalhães/I. Vaz Pinto/P. Brum: Late Roman Imported Pottery in the Southwest of *Lusitania*: The Case of Tróia (Portugal). In: Duggan/Turner/Jackson (eds.): *Ceramics* (note 11), pp. 135–150.

12 For discussion of a Suevic-Visigothic frontier prior to the former’s conquest see Barroso Cabrera/Morín de Pablos/Sánchez Ramos (note 6), pp. 34–38.

provoking discussion and certainly something that scholars researching into the eighth century should become acquainted with.

The scholarly discussion of *imitatio imperii* is significantly advanced by the contributions of the various authors found within this volume. The editors have made great additions themselves and included chapters from academics of a range of backgrounds and interests. Much of the discussion has used evidence and methods not usually located in research of this topic and used lines of enquiry that have not been extensively employed to create a captivating debate. Conventional scholarship would consider the Visigothic Kingdom to be rife with ‘traditional’ *imitatio*; however, this is a concept that has certainly been shattered by the arguments and hypotheses contained in each chapter – a process that should be extended to the rest of the western kingdoms. While the second half of the volume loses some of the tightness of the connected topics found in the first six chapters, this does not detract from the overall quality of the work, and therefore it is the opinion of this review that many would profit to spend time reading over its pages.

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