

## Visigothic Kingship in Action: Impact and Re-signification

The study of Visigothic kingship has a long and respectable tradition. On the one hand, scholars have scrutinized the numerous normative texts from the Visigothic kingdom to recover the legal foundations of kingship and the institutions surrounding kings (court, councils, army). As a corollary, a robust series of studies that combine normative and historical texts have explored the interactions between kings and magnates and kings and bishops in what can be described as the kingdom's "high politics." On the other hand, scholars have combined the study of normative texts with theological treatises or descriptions of rituals to discuss cultural traditions of the post-imperial world. As a result, Visigothic kingship has been presented as having evolved from a supposed ancestral form of Gothic or Germanic kingship, as resulting from the transformation of Roman rulership, or as having developed Christian ideas of government.

This conference will gather experts in different areas of Visigothic history to redirect the study of kingship in new directions. By discussing "kingship in action," the papers will consider how different social actors perceived kingship, how they resignified and repurposed top-down ideas on kingship in the Visigothic kingdom and the early medieval polities after the kingdom's demise, and the perception of the materiality of kingship (buildings, art, coinage). Concurrently, contributors will explore how local practice and historical events shaped kingship "from below." The combination of a multidisciplinary approach will allow new ways of interpreting kingship, showing them to be more fragmentary and contingent institution than previously thought.

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# Visigothic Kingship in Action: Impact and Re-signification

June 11–13, 2026

Universität Hamburg



## Thursday, 11.06.2026

17.00 h **Sabine Panzram** (Universität Hamburg)  
**Damián Fernández** (Northern Illinois University)  
**Stefan Esders** (Freie Universität Berlin)  
*Welcome and Introduction*

### The Transformation of Visigothic Kingship

17.30 h **Jeroen Wijnendaele** (Ghent University)  
*Aquitanian Gothic Kingship: What it should have been and what it was*

18.15 h **Rocco Selvaggi** (Helmut-Schmidt-Universität / Universität der Bundeswehr Hamburg)  
*Can We Trust the Visigothic King? Roman Perspectives on the Visigothic Settlement in Aquitania*

20.00 h Reception

## Friday, 12.06.2026

09.30 h **Paulo Pachá** (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro)  
*Was the Visigothic Kingdom of Toledo a Theocracy? Sacred Kingship and the Nature of Power*

10.15 h **Céline Martin** (Université Bordeaux-Montaigne)  
*The Episcopal Model in Visigothic Kingship*

11.00 h Coffee

11.30 h **Molly Lester** (US Naval Academy)  
*Religious Rulership Reworked: Visigothic Experiments in Orthodox Kingship*

12.15 h **Kay Boers** (University of Amsterdam)  
*Rapina Civium: Poverty and Kingship in the Visigothic Kingdom*

13.00 h Lunch

### Kingship and Rebellion

15.30 h **Wolfram Drews** (Universität Münster)  
*Sacral Kingship Performed in Historiography: The Opposition of Princeps Religiosus and Tyrant in Julian of Toledo*

16.15 h **María Esperanza Osaba García** (Universidad del País Vasco)  
**Stefan Esders** (Freie Universität Berlin)  
*The Deposition of Archbishop Sisbert of Toledo (690-693): Kingship, High Treason and Political Trials in Late Seventh-Century Visigothic Iberia*

17.00 h Coffee

### Visigothic Kingship and Historical Memory

17.30 h **Julia Aguilar Miquel** (Universidad de Valencia)  
*The Concept of Kingship in Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel: a Visigothic Heritage?*

18.15 h **Jorge Elices Ocón** (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Madrid)  
*Visigothic Kingship in Arabic Sources: an Image in/between Contexts*

20.30 h Dinner

## Saturday, 13.06.2026

### Kingship and the Law

09.30 h **Damián Fernández** (Northern Illinois University)  
*The Visigothic Politics of Land: Royal Gifts and Property Rights*

10.15 h **Pablo Díaz** (Universidad de Salamanca)  
*Regia potestas/iudicandi potestas: King and Monopoly of the Law in the Liber Iudiciorum*

11.00 h Coffee

### The Material and Spatial Contexts of Kingship

11.30 h **Sabine Panzram** (Universität Hamburg)  
*„The Power of Cities“? Local Government and Kingship in Visigothic Iberia*

12.15 h

**Lauro Olmo Enciso** (Universidad de Alcalá)  
*State Formation and Visigothic Kingship: An Interpretation through Materiality*

13.00 h

Lunch

15.30 h

**José Carlos López Gómez** (Universidad de Málaga / Universität Hamburg)  
*Episcopal Control over Territory in Suevic and Visigothic Iberia: Insights from Spatial Technologies*

16.15 h

**Manuel Castro Priego** (Universidad de Alcalá)  
*Pavements, Rituals, and Coins: The Reccopolis Treasure and Its Mediterranean Connections (6th–8th Centuries)*

17.00 h

Coffee

17.30 h

**Sabine Panzram** (Universität Hamburg)  
**Damián Fernández** (Northern Illinois University)  
**Stefan Esders** (Freie Universität Berlin)  
*Conclusions: Visigothic Kingship in Action: Divine-like, Sacralized, Theocratic...?*

20.30 h

Conference Dinner

### Location

Warburg-Haus  
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*Tremissis showing Liuvigild(?)  
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