The Medieval Spains
400 to 1492
Roman Spain
Fortune is of sluggish growth, but ruin is rapid.
~Seneca
More complex societies are more costly to maintain than simpler ones, requiring greater support levels per capita. [...] It is the thesis of this chapter that return on investment in complexity varies, and that this variation follows a characteristic curve. More specifically, it is proposed that, in many crucial spheres, continued investment in sociopolitical complexity reaches a point where the benefits for such investment begin to decline, at first gradually, then with accelerated force. Thus, not only must a population allocate greater and greater amounts of resources to maintaining an evolving society, but after a certain point, higher amounts of this investment will yield smaller increments of return. Diminishing returns, it will be shown, are a recurrent aspect of sociopolitical evolution, and of investment in complexity.

~Joseph Tainter
Tainter’s 11 Themes of Collapse

1) Depletion or cessation of vital resources
2) Establishment of new resource base
3) Insurmountable catastrophe
4) Insufficient response to circumstance
5) Other complex societies
6) Intruders
7) Class conflict, societal contradictions, elite mismanagement
8) Social dysfunction
9) Mystical factors
10) Chance concatenation of events
11) Economic factors.
5th Century Barbarian Invasion
Vandals, Suebi & Alans
This map shows the breakdown of the Roman frontier in the late fourth and early fifth centuries CE. Great cities including Augusta Treverorum (modern Trier) and Rome itself were sacked by invading barbarian forces. Historians debate the reasons for what happened, but one of them was the rise of the Huns in Central Asia. As they moved westwards, they pushed against the various Germanic and Gothic tribes. These, in turn, looked for refuge and plunder inside the Roman Empire.
The Visigoths
5th Century Visigothic Kings

Athaulf (410–415) Assassinated by Sigeric.
Sigeric (415) Assassinated after seven days on the throne.
Wallia (415–419) Died of Natural Causes.
Theodoric I (419–451). Killed fighting Atilla the Hun
Thorismund (451–453) Son of Theodoric. Assassinated by brother
Theodoric II
Theodoric II (453–466) Son of Theodoric. Assassinated by brother Euric
Euric (466–484) Died of natural causes.
Alaric II (484–507) Killed in battle against Franks
"The Goths had adopted the reprehensible habit of killing out of hand any king who displeased them and replacing him on the throne by someone they preferred,"

~ Gregory of Tours
6th Century Visigothic Kings

Gesalec (507–511) Captured and executed by Ostrogoths
  Theoderic the Great (511–526) King of Ostrogoths, regent for Amalaric.
Amalaric (511–531) Assassinated.
Theudis (531–548) Assassinated.
Theudigisel (548–549) Assassinated during a banquet by outraged husbands.
Agila I (549–554) Assassinated.
Athanagild (554–568) Died of natural causes.
Liuva I (568–572) Died of natural causes.
  Hermenegild (580–585), son of Liuvigild, Ruled as Sub-king in Baetica.
    Converted to Catholicism. Rebelled & executed by Liuvigild.
    Converted to Catholicism in 587. Died of natural causes.
“Under anarchy, uncoordinated competitive theft by ‘roving bandits’ destroys the incentive to invest and produce, leaving little for either the population or the bandits. Both can be better off if a bandit sets himself up as a dictator—a ‘stationary bandit’ who monopolizes and rationalizes theft in the form of taxes. A secure autocrat has an encompassing interest in his domain that leads him to provide a peaceful order and other public goods that increase productivity. Whenever an autocrat expects a brief tenure, it pays him to confiscate those assets whose tax yield over his tenure is less than their total value. This incentive plus the inherent uncertainty of succession in dictatorships imply that autocracies will rarely have good economic performance for more than a generation. The conditions necessary for a lasting democracy are the same necessary for the security of property and contract rights that generates economic growth”

~Mancur Olsen
7th Century Visigothic Kings

Witteric (603–610) Arian. Assassinated
Gundemar (610–612) Died of Natural Causes.
Sisebut (612–621) Assassinated
Reccared II (621) Died of natural causes.
Sisenand (631–636) Died of natural causes.
Chintila (636–640) Died of natural causes.
Tulga (640–641) Dressed by Chindiswinth. Tonsured and sent to a monastery.
Chindasuinth (641–653) Died of natural causes at age 89.
Recceswinth (649–672), son of Chindiswinth. Died of natural causes.
7th & 8th Century Visigothic Kings

Wamba (672–680) Resigned and entered a monastery.
Erwig (680–687) Son of Ardabast an Armenian or Persian émigré.
   Resigned and entered a monastery.
Egica (687–702) Son-in-law of Erwig. Died of natural causes
Wittiza (694–710) Son of Egica. Fate unclear.
Roderic (710–711) ???
Al-Andalus
711 AD