Romanness a multiple identity and its changes


“Most reuses of things Roman were undertaken because they were Roman, or at least knowing that they were. But few of them implied adopting a Roman identity proper. Charlemagne may have become a Roman emperor, but that hardly meant that he also became a Roman. Why should he want to?” 407

How one could be Roman in the Middle Ages under researched

a. identification as Roman rare in early medieval sources

b. Roman survival and continuity argued in terms of people “surviving”

Roman-barbarian dichotomy unhelpful after the period when imperial Romanness gone

“The crucial role of a unifying Roman vision does not imply that we should think of Romanness as an intrinsically homogeneous cultural system. That was the Renaissance perception of classical antiquity derived from the self-representation of the imperial elites.” 409

“It has been argued that we can interpret the ‘end of antiquity’ in the west as a disappearance of central Romanness, whereas regional Romanness survived where it was grounded in a solid economic basis and in a negotiated settlement with new barbarian elites.” 409