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MONASTICISM IN THE KINGDOMS OF LEON AND CASTILE (NINTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES): AN APPROACH TO ITS SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

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Resumen

El desarrollo de los estudios sobre el monacato en la Corona de Castilla en el último medio siglo ha renovado nuestra visión del mismo con la incorporación de nuevos temas y la reconsideración de los anteriores. El análisis de los dominios monásticos, la relación entre monasterios y sociedad, la creación y gestión de la memoria, el monacato femenino o las formas de vida monástica y las reglas y costumbres han atraído la atención de los historiadores. Ello ha permitido mejorar nuestro conocimiento de la economía, de la sociedad o de la cultura en general, así como de los monasterios y las comunidades que los ocupaban.

Palabras clave:
monacato, Castilla, León, Edad Media.

Abstract

The development of studies concerning monasticism in the Kingdom of Castile over the last half century has changed our perception of monasticism through the incorporation of new topics and a reconsideration of the old ones. The analysis of monastic domains, the relation between monasteries and society, the creation and management of memory, female monasticism and other forms of monastic life, and its rules and customs have all attracted the interest of historians. This has improved our knowledge of the economy, the society and the culture of the time, both in general and with regard to the monasteries and their communities.

Key words:
monasticism, Castile, Leon, Middle Ages.

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The historiography of the monasteries of the western Iberian kingdoms has made great strides in recent decades, taking advantage of the fact that a very important part of the documentation up to the 13th century is of monastic origin[1]. This paper aims to offer a summary of the state of the art, recapitulate the main achievements made with regard to the Kingdoms of Leon and Castile and provide an overview of the perspectives of analysis that are opening up in this field[2]. Our knowledge of medieval monasticism in Leon and Castile, along with our understanding of its economic dimension, its overlapping with society, its relationship with the different powers and the implantation of the different religious orders, has improved considerably in recent decades. However, there are still many pending issues and new perspectives for analysis are opening up along the lines of the recent syntheses at the Western European level (Vanderputten 2020; Beach, Cochelin 2020). The dimensions of this article necessarily limit the number of bibliographical references and narrow its scope to the 8th to 13th centuries, without addressing the late Middle Ages. To a large extent, it is a reflection that is based on a previous, more extensive synthesis (Reglero 2021).

Early medieval monasticism (8th-11th centuries)

Documentation dating from the 9th-11th centuries mentions a very large number of monasteries, for which data barely exist. This lack of data has led to the belief that they were in fact churches, self-styled as monasteries to elude the power of the bishop. In the second half of the 7th century, the *Regla Común (*Common Rule) denounced the proliferation of false monasteries, founded by rich owners, peasants or clergy, who sought to obtain alms from the faithful and other economic or legal advantages (Díaz Martínez 1987, 2011). Beyond the issue of the devotional sincerity of these monks and nuns, small monastic communities predominated, communities whose existence lasted not more than one or two generations, coinciding with the lives of their promotors. This fact did not preclude the existence of relatively large monasteries, including San Millán de Suso in La Rioja, the Monastery of Cardeña in Castile, the monasteries of Samos and Celanova in Galicia and that of Sahagún in Leon, all of which boasted major patrimonies and maintained their activity over centuries (García de Cortázar 2007b).

Historians of the 1970s and 1980s paid particular attention to the domains of the main monasteries of this period. Following the model of José Ángel García de

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2. This state of the art summary has been carried out at the request of the ARDIT-Cultures Medievals association, the organizer of the virtual seminar "Església, Litúrgia i religiositat a l'edat mitjana" (Church, Liturgy and religiosity in the Middle Ages) (2021).

Cortázar for San Millán de la Cogolla (García de Cortázar 1969), the monastery was used as a vantage point from which early medieval economy and society could be observed (Reglero 2010). This is how monastic "repopulation" was studied, referring to the exploitation of the territory by or under the direction of monastic communities, which exerted or directed these land seizures (García de Cortázar 2007a). The accumulation of estates in the hands of the great monasteries, mainly through donations, but also through purchases and exchanges, provided insight into the development of large extensions of property, with domains that were mainly made up of farmland, vineyards, pastures and mountains, but also included mills and orchards. On the other hand, a spatial analysis of domains such as that of Sahagún suggested the development of transhumance routes from the Cantabrian mountain range to the River Duero (Mínguez 1980). Finally, the increase in monastic power over the peasants was linked to the genesis of feudalism in the western kingdoms of the peninsula (García de Cortázar 1989).

In the following decades the focus shifted to the relations between monasteries and society. Kings, counts, and other members of the aristocracy founded monasteries over which they exercised close control for generations. These are known as family or family-owned monasteries, whose property was transmitted through hereditary distributions, like other types of property. The "heirs" had the right to be buried in the cemeteries of said monasteries, to profess in their communities before dying, to be cared for in their old age or poverty, and to eat and stay there with their retinues. In addition, they managed the properties of the monastery, which gave them the ability to dispose of their assets and income in case of need (Martínez Sopena 1991, 2003, 2007).

Some aristocratic women, especially after being widowed, consecrated themselves to God as a "servant of Christ" or *Deo vota*. Without professing in a monastery as nuns, they governed the family monasteries both economically and socially (Montenegro, Castillo 2011). The prominent role played by these women contrasts with the scarcity of actual female monasteries, although several of these family monasteries, along with other small monasteries, had a dual character, or, at least, allowed some women to live together with them, under the guidance of the abbot (Reglero 2021: 113-124).

Not all monasteries belonged to the aristocracy; some large monasteries governed themselves under the protection of the King of Leon or the Count of Castile, while others, smaller in size, were linked to peasant communities or depended on a bishop. This did not prevent them from being immersed in a web of social relations that linked them to both the powerful and the local population, regardless of their wealth (García Cacho 2017).

The conciliar canons, and specifically those of the Visigothic Church, placed the monasteries under the jurisdiction of the bishops, while protecting the monks and their properties from episcopal abuses and giving them autonomy in the economic

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field (Díaz Martínez 1987: 53-60). Few studies have analysed these relationships in the Early Middle Ages, and those that have been carried out focus on the fact that the monasteries of the time, unlike the churches, were not subject to episcopal administration. Notwithstanding, it must be emphasized that this did not prevent the monks from turning to these prelates for the consecration of their churches and abbots, for their profession as monks, converts or confessors, or for the resolution of disputes that confronted them with other clerics or monasteries (Carbajo Serrano 1988: 93-97). On the other hand, the bishops were also owners of some monasteries, the numbers of which increased throughout the 11th century. Despite the scarcity of sources, this is a topic that merits more attention.

The separation between the secular and regular clergy was not as great as it would be after the Gregorian Reforms. It was by no means uncommon that a bishop should previously have been the abbot of a monastery, as had happened in the Visigothic period. In the 11th century, the Navarrese dynasty promoted the system of bishop-abbots in Navarre and Castile: the king promoted an abbot to a nearby episcopal seat, which he governed without abandoning his previous office, taking advantage of the economic resources of the monastery (Fortún 2013). In some sees, the cathedral clergy were able to live in a community under a rule or the bishop organized the parishes –understood as the ancient parish, which comprised numerous locations and was the equivalent of later archdeaconships or archpriestships, rather than the classical parish – under the government of abbots, who governed the monk-clerics, as described by the Council of Coyanza of 1055, which prescribed the rule of Saint Benedict or Saint Isidoro (García Gallo 1951; Isla 2006: 93-130). In addition, it seems that the monasteries and their monks were able to take responsibility for the pastoral care of nearby local communities.

Early medieval monasteries in the kingdom of Leon did not follow a single rule nor were there dominant customs. Two themes have especially attracted the attention of scholars: pact-based monasticism and the diffusion – or rather, the non-implementation – of the Benedictine rule. The monastic Pact, which remained attached to the Common Rule, entailed the acceptance of the authority of the abbot by the monks, but also the limitation of this authority through the establishment of appeal mechanisms for grievances. Monks were able to protest or question an abbot's decisions both within the monastery (to the deans or provosts) and externally (to the assembly of local abbots led by the bishop who lived "under the rule" or even to a count) (Isla 1992: 32-35). This exceptional measure is documented in some covenants from Galicia, with an earlier chronology, and from Castile, dating from somewhat later. However, most monastic covenants are simply documents in which the monks accepted the authority of the abbot, which was a necessary requirement for their consecration by the bishop. The monastic pact has been linked to the survival of a more locally-based social organisation, with "egalitarian" peasant societies, which are thought to have been disappearing in these centuries in the face of increasing hierarchisation (Bishko 1984; Isla 1992: 17-40).

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The problem of the diffusion of the Rule of Saint Benedict derives from a comparison with the Carolingian world, including Catalonia, where, according to the traditional view, since the reform of Benedict of Aniane, the rule had been followed in a general way and in accordance with the prescriptions of the Carolingian councils. This is in contrast to Asturian-Leonese monasticism, where it would not have been established until the arrival of the Cluniacs in the last quarter of the 11th century (Linage 1973a). This view has been nuanced in recent years. On the one hand, the diversity within Carolingian and post-Carolingian monasticism has been highlighted, which has been interpreted in different ways, challenging the image of a common Benedictine ideal. On the other hand, our growing knowledge regarding Benedictine rule in the western lands of Hispania, mainly in Rioja and Castile, but also in Leon and Galicia, has also been influential. From the middle of the 10th century, mentions of this rule multiply, and a rule for a monastery of nuns is even preserved, based on that of Saint Benedict, as well as commentaries on it by Abbot Esmaragdo (Linage 1973b). This does not mean that the Carolingian interpretation of the rule was followed, much less the Cluniac one, but it does mean that the Benedictine rule had already acquired considerable prestige and that some of its provisions were accepted (Reglero 2018).

Life in the monastery was marked by what is called the mixed rule, i.e. by rules taken from different texts of the monastic tradition. The abbot could rely on a code in which various rules or writings on monastic life were copied, and he consulted them to solve the problems that arose in everyday life (Velázquez Soriano 2006). Reference is also made to the rule that the abbot had to present to the bishop upon his consecration. This subject merits attention, since it is possible that it was a pact of acceptance by the monks of the monastery or brief extracts from different rules or pious texts that the community undertook to follow.

The role of monasteries as centres of written culture is a cliché in historiography and, as such, there is some truth in it, but also an element of exaggeration. The most important monasteries undoubtedly hosted prominent libraries. These libraries could hold dozens of books, mostly liturgical, but there were also some works of literature, theology, law and history. Virgil's *Aeneid*, which is mentioned in some donations, and other texts by classical authors, such as Horace or Cicero, were copied to improve the Latin grammar that had been learnt from the manuals of Donatus and Priscian. Collections of canons, such as the *Collectio Hispana*, which contained the ecumenical councils, those of Toledo and others from Gaul and Africa, as well as the *Liber Iudiciorum* (Book of Judgments), a compilation of the laws of the Visigothic monarchy, were kept for practical purposes, although they were sometimes copied in rich, illuminated, prestigious codices, such as the *Albeldense* and the *Emilianense*. The works of the great ecclesiastical scholars of the kingdom of Toledo, such as Isidore of Seville or Ildefonso of Toledo, constituted the fundamental part of the non-liturgical collections, together with works from the Latin monastic tradition,

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such as the *Moralia* or commentaries on the *Book of Job* and the *Dialogues* of Gregory the Great, or the texts of John Cassian, Augustine of Hippo or Smaragdus, all of which were included among the so-called "spiritual" books, as they were intended for monks to read and meditate on in order to deepen in their Christian and ascetic life (Díaz y Díaz 1983, 2007).

As far as the copying of books in the monastery's *scriptoria* was concerned, this was a task aimed at supplying both the monastery's own library and that of other monasteries or cathedrals, including commissions from travellers. It was a difficult task, in which the master worked with his disciple, with the support of the person in charge of preparing the parchments, as shown in a miniature of the *Beato de Tábara* (Yarza Luaces 2003: 193-194). These were not large copying workshops with dozens of monks at work, but rather a highly specialised task for which few were trained (Fernández Flórez 2016: 32-38). Nor were monks renowned for the production of original works. Even the best known of these works, the *Commentaries on the Apocalypse* by Beatus of Liébana, is, for the most part, a compilation of earlier texts (González Echegaray 1995). A study of the codices of this period provides the best insight into the monastic culture of the period.

The arrival of the large religious orders

The introduction of Benedictine monasticism of Cluniac inspiration took place starting in the second quarter of the 11th century, thanks to the support of Sancho III the Great of Navarre. This shift entailed profound changes both in the liturgy and in attire. Intercessory prayer for the deceased was also reinforced. The initial expansion, which was based on the adaptation of Cluny customs by Abbot Paterno of San Juan de la Peña, eventually reached the lands of La Rioja and Castile (Reglero 2018). Later, Alfonso VI donated the monastery of San Isidro de Dueñas to Cluny (1073), which was the first of a small network of Cluniac priories in the Kingdom of Leon that were formed over the following decades thanks to the support of the royal family and part of the aristocracy (Reglero 2008). Other abbeys, though not being subordinate to Cluny, gradually accepted its customs and, with them, its way of understanding Benedictine monasticism. This process culminated in the mid-12th century, when the penetration of Cistercian monasticism led the Benedictines to opt for one or another model of interpreting the rule. At that time, in Leon and Castile, both the original customs of Cluny and those adapted in Sahagún began to spread (Mattoso 1968: 120-129; Reglero 2012: 144-146).

Cistercian expansion also had the support of the royal family and, in particular, of certain aristocratic families, including the Traba and Haro families. It was the Traba family who donated Sobrado to Clairvaux (1142), the first Hispanic Cistercian monastery (Alonso Álvarez 2007a). Over the following decades, the Cistercian Order gradually took over former family monasteries belonging to the aristocracy,

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where its monks settled, as well as founding new monasteries. In addition, there were groups of Benedictine monks or ascetic communities who accepted Cistercian customs, such as those at Valparaíso and Carracedo. At the end of the 13th century, there were almost forty male Cistercian monasteries in the Kingdom of Castile, which testifies to the extension of the spread of this order (Cocheril 1964; Pérez Embid 1986; Baury 2019). It should be noted, however, that many of these monasteries were founded or affiliated from the end of the 12th century onwards, when the Order had foregone the most extreme manifestations of its initial asceticism.

The Premonstratensian order, which followed the Augustinian rule but shared organisational and ascetic characteristics with the Cistercians, was less widespread and many of its monasteries were of little importance. In this case, it was the Counts of Urgel and the Lara family who gave them the most support. The rule of Saint Augustine was followed, with varying degrees of severity, by very different groups of clerics: monasteries or canon houses affiliated to congregations such as Saint Rufus of Avignon or the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, some cathedral councils and collegiate churches - although the majority tended to secularise - and clerics who assisted at hospitals (Claustro 2009; Calvo Gómez 2016). Among these, the abbey and hospital of Benevívere stands out for its originality, looking to Augustinian and Cistercian elements when drawing up its own book of customs (1179), a text that merits careful study (Fernández 1962).

During the 12th century, especially in its second half, there was an initial expansion of female monasticism. This mostly followed the Benedictine rule, but, while traditional monasticism dominated in Galicia with the nuns of the "*negra toca*" (black headdress), in the Duero valley and La Rioja, a Cistercian-inspired monasticism prevailed, often under the leadership of the Monastery of las Huelgas in Burgos, which ended up being accepted in the Order (Coelho 2006; Baury 2012; Pérez Rodríguez 2019). At the end of the 13th century, there were as many female as male Cistercian monasteries in the Kingdom of Castile, adding those of the black nuns, those dependent on the military orders and some pre-monstratensian monasteries of lesser importance and duration (Mujeres 2017).

During the 13th century, and especially in its first half, the establishment of Cistercian monasteries, both male and female, continued, but the mendicant orders accounted for most of the new foundations. As in other kingdoms, the convents of the Franciscan Friars Minor or Franciscans were more numerous than those of the Preachers or Dominicans, tripling them in the case of the male friars. The success of the Franciscans is reflected in the creation of three provinces in Spain in 1239, two of them (Castile and Santiago) in the Crown of Castile; although the Dominicans did not separate Aragon from Castile until around 1300 (Rucquoi 1996, García Serrano 1997; García Oro 2006). On the other hand, almost all the female mendicant convents in the 13th century were communities of Damianite, Minorite or Poor Clare nuns, due to the reluctance of the Dominicans to take charge of their care

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(Graña 1994, 2013, 2014). It was precisely the incorporation into the Dominicans of the Monastery of the Dueñas of Zamora that caused a major scandal, illustrating the internal tensions in the community between the philodominic and the philoepiscopal factions (Linehan 1999). In fact, a significant number of the first female mendicant monasteries emerged from pre-existing communities of women, who accepted or were induced to live under such rules.

The scarcity of reliable information on male mendicants in the first half of the 13th century, due to their refusal to own property, comes to an end in the middle of the century. Papal privileges and the construction of new monasteries in more central locations led to conflicts with the secular clergy or with the already-established canons and monks: the long-standing dispute between the canons of the cathedral and the Dominicans in Burgos is a good example of this (Linehan 1992). By then, they had become a fundamental part of urban life, having seen their initial radical poverty reduced and having gained the support of the powerful, ranging from the royal family to the urban oligarchy.

As happened with the early Middle Ages, those monastic domains attracted a great deal of attention for almost two decades. The process of formation of the great Benedictine domains was studied, which made it possible to observe the differences between the Black Monks and the Cistercians. The chronology of the expansion of the former occupied the second half of the 11th century and the first half of the 12th century; while from that time onwards, donations went mainly to the latter and, to a lesser extent, to the Premonstratensians. On the other hand, Benedictines of Cluniac influence benefited from the donation of a large number of churches (the source of long and bitter conflicts with the bishops over the payment of tithes, the appointment of clergy and ecclesiastical jurisdiction), as well as rights over the men in the corresponding villages and some towns (Sahagún, Oña, Santo Domingo de Silos), mirroring the lordships of the nobility. In contrast, the Cistercians created extensive farms (Pérez Embid 1986; Andrade 1997; Reglero 2010). Although all the historical studies on this period dealt with management and administration systems in greater or lesser depth, information regarding this field is scarce and heterogeneous: the system of obediences and offices in the Benedictine monasteries varies from one monastery to another, and the accounts of the holdings are missing. Perhaps new studies of the monasteries of an order or region as a whole will shed light on this aspect. In any case, the Benedictine domains of the Black Monks were already showing clear signs of crisis in the second half of the 13th century, when the Cistercians were still holding their own (Reglero 2010).

Our knowledge of the monastic community of the time is still deficient. Beyond the names and economic activity of the abbots and monastery officials, little is known about the monks themselves (Edades 2019). Occasionally a member of a prominent noble family appears as a monk or friar, but this is not the norm. There are also few reports regarding the observance of the rule and customs, apart from

visits by the Cluniac priories at the end of the 13th century, which denounce the relaxation of cloister discipline (Pérez Celada 1998; Reglero 2014: 205-213). The lists of witnesses show the presence around the monks of groups of clerics and chaplains, servants of different ranks and lay people linked to the monastery through economic and spiritual ties. At times, the monastery was in dispute with the councils and the bishop over these *familiares*, discussing whether or not they were affected by the interdict, whether they should be taxed or exempt, and, ultimately, to what extent they were part of the monastic community (Reglero 2008: 438-455, 553-558). This is another subject pending systematic research.

The study of the relationship between the monastery and the laity has focused on the aristocracy. The foundation of a monastery or its handing over to a religious order, the donations made by a noble family over several generations, the disputes and agreements about the possession of villages and estates, the choice of its cemetery as a burial place and agreements regarding prayers for the souls of the deceased are recurrent issues (Martínez Sopena 2003, 2007; Monasterios 2014). The theme of aristocratic patronage has highlighted the role of female devotees in the administration and protection of family monasteries. The *Deo votae* of the High Middle Ages became, in the 11th-13th centuries, the *dominae* of the *Infantado* of Leon or the *ladies* of the Cistercian monasteries, whether they were the *infantas* of the Huelgas de Burgos or the women of the Haro family in their respective foundations (Martin 2006; Baury 2012; Cayrol 2014, Reglero 2016). In any case, ties of patronage were often diluted (Baury 2012: 109-111), either due to the desire of the monks to maintain their freedom, or because of the tendency of kings and rich men to found their own monastery for their burial, so that family pantheons are scarce and used more by the secondary members of the family than by the main ones, sometimes called "heads of the lineage". The choice of monasteries as burial places, whether in the cemetery, the cloister or the church, has attracted considerable attention, especially from art historians concerned both with the artistic value of the tombs and the funerary chapels or churches built to house them (Senra 2006; Alonso Álvarez 2007b; Monasterios 2014). However, although the formation of family "pantheons" and their limits is a well-known subject with respect to the royal family, this aspect requires systematisation in the case of the aristocracy (Alonso Álvarez 2012; Baury 2012: 77-80, 99-100).

Other evidence of the "memory" of the deceased, and of their liturgical commemoration, are the inscriptions in necrologies and obituaries, which are scarcer in monasteries than in cathedrals, which is why there are fewer studies available. Nevertheless, there are examples, such as those the monasteries of San Zoilo of Carrión or San Isidoro of Leon, where both the monks or canons and the benefactors and familiars of the monastery are listed (Neiske, Reglero 2007; Reglero 2020, 2022). The aim of these codices was to preserve the memory of the deceased for the purpose of intercessory prayer, which gradually became the focus of those who

founded an anniversary or chaplaincy, especially from the end of the 12th century onwards. Endowment documents usually specify the type and frequency of the liturgy requested or agreed upon with the monks, as well as the properties or rents that would fund it. These donations gave rise to important disputes regarding the burial of some of the deceased between the monasteries of monks, nuns and friars on the one hand, and the cathedrals and parish churches on the other. Specific cases have been studied (Linehan 1992), but a more systematic overview is lacking.

These conflicts, which spread throughout Latin Christendom, ended up being resolved by the papacy and his delegated judges, on the basis of specific privileges granted to the orders or monasteries and conciliar provisions. The relationship between the monasteries of Leon and the papacy began with the granting of "Roman liberty" by Gregory VII to Sahagún (1083). Over the next two centuries, this and another small group of monasteries obtained various privileges, especially exemption from episcopal jurisdiction, as well as indulgences in their favour. Cluniacs, Cistercians and Mendicants enjoyed similar privileges, which they tried to apply to their monasteries. Research on the Galician Cistercians has shown the limits of such exemptions and the maintenance, in many cases, of episcopal power (Renzi 2014).

The relationship with the papacy intensified during the 13th century. From the IV Lateran Council (1215), the system of Benedictine congregations and visits to monasteries were promoted. These congregations were created in the Kingdom of Castile, as was the case in the provinces of Toledo and Santiago, but they had an ephemeral and rather inactive existence (Zaragoza 1997; Pérez Rodríguez 2019: 241-245). The Pope and his delegates commissioned visits, even to the exempt monasteries, but the monasteries resisted losing their independence. These relations are not as well known as those between the Pope and his delegates and the bishops and cathedrals.

In the cultural sphere, the attention paid to the creation of historical accounts by the great Benedictine monasteries such as San Millán de la Cogolla, Cardeña, Sahagún or Arlanza is particularly noteworthy. The creation of pseudo-historical legends linking each monastery to a king, count or hero (the Cid in Cardeña) aimed to attract royal protection when the shift of devotion towards the new orders, aristocratic aggressiveness and falling incomes threatened their status (García de Cortázar 2003a, 2003b). There are also many monastic chronicles, such as those of the monastery of Sahagún, which provide their view of the conflict with the town's bourgeoisie (García, Reglero 2014). Another, more traditional strategy was the development of hagiography, writings on the lives and miracles of their patron saints, both to serve as an example to their monks and to attract alms from the faithful (Pérez Embid 2002; García de Cortázar 2016). The image of Saint Dominic of Silos as liberator of the Christians held captive by the Muslims in the 13th century is a good example of the latter.

The writing of these texts may have been the work of clerics or monks from outside the original community, as exemplified by Gonzalo de Berceo, who wrote the lives, in romance, of Saint Millán and Saint Domingo de Silos. This cleric from La Rioja had grown up in San Millán de la Cogolla, but was not a monk (Baños 1997: xxix-xxxv). In contrast, it was Pero Marín, a monk at Santo Domingo de Silos, who compiled the miracles of the monastery's patron saint (ANTÓN 1988). Authorship and patronage are difficult to disentangle.

The appearance of the mendicant orders also generated academic interest. These friars dominated the cultural panorama of the 13th century at monastic centres, creating their own network of teaching, coordinated with university studies. This relegated monasteries such as San Isidoro of Leon to a secondary role, despite it having been an important centre in the 12th and first third of the 13th century, associated with figures such as Martinino of Leon (Santo Martinino 1987) and Lucas de Tuy, and, very probably, the author (Ordoño Sisnándiz?) of the *Historia Legionense*, otherwise known as *Silense* (Martin 2018).

Finally, it should be noted that studies from the field of Art History usually gather documentary information on the monasteries before focusing on artistic aspects (architecture, sculpture, painting). Their chronology is usually broad, as can be seen in the books on the Premonstratensians of Castile and León (López 1997) or the Cistercians of Valladolid (García Flores 2010). In recent years, special attention has been paid to the relationship between the materiality of the monastery and the liturgy, as in the case of a recent thesis on Dominican convents, although the 13th century in Castile is poorly documented (Pérez Vidal 2021).

Thus, although the last few decades have seen a surge in the study of monasteries and monasticism in the kingdoms of Leon and Castile, there remain many unresolved issues. It is necessary to go deeper into themes such as their relationship with the bishops and the papacy, female monasticism, the codices linked to these monasteries, their liturgy, and small early medieval non-aristocratic monasteries. It would also be interesting to compare regional realities or the monasteries of different orders to identify similarities and differences in different fields, beyond their institutional affiliation. Finally, it would also be worthwhile to explore urban monasticism before the mendicants, and compare it with the latter, expand our knowledge of the administration of monastic patrimony, and that of the familiars and "brothers" who were linked to the monastery in life and death.

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