Monasticism in Late Antique Iberia: Its Origins and Influences

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ABSTRACT

In the eleventh century, Iberian monasticism became "regularized" and embraced, often by royal imposition, Benedictine monastic customs. Since its origins in the fourth and fifth centuries, the nature of monastic life in the Iberian Peninsula continually evolved and developed an identity of its own. The sixth and seventh centuries represent a key moment in that evolution, thanks to Martin of Braga, Isidore of Seville and Fructuosus of Braga, and others. According to Ildefonsus of Toledo, it was the north African monk Donatus who introduced into Iberia, in the last quarter of the sixth century, the custom of following a defined rule and who also founded the monastery at Servitanum. In this essay, I will lay out the tangible influences on the growth of Iberian monasticism of monastic movements, rules and customs from elsewhere and, from that, elicit the unique development of Iberian monastic identities and monastic environments.

ESSAY

The extant written sources present the sixth and seventh centuries as key moment in the evolution of the monastic movement in the Iberian Peninsula. This is attributed to the lives and writings of figures such as Aemilian of Cogolla (472-573), Martin of Braga

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(520-580), Isidore of Seville (560-636), Fructuosus of Braga (d. 665), Valerius of Bierzo (630-695), and Ildefonsus of Toledo (607-667), who claimed that the African monk Donatus brought the monastic rule to the peninsula in the sixth century and founded the monastery a Servitanum.[1] From this narrative, it would seem that until then in the Iberian Peninsula – and the conciliar void regarding precise regulations seems to confirm this impression – there was a certain "anarchy" in the monastic sphere, one in which monasteries and "cenobios" were confused and where the determination of honest and dishonest hermits was ambiguous.[2] This anarchic situation may have reflected the personalist organization of monastic and cenobitic spaces sponsored by secular and ecclesiastical elites.[3] In addition, the contemporary paganization of customs in parts of the Christian population (mainly rural) concerned the ecclesiastical hierarchy.[4] How was this Iberian situation, and the essence of Iberian monasticism, influenced by interactions with and the arrival of external monastic customs, especially from North Africa and the East?

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[1] Ildefonsus, *De Viris Illustribus* 3: "Donatus et professione et opere monachus cuiusdam eremitae fertur in Africa extitisse discipulus. […] Iste prior in Hispaniam monasticae obseruantiae usum regulamque dicitur aduexisse." For all references to Ildefonsus's *DVI* see the editions of Carmen Codoñer Merino: Carmen Codoñer Merino, *El "*de viris illustribus*" de Ildefonso de Toledo: Estudio y edición crítica*, Acta Salmanticensia 65 (Salamanca, 1972) and in *Ildefonsi Toletani Episcopi Opera*, CCSL 114A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007).

[2] Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "La realidad material de los monasterios y cenobios rupestres hispanos (siglos v-x)," in *Monjes y monasterios hispanos en la Alta Edad Media*, ed. José Ángel García de Cortázar and Ramón Teja (Aguilar de Campoo, 2006), 64ff.

[3] See Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii): una aproximación a su arquitectura a través de las fuentes literarias," *Los visigodos y su mundo*, I *Jornadas Internacionales* (Madrid-Toledo) Madrid, *Arqueología, Paleontología y Etnografía* 4 (1998): 115-25.

[4] Especially Martin of Braga (see *Martini Episcopi Bracarensis Opera Omnia*, ed. Claude W. Barlow [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950]). But not only him, since paganism was a constant concern for the Iberian church throughout late antiquity, on which see Jorge López Quiroga and Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "El destino de los templos paganos en Hispania durante la Antigüedad Tardía," *Archivo español de arqueología* 79 (2006): 125-54.

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One of the principle characteristics of Iberian society from the fifth through seventh centuries was the compartmentalization of religiosity into subcultures.[5] The monastic subcultures found their roots in the great eastern cenobitic culture, not in Rome. In the sixth-century, the existence of diverse monastic subcultures appeared:[6] while in Tarraconensis its guidelines – recognized in the councils of Tarragona (516) and Barcelona (540 and 546) – were set by the conciliar and synodical Gallic prescriptions of the first half of the century, in Gallaecia, from the time of the Suevi (early 400s to 585), they were forged on the basis of a spirituality of clear eastern nature, imported, settled and spread by Martin of Braga, who, as recorded in the acts of the second council of Braga (572), issued the "Chapters of the councils of the Eastern Fathers." In Baetica and Carthaginensis the North African influences, basically Augustinian, arose with the arrival – also in the sixth century – of communities from that area, including those of Donatus and his fellow African Nancto, founder of a monastery near Mérida.

Eastern monastic influences can also be found in the works of Iberia's monastic legislators of the seventh century, including Isidore of Seville and Fructuosus of Braga. Their works reflect the rules of Pachomius (292-348), Basil of Caesarea (330-379), and Augustine of Hippo (354-430). Around the year 589, Eutropius (d. 610), then the abbot of Servitanum, advised the monks to follow the discipline that Augustine left "in octavo civitatis Dei libro."[7] However, one can also find Gallic influences from the works of Caesarius (470-542) and Aurelian (523-551), both bishops of Arles, and the earlier writing of John Cassian (360-435). The rules of Benedict of Nursia (written c. 534-553) and Columbanus (the so-called *Regula Magistri*) also had an impact on Iberian

[5] Enrique Cerrillo Martín de Cáceres, "El concepto de subcultura y su aplicación en arqueología," II *Jornadas de Metodología y Didáctica de la Historia* (1985): 217-42.
[6] Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 117.
[7] Ibid., 118, n. 15-16.

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monasticism; English and Irish monasticism seems to have penetrated the broader Iberian Peninsula through Gallaecia, where a Celtic community settled in the sixth century and founded the church of Britonia.[8]

All of these texts, based on the Holy Scripture, also have in common the fact that they encourage the monk to fulfill three dictates: prayer, reading and work; around these the *regulae* were organized, although their final configuration and distribution depended on factors as divergent as the rule or rules that governed, for example, the type of community (male, female or mixed) or the dominant agricultural and economic activity (e.g. whether a monastery was on a mountain, in a plain, etc.).[9] In terms of the types of monasticism, the Iberian community had various modalities, including – especially in Gallaecia – the double monasteries or the so-called "pseudo monasteries" or "familiar monasteries." The first had their origin, basically, in the *tuitio* or material and spiritual government by men of female monasteries, a measure that was reflected in the eleventh canon of Isidore's second council of Seville (619), through the figure of the monk *praepositum virginus*. Later, in the *Regula Communis*, of Fructuosan inspiration, this tutelary role was placed in the hands of a small group of monks.[10]

The "familiar monasteries," also known as "pseudo-monasteries" – of private foundation – are condemned in various documents from the fifth and sixth centuries,

[8] José Orlandis Rovira, "Las congregaciones monásticas en la tradición suevo-gótica," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* I (1964): 97-119.
[9] Compiled in the *Codex Regularum*, also known as the *geronticon*, in which is found, among others, the rules of Pachomius, Basil, Macarius, Urseisius, Faust Reitz, John Cassian, Augustine, Benedict, Jerome, Leander, Fructuosus, etc. On the *Codex Regularum* see José Freire Camaniel, "El Liber Regular y el Codex regularum del monacato prebenedictino," in *Sub Iuce Florentis Calami: homenaje a Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz,* ed. Manuela Domínguez García (Santiago de Compostela, 2002), 350-58.
[10] *Regula Communis*, 15 & 17. For the *Regula Communis* see *San Leandro, San Isidoro, San Fructuoso: Reglas monásticas de la España visigoda,* ed. Julio Campos Ruíz and Ismael Roca Meliá, vol. 2 (Madrid, 1971).

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eastern as well as western (including Iberian), but the most severe condemnation will come on the part of the *Regula Communis*.[11] Its attempt to spiritually regularize these monasteries will elicit the foundations for a type of Iberian monasteries referred to in the scholarship as "spiritual villages."[12] In Chapter 6 of the *Regula*, the joint reception is accepted, within the same monastery, of whole families, practices that could not be carried out in the same manner throughout the Peninsula, as in the Fructuosan foundations of Baetica, where husbands and children entered a community of men, while wives and daughters, a female one.[13] The first of these spiritual villages of Iberian late antiquity arose thanks to the help and collaboration of the elites, both ecclesiastical and secular, of the faithful who donated their properties or their wealth for their foundation and construction.[14]

The first Iberian solitaries

The "monastic life" (reflected in the figures of virgins and ascetics[15]) already existed in Iberia prior to the arrival of the "barbarian peoples" in 409; the oldest literary testimonies are to be found in the conciliar documentation, in canons six and eight of

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[11] *Regula Communis* 1.
[12] *Regula Communis* 6.
[13] See *La Vida de San Fructuoso de Braga: estudio y edición crítica*, ed. Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz (Braga, 1974).
[14] As the noble Gudilio, who contributed slaves and funding for the construction of three churches (*Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, ed. José Vives [Barcelona, CSIC, 1942], 100-101; Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 124, n. 25) or the noble Minicea, who helped Donatus construct the monastery of Servitanum (Carmen Codoñer Merino in *El "*de viris illustribus" *de Ildefonso de Toledo: Estudio y edición crítica*, Acta Salmanticensia 65 [Salamanca, 1972], 120-23; Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "El hábitat 'cenobítico' en *Hispania*: organización y dependencias de un espacio elitista en la Antigüedad tardía y alta Edad Media (siglos v-x)," in *Monasteria et Territoria. Elites, edilicia y territorio en el Mediterráneo medieval (siglos v-xi)*, ed. Jorge Lopez Quiroga, Artemio M. Martínez Tejera and Jorge Morín de Pablos [Oxford: BAR, 2007]: 25-26). It is said that Servitanum was a 'monastery of patrons'.
[15] According to the *Chronicles* of Hydatius, in the year 456 groups of virgins, who were evicted on the occasion of the sacking of the city at the hands of the troops of Theodoric, lived in Braga. See Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "Reflexiones en torno a la edilicia cristiana en la tardo-antigüedad hispana (ss. iv-vii) (i)," in *Galia e Hispania en el contexto de la presencia 'germánica' (ss. v-vii),* ed. Jorge Lopez Quiroga, Artemio M. Martínez Tejera and Jorge Morín de Pablos (Oxford: BAR, 2006), 113, n. 23.

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the council of Zaragoza (380). Although little is known of peninsular monasticism before the fifth century, it seems to have been an ascetic movement of an eminently aristocratic character, related to the Theodosian elite (at least in its origin), which, at first, would have followed the guidelines established by Martin of Tours (336-397).[16] The monasticism of the East opened a new way to achieve spiritual perfection, in this case from the loneliness and isolation advocated in the Gospels: the eremitism, the withdrawal from the world, the *fuga mundi*: solitary monks, hermits who lived in monasteries, the hermits who from c. 320 – by the grace of the Egyptian Pachomius[17] – became cenobites and lived in monasteries.[18] John Cassian states that in Gaul in the first half of the fifth century cenobitic life was considered as a transitory moment, a preparation, for life in solitude, for the *anachoresis*. But that is a western version, since, originally, the anchorite arose before the cenobite. This is the figure of the "honest hermit" or "monastic hermit," the one who lived in solitude before the cenobitic life: the anchorite degree became an award, an earthly reward. Did that happen in Hispania? The principle of solitude of the anchorite carried with it some feelings of independence and freedom that the late ancient Iberian church could not bear, especially when considering the persistence of Priscillianism. But, at the same time, the existence of hermits and anchorites could not be rejected, since it was a *modus vivendi* approved by the Apostles. So, it was devoted to monitoring and controlling. And this is reflected in the texts, like those collected by Isidore in the *Etymologies*:

[16] Garcia M. Colombás, "El concepto de monje y vida monástica hasta final del siglo v," *Studia Monastica* 1 (1959): 257-342; Pablo Díaz Martínez, "Ascesis y monacato en la Península Ibérica antes del siglo vi," Actas del *I Congreso Peninsular de Historia Antigua* (Santiago de Compostela, 1988), 80-97; Luis A. García Moreno, "Los monjes y monasterios en las ciudades de las españas tardorromanas y visigodas," *Habis* 24 (1993): 179-92.
[17] Ramón Teja Casuso, "Los orígenes del monacato (siglos iv-v)," Actas del I seminario sobre el monacato, en *Codex Aqvilarensis* 1 (1988): 15-30.
[18] Manual C. Díaz y Díaz, "El eremitismo en la España Visigoda." *Revista Portuguesa de Historia* vi ("Homenagem ao Prof. Pierre David") (1955): 211-37.

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"Anchorites (*anchorita*) are those who after the community life seek out deserted places and live alone in the wilderness. Because they withdraw far from people they are named with this name. Anchorites imitate Elijah and John (the Baptist), cenobites imitate the Apostles."[19] Isidore also speaks of a third type of monk: the hermit or eremite (of *eremos*), also called, he says, "anchorite," ones who "removed from the gaze of people, seek out the desert and deserted solitary places, for the term *eremum* is used as if it were 'remote'."[20]

These solitary monks, these wanderers or outcasts "who practiced this way of life without having previously lived in a monastery observing the monastic rules"[21] had a noticeable impact in Iberia. Two well-known examples are the lives of Aemilian and Fructuosus. As a young shepherd of barely twenty years old, Aemilian set off on his lonely adventure, after a discipleship under the hermit Felix. A solitary man whose "fame of sanctity" grew to the point of calling the attention of the bishop of Tirazona, Didymus, who attempted – but failed – "to make the man enter the ecclesiastical order since he was in his diocese."[22] Fructuosus, Goth by birth (a native of Complutum, Alcalá de Henares) and of aristocratic origin, retired to the solitude of his possessions in Bierzo after going through the episcopal school of Palentia, led by Conantius (active c. 609-639), taking on the religious habit and receiving the tonsure.[23] Inspired by the

[19] Isidore, *Etymologies* 7.13.3. For the *Etymologies* see the recent translation by Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewish, J. A Beach and Oliver Berghof (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[20] Isidore, *Etymologies* 7.13.4.
[21] 7 Toledo (*Concilios visigóticos e hispanorromanos*, ed. & trans. José Vives, Tomás Marín and Gonzalo Martínez Díez [Barcelona-Madrid, 1963]).
[22] See *Sancti Braulionis Caesaraugustiani Episcopi. Vita Sancti Aemiliani*, ed. Luiz Vázquez de Parga e Iglesias (Madrid, 1943).
[23] See *La Vida de San Fructuoso de Braga,* Díaz y Díaz. For an analysis of the Fructuosan monastic world, from different perspectives, see A. Linage Conde, "En torno a la regula monachorum y su relación con otras reglas monásticas," *Bracara Augusta* 21 (1967): 123-63; Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, "El monacato fructuosiano y su desarrollo," in *El monacato en la diócesis de Astorga durante la Edad Media* (Astorga, 1995), 33-48; Jorge López Quiroga, "Actividad monástica y acción política en San Fructuoso de Braga," *Hispania Sacra* 54.109 (2002): 7-22; Jorge López Quiroga and Mónica Rodríguez Lovelle, "La Hispania

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eastern rigor of the Fathers of the Desert, Fructuosus practiced a life of solitude without having previously been in a cenobitic place, as the early anchorites.[24] His beginnings were those of a young man who, also at the age of 20, chose the loneliness of Bierzo to develop his spirituality. There he lived as an authentic anchorite "wandering alone through leafy, forested and rough lands, through caves and high mountains, while praying, tripling the fasts and increasing the vigils."[25]

The first Hispanic monasteries and cenobitic places

The monastic architecture of this period remains largely unknown, despite the efforts of various scholars of diverse disciplines in the past forty years.[26] The extant texts lack significant news related to the organization and configuration of monasteries and cenobitic places and only a few texts deal at all with their physical structure or uses. These include the hagiographies, chronicles, and records of the conciliar acts. Yet, there are also more reliable writings on this matter, including the monastic rules, Isidore's *Etymologies*, the writings by Martin of Braga and Valerius of Bierzo, and epigraphic evidence.

del siglo vii a través de la Vita Fructuosi," in *Familla, Violence et Christianisation au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Sorbonne, 2005), 195-207; and, Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "*Per speluncas et rupes*… los 'espacios monásticos' en El Bierzo, de San Fructuoso de Braga a San Genadio de Astorga (siglos vii-x)," in *In concavis petrarum habitaverunt. El fenómeno rupestre en el Mediterráneo medieval: de la investigación a la puesta en valor*, ed. Jorge Lopez Quiroga and Artemio M. Martínez Tejera (Oxford: BAR, 2014), 117-51.

[24] Ramón Teja Casuso, *Emperadores, obispos, monjes y mujeres: protagonistas del cristianismo antiguo* (Madrid, 1999).

[25] *Vita Sancti Fructuosi* 3. For discussion see Martínez Tejera, "La realidad material de los monasterios y cenobios rupestres hispanos," 166, n. 49.

[26] Luis Caballero Zoreda, "La arquitectura monástica," in *XV Centenario de San Benito* ("La comunicación en los monasterios medievales"), Ministerio de Cultura (Dirección General del Patrimonio Artístico, Archivos y Museos), exposición itinerante organizada en colaboración con ANABAD (Madrid, 1980), 17-38; Luis Caballero Zoreda, "Monasterios visigodos. Evidencias arqueológicas," *Codex Aquilarensis* 1 (1988): 31-50; Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)."

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From these it is possible to recreate the monastic spaces, to speak not only of the types of monks, but also of the types of monastic habitats, which can be reduced to three main modalities: "monasteries," "cenobitic places," and *lavras*. The "monastery" was defined by Isidore in the *Etymologies* as a solitary room inhabited by a *monachus*, by an anchorite or hermit.[27] The "monastery" was, from its origins in the East, a one-person domain, extremely simple and humble, small and isolated, as the authentic solitary lived in the most absolute loneliness (though not necessarily confined). The individual and isolated spaces functions as housing and places of oratory and occasionally called *ergastulum*, a small-sized space (*cellula*), existing "in" or "by" an *ecclesia*; that is, referring to a humble cell made by man. In this sense, and in the interior of a church, the localized churches of Albelda (La Rioja) stand out.[28]

The "cenobio" is the space for the "cenobite monk," the one who lives together with other monks, under the observance of a rule and obedience to an abbot. The cenobio, away from men, but not isolated, reduces the space where the cenobite develops his individual spirituality. Spaces in the service of a community of "solitary men" conducted by an abbot and ruled by one or more of the *regulae* contained in the *Liber regularum*, a spiritual code compilation in which the normative texts of Isidore, Fructuosus and *Regula Communis* shared significance with the texts of Pachomius, Basil, Augustine, John Cassian and Benedict of Nursia. And if we consider the testimony offered by Ildefonsus, the first cenobitic places began to appear in the Iberian Peninsula as of the year 570, when Donatus's African community settled. Donatus is said to have been accompanied by seventy monks and to have been carrying with him

[27] Isidore, *Etymologies* 15.4.5.
[28] J. María Torres, "El término 'ergastulum' en la primera literatura monástica," in *Cristianismo y aculturación en tiempos del Imperio Romano*, Antigüedad y Cristianismo VII (Murcia, 1990), 287-90.

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an extensive library, in addition to being the first to introduce to *Hispania* the habit of applying a rule.[29] This is the reason, I believe, why archeologists cannot find remains of large monasteries in the sixth century (despite exceptional cases, such as that of Dumio, near Braga in Portugal).[30]

The third modality, the *lavrae* or *laurae*, also of eastern origin, enables scholars to reconcile the individual asceticism of the monastery with the community of the cenobio: this is a formula (the "eremitic colony") arising in Palestine, originally as a "set of individual cells and spreading throughout or by a path, where daily life is done by the monk in his hut and the social relationship derived from the collective faith gathering the whole set of the different brothers."[31] This modality was witnessed by the Iberian virgin Egeria in the fourth century: "Thus – says the pilgrim on her journey to Mount Sinai – on Saturday afternoon we got into the hilly area and arrived to some hermitages where the monks who dwelt there welcomed us in a very cordial manner, offering all their hospitality; there is even a church with a priest […]."[32]

The Iberian monastic buildings of this period (Suevic and Gothic) – monasteries and cenobios – are so diverse, from the material and spiritual point of view, as well as the monastic "subcultures" in which they arose. So far it is not possible to talk about a typical monastery in late antique Iberia, because its morphology and configuration was absolutely personalist, a result of differing literary interpretations by individuals. The clearest example is found in Isidore and Fructuosus and in their monastic rules, written

[29] Ildefonsus, *DVI* 3.
[30] Martínez Tejera, "La realidad material de los monasterios y cenobios rupestres hispanos," 86-87.
[31] Ibid., 95, n. 104.
[32] *Itinerario de la virgen Egeria (381- 384)*, ed. Agustín Arce (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1980), 192-94.

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precisely for the monks of some of their foundations in the first half of the seventh century: the monastery of Honoriacensis and the Complutense cenobio. Was there a typical Isidorian monastery or Fructuosan? In principle, I would say there was not, since such rules would have different interpretations, depending on, for example, the geographical area of their use. The excavations to be carried out, coming quite soon in Compludo (Bierzo), will serve to check its level of compliance with the regulations drafted by its founder, but also it will be the excavation currently being carried out in San Pedro de Montes (the *monasterium ruphianense*, its second foundation) that provide the keys to knowing whether it followed the model of Compludo, in which case we could then talk about, without hesitation, at least a Fructuosan organizational model.[33]

Some monastic rules define the monastery as an area enclosed by a fence or a wall with a door and, within that environment, the monk should have all the necessities for his subsistence and thus wipe out any intention to contact the *extra monasterium* world.[34] This delimitation is not a novelty of the Iberian rules, not even of the wider western ones, but of the fourth-century eastern rules, such as the *Regula ad Monachos* of Pachomius (written between the years 340 and 348), through which he was the founder of the first "cenobio," the first monastic communal place. In some cases, this enclosure could be a high wall, as seen in the eastern monasteries (Syrian, Egyptian, Turkish, etc.), which would give to the monastic area an air of strength.[35]

[33] For excavations being carried out within the framework of the project see: *La Tebaida Berciana (ss. VII-XV): el fenómeno monástico en El Bierzo (León): de la investigación a la puesta en valor*, directed by Jorge López Quiroga (Investigador, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) and Artemio M. Martínez Tejera (Investigador Colaborador del Institut de Recerca Històrica de la Universitat de Girona), financed by the Junta de Castilla y León and managed by el Consejo Comarcal de El Bierzo (Ponferrada).
[34] *Regula Magistri ad monachos* 15; *Regula Monasteriorum* of San Benito 48; and Isidore, *Regula monachorum* 1.
[35] See *Regula ad Monachos* 51 and 84. Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 120.

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How the buildings were organized in the interior of the enclosure and the buildings or annexes it had remain a mystery.[36] What in it could be distinguished from the typical rural settlement of this area, the castros? Maybe it was the appearance presented by those Fructuosan monasteries of Gallaecia and other Iberian provinces where whole families were gathered, but, unfortunately, we cannot count on remnants of them due to – undoubtedly – non-durable materials used in its construction (mainly wood), but also by the lack of archaeological excavations. However, thanks mostly to the texts, it is known that whatever the external aspect of the Iberian monasteries of these centuries, all of them had a series of essential annexes or buildings designed to fill both the spiritual and physical needs of the monks, among others the garden: "the factory of the monastery will have only one door and one shutter to leave the garden […]. The garden will also have to be included within the enclosure of the monastery, so that while the monks are working within they would not find any excuse to walk outside the monastery."[37]

The spiritual needs were filled by the monk in the church, or churches, because there could be more than one sacred building in the same compound as in the case of Montserrat and Tarragona, of the seventh century, and probably in Saint Lucia of the Trampal, Alcuescar (Caceres), also of the seventh century, either as a possible reflex of a western liturgical rite of processional character, or for separating the role of the

[36] Martínez Tejera, "El hábitat 'cenobítico' en *Hispania*;" Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 120.
[37] Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "El jardín monástico medieval (ss. iv-xi)," *Codex Aquilarensis; cuadernos de investigación del monasterio de Santa María la Real* 7 (1992), 125; Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 120.

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church's liturgical function from its use as a funeral space, following conciliar measures that prohibited burials within the basilicas, or baptismal.[38]

As with the whole monastic space, it is not possible to speak of a typical monastic church in late antique Iberia.[39] We have incomplete data, such as that there were monastic churches with two choirs. An inscription from Bailén and dated to 691 introduces the existence of a monastic church made by the "unworthy abbot Locuber and built with two choirs."[40] For its part, the *Regula Communis* claims, speaking of the double monasteries, inhabited by monks and nuns – that "both sexes will occupy different choirs," and it prohibits the monks "turning the head to the choir of nuns."[41] The fact that it refers to the two choirs when speaking about the double monasteries suggests that this typology was present only in the churches of this type of monasteries; what is certain is that it is a rare fact, since it deserved to be recorded.

Do these monastic churches with two choirs have something to do with 'contrasting' churches? This typology – of eastern Roman origin – made its appearance in the Iberian Peninsula in the fourth and fifth centuries (Torre de Palma, Portugal) and would develop during the sixth century into a localized group of basilicas mainly in

[38] Council of Braga (561) 18; M. A. Mundó i Marcet, "Il monachesimo nella Penisola Iberica fino al sec. vii. Questioni ideologiche e letterarie," in *Il monachesimo nell'Alto Medioevo e la formazione della civiltà occidentale*, IV Settimana di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'altomedioevo (Spoleto, 1957), 73-118; Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "De nuevo sobre áreas ceremoniales y espacios arquitectónicos intermedios en los edificios hispanos (ss. iv-x): atrio y pórtico," *Boletín de Arqueología Medieval* 7 (1993): 163-215; Jorge López Quiroga and Artemio M. Martínez Tejera. "Un 'monasterium' fructosiano por descubrir: el de Compludo, en El Bierzo (prov. de León)," Argutorio: revista de la Asociación Cultural "Monte Irago," 9.18 (2007): 43-47.

[39] Francisco Íñiguez Almech, "Algunos problemas de las viejas iglesias españolas," *Cuadernos de Trabajo de la Escuela Española de Historia y Arqueología en Roma* 7 (1955): 9-180; Rafael Puertas Tricas, *Iglesias hispánicas (siglos v al viii). Testimonios literarios*, Dirección General del Patrimonio Artístico y Cultural, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia. Temas de arte 4 (Madrid, 1975).

[40] Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 121, n. 30.

[41] *Regula Communis* 17.

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Baetica, Lusitania and Carthaginensis. Starting from a place of eastern Roman origin, the more immediate Christian precedents outside the Iberian Peninsula at the time could be found in the architecture developed in North Africa.[42] But problems arise in trying to confirm the existence, as in monastic churches, of rooms such as the *sacrarium*, the *secretarium*, "contraábsides," porticos, etc. The solution lies in a better knowledge of the so-called Hispanic rite, or rather the "Hispanic rites," as it seems there were more than one, and knowing to what extent the "monastic customs" mixed with the "church's rules."[43]

But the monastic communities not only gathered to pray or listen to the abbot in the conference (*collatio*), but also to have food, so the *Regula Magistri* orders.[44]At the end of the sixth century (c. 570-580), in the heart of the Suevic kingdom, Martin of Braga devoted a few verses, *In refectorio*, to the *triclinium* of the Dumio monastery.[45] And next to this unit, the dining room, would be (at least according to the first chapter of the rule of Isidore), the *cellarium*, or warehouse to collect the services of the table or the meal's leftovers. This area of warehouses would be complementary with other annexes destined to save everything related to the dressing and cleanliness of the monks, or else, to set the tools and work materials[46] and with the existence of barns, *horrea*, etc.[47]

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[42] On this space in high medieval Spanish architecture see Martínez Tejera, "Reflexiones en torno a la edilicia cristiana en la tardo-antigüedad hispana (ss. iv-vii)," 121.
[43] Council of Braga in 561; Martínez Tejera, "Los monasterios hispanos (siglos v-vii)," 124-25, n. 31; Artemio M. Martínez Tejera, "El contraábside en la 'arquitectura de repoblación'," in *Repoblación y Reconquista*, ed. José Luis Hernando Garrido and Miguel Ángel García Guinea (Madrid, 1993): 149-61.
[44] *Regula Magistri* 23 and 14.
[45] Martínez Tejera, "El hábitat 'cenobítico' en *Hispania*," 31-32; Martínez Tejera, "El contraábside en la 'arquitectura de repoblación'."
[46] Fructuosus*, Regula Monachorum* 5 and 11.
[47] Martínez Tejera, "El contraábside en la 'arquitectura de repoblación'," 25-27.

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The texts also refer to the bedroom or bedrooms – depending on the amount of monks that inhabited the monastery, there could be more than one.[48] Between aid units, it is necessary to emphasize the monastic hostel, which was, at least at the end of the seventh century, outside of the cloister of the monks[49] and even outside the monastery. One example is the *xenodochium* of Mérida, in the environs of the monastery of Santa Eulalia, a model – the monastery with a *xenodochium* – introduced in the first Syrian eastern monasteries in the fifth and sixth centuries. And by this, together with the monastic hostel, or as a part of the same, would be the area for the novices, where they would remain for several months in the services of hospitality.[50]

The aid unit was the *locus aegrogantium*, away from the church and the cells, although within the monastic enclosure (at least according to Isidore[51]), and, in a cell more spacious than normal with servers chosen by the abbot, was placed the ill and old monks, according to Fructuosus[52] and the *Regula Communis*.[53] On the rest of the late antique monastic units reflected in the texts of the time (kitchens, bathrooms, libraries, *scholae* or monastic schools, porters, etc.): there is little we can do more than to infer their existence.[54]

[48] So Isidore allows in Chapter 13 of his *Regula Monachorum*.
[49] 3 Zaragoza (691) 3.
[50] According to Isidore's *Regula* 4 & 21 and Fructuosus's *Regula Monachorum* 9. See Martínez Tejera, "El contraábside en la 'arquitectura de repoblación'," 28-29.
[51] Isidore, R*egula* 1.
[52] *Regula Monachorum* 23.
[53] *Regula Communis* 8.
[54] Martínez Tejera, "El contraábside en la 'arquitectura de repoblación'," 33ff.

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