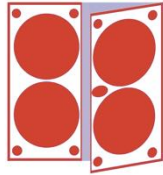




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Nomina Inserere Voluerint, Non Prohibeatur.
Nominal Inscriptions Inside the Altar in the North-East
of the Iberic Peninsula (9th-13th Centuries)

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Abstract

Some manuscripts of the 11th and 12th centuries preserved in Catalonia present a specific rite when a bishop had to consecrate a church. In the altar he placed relics, three fragments of hosts, three grains of incense and small parchments on which was written the information about the consecration, the ten commandments and the beginning of the four gospels.

The Catalan consecration ritual corresponded to a specific liturgical codification, the Catalano-Narbonese Ordo, which is generally accepted to have been strictly followed. However, archaeological excavations carried out in pre-Romanesque and Romanesque churches in Catalonia since the 19th century have often brought to light a practice that was not codified in these texts: the modest containers of wood, stone or alabaster that contained the consecration relics had been engraved with names. This paper is dedicated to these nominal inscriptions from the consecration ritual, found inside the altars.

Keywords: Lipsanoteca; Consecration; Medieval Epigraphy; Nominal Inscriptions; Graffiti

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In an article on medieval endotaphs published in 2016, Cécile Treffort reflected on the function and meaning of inscriptions and funerary deposits, «hidden from human eyes», particularly those from the 9th to the 12th century¹. When she discussed the role of nominal inscriptions, she insisted on their eschatological dimension. The name will identify the deceased when the burial is open, whether it is in a historical future or during the Last Judgment. She also attached great importance to the very fact of writing the name of a deceased person in the material, a gesture that would give the person a part of life. These hypotheses, which aim to explain the paradox of hidden writing in a funerary context, have guided us in the apprehension of an entirely different corpus: that of inscriptions found hidden inside medieval altars.

Like the tomb, the altar was indeed a place of burial, that of the saints and martyrs. Like the tomb, the altar could not be freely reopened once it was closed. Moreover, it seems that in the North-East of the Iberic Peninsula the altar was a place to associate words with bones. The altar 'graffitis'² are widely known and documented, especially in France and Catalonia³, but what is much less known is that Catalan pre-Romanesque and Romanesque altars also contained small reliquaries, which sometimes wore inscriptions. These boxes, more often found hidden in the altar *stipes*, were used to carry and contain the relics during the consecration ritual. According to Catalan historiography, those reliquaries (inscribed or not) have a specific name: they are called *lipsanoteques* (singular: *lipsanoteca*). This word comes from the Greek substantive *λείψανον* (what remains) and the suffix *θήκη* (where it's kept)⁴. It is a synonym for reliquary, which is of Latin origin, and much like it, it was created in the modern period⁵. The use of the word *lipsanoteca* as the altar reliquary was spread in Catalonia by Mn. Josep Gudiol i Cunill in *Nocions de arqueologia sagrada Catalana*, published in 1902⁶. It is not widespread in medieval studies outside of Catalonia and France⁷. There can be a debate on which word is more accurate to designate those objects, but it sure is convenient to use a specific word to categorize them, especially because, as we will see, they present a series of characteristics that are not shared with the rest of the reliquaries. I have chosen to work with the word *lipsanoteques* because it is the one of Catalan and Aragonese academics.

In addition to the inscriptions, the *lipsanoteques* bear marks of the consecration ritual. They contained parchments with fragments of the Decalogue and the beginning of the four Gospels, basic information on the consecration (date, year, bishop) and sometimes

¹ Treffort 2016: 39-46.

² While those nominal inscriptions are usually called 'graffitis', this appellation is contested. The problem is well exposed by Cécile Treffort in: Eadem 2004: 137-146.

³ Ponsich 1975: 41-65; Alavedra i Invers 1979; Treffort 2003: 147-160; Eadem 2004: 137-146; Eadem 2007: 43-83.

⁴ The word *λείψανον* (what remains) was used in latin (*lipsanum, a, n.*) by late antic Christian authors as a synonym for relics.

⁵ Our first survey in texts databases and dictionaries leads us to attribute a Jesuit Flemish origin to this Greek neologism. The first known use of this word is found in Christoph Brouwer's 1617 post-mortem edition to Raban Maur's poems (PL 112, col. 1677a, carmen III). As for the second and third, they can be attributed to the Bollandist Society, in the *Acta Sanctorum Julii* (PL 140, col. 0039a-0039b, n. 53).

⁶ Gudiol i Cunill 1902: 271-272.

⁷ Italians call them *capsella* or *capsa*, Germans also call them *capsa*, but in both cases the use of this vocabulary is not established, and reliquary is used undeferentially. In English academic works, it is only known because of the famous ivory reliquary, commonly called the *lipsanoteca* of Brescia (Brubaker 1986: 587).

lists of names of men and women, both clergymen and laymen, either alive or dead⁸. They also contained pieces of hosts and incense, and, in some cases, small bottles of sacred wine or oils. The *lipsanoteques* themselves, or the sepulchres in which they were placed, were sealed with wax or plaster, and stamped with the ring of the bishop.

The typology of the *lipsanoteques'* inscriptions present similarities both with the inscriptions of the common visible reliquaries and the altar 'graffitis'. They have been classified by Javier de Santiago Fernández in a paper published in 2002⁹. It is based on the 16 Catalan *lipsanoteques* and lids registered in the encyclopedia *Catalunya Romànica*¹⁰. The typological analysis he provided in his article is very well thought and is certainly still a reference. However, my PhD research on *lipsanoteques* has led me to explore museums warehouse and reveal the existence of more of these inscribed objects. It has also been an occasion to revise the editions provided by *Catalunya Romànica*. Furthermore, I chose to include both Catalan and Aragonese objects in the same corpus, because of the use of a similar liturgy of consecration on part of the territory. Javier de Santiago Fernández's classified the inscriptions according to four categories, based on their written content and form. First, there are the inscriptions who identifies the relics present in the altar; second, the ones who contain a verb; third, the lists of names; and fourth, the mix of the second and the third¹¹.

Within the framework of this paper, it seems useful to focus on the nominal inscriptions (the second, third and fourth categories). The relics identification inscriptions are distinct because they belong to a wider group of *lipsanoteques* inscriptions which are found as far as Asturias¹², and which must be linked with older and broader tradition of reliquaries and relic authentication parchments. The context of the consecration, as well as the invisibility of these scriptures after the closing of the altar, seems to give a different meaning to the nominal inscriptions and thus justify their specific study.

The aim of this paper is to present an actualized version of the corpus of nominal inscriptions and to reflect on their purpose and meaning in the context of the altar and the ritual of consecration. In a first part, it presents the context of the inscriptions: the material context (*lipsanoteques* and lids), the archeological context of the objects (the altar) and the liturgical context of their use (the consecration ritual). This introduction is necessary to later understand their reception and purpose. It later records and revises Santiago Fernández's typology and presents examples for each type of inscriptions. To finish, it proposes a reflection on their meaning and purpose. The actualized editions of the inscriptions can be found at the end of the article.

⁸ These consecration parchments have been studied recently by Patrick Henriët (Henriët 2013: 67-106), and they have been published in several editions, generally mixed with the *dotaries*: Baraut Obiols 1978: 11-182; Idem 1979: 481-488; Idem 1986; Ordeig i Mata 1993-2004.

⁹ Santiago Fernández 2002: 35-62; Idem 2003: 183-192.

¹⁰ CR 1984-1999.

¹¹ Santiago Fernández 2002: 53.

¹² Carrero Santamaría 2004: 577-589; Panizo Delgado 2004: 265-276; Araus Ballesteros 2013: 455-496.

Part One: Context

Material Support: The Lipsanoteques

The *lipsanoteques* have never been classified or studied as a group¹³, the building of a corpus is part of an ongoing research. The group of *lipsanoteques* I study comes principally from the ancient Catalan dioceses, which are Barcelona, Elne, Girona, Roda, Tarragona, Tortosa, Urgell and Vic, but they can also be found in the neighbouring dioceses of Comminges, Roda-Barbastro, and Huesca, and there are some isolated cases in the north of the Peninsula until Palencia and Oviedo¹⁴. These dioceses are the only ones where *lipsanoteques* are currently attested in large numbers, both in the Iberic Peninsula and in central Europe¹⁵. Though their conservation is partly due to the hazards of time and conservation, their abundance (as for now more than 280 objects) supports the idea of a geographic particularity. Moreover, most of these territories were united under a common liturgical tradition, and thus celebrated the consecration of an altar in a similar way. As for the chronology, it goes from the end of the 10th century to the beginning of the 13th. The chosen chronology also corresponds to a period Christian expansion, leading to the modification of the religious landscape, renewal of architectural forms and decorations, intense construction and reconstruction of churches and the development of a network of parishes¹⁶. There are some posterior examples in the same territories, but they are fewer and are considerably different both in form and content.

My ongoing study of the *lipsanoteques* has led me to establish their typology. Since it is not the point of this paper, its presentation will be general. They can be classified in two large categories: those that were 'made to be' *lipsanoteques* and the repurposed containers. Though the second category is of much interest, they will not be part of this study, because they do not wear inscriptions related to the consecration. The 'made to be' *lipsanoteques* are for the vast majority made from wood, sculpted in a rectangular box shape, or turned into a cylindrical or ovoid shape. Other materials were also used in some cases: stucco, alabaster, and regular stones. They could be shaped into rectangular boxes (with sliding, built-in, or loose taps), but also into miniature tombs and sarcophagi. Whether in wood or other materials, they were very sober objects: few were decorated. Those that were, were carved with simple geometric shapes or painted with stripes of different colours.

¹³ Half of the *lipsanoteques* are briefly presented in the *Catalunya Romanica*. Among all, only a few objects have been the subject of a comprehensive study. Some museum collections have also been the subject of general analyses. It is the case of the Episcopal Museum of Vic (Trullén, ed. 2003: 250-254) with the studies of Josep Gudiol i Cunill (Gudiol i Cunill 1901) and Marc Sureda i Jubany (Sureda i Jubany 2010: 47-62). See also the two following publications that study groups of *lipsanoteques*: Ponsich 1987b: 5-8; Bastardes i Parera 1989.

¹⁴ Thanks to the work of Juan Pablo Rubio Sadia on liturgical manuscripts, the expansion of the Catalano-Narbonese liturgical traditions to other peninsular churches is attested for the 10th and 11th centuries. The inscriptions could be another example of the liturgical influences he detected in Oviedo and in Palencia thanks to the *responsorio* (Rubio Sadia 2014: 95-114; Rubio Sadia 2010: 243-278).

¹⁵ The conserved *lipsanoteques* from the Italian peninsula and east-European territories are usually from late antiquity and early Middle Ages. As for the German ones, they are from a slightly later chronology, and very different typology (Röckelein 2010: 21-34). Their absence in France suggests that until at least Latran IV in 1215, the relics were deposited enfolded in fabric, but truth is there are not many remains to rely on.

¹⁶ Zimmermann 2008: 16-17.

Archeological Context: The Altars

In a church, where could be found the *lipsanoteques*, and thus the inscriptions? The typical *locus* for the relics in Catalonia was situated in the foot of the altar (*stipes*), directly under the table, though there are few exceptions¹⁷. The altar foot could be made of 4 or 5 small columns (4 in each angle and one in the centre), one unique column or pilar, or of a stone-built structure¹⁸. The hole could be round, square, rectangular, or cruciform, and was most of the time closed with a stone or wood lid. Those lids were usually sealed with wax or even cement. However, the *lipsanoteques* are not often found in their original context. Most of the time, they were discovered in posterior altars or Romanesque altars that were reconsecrated in a posterior period, and a lot of them are unfortunately decontextualized because of looting and illegal selling.

Social Context: The Consecration Ritual

Before presenting the inscriptions, it is necessary to briefly present the ritual for the consecration of the church, to put them in context. During the Romanesque period, the consecration ritual that prevailed in the Catalan Dioceses was the one of the archbishopric of Narbonne, usually called the *Ordo Catalano-Narbonnais* by the historians¹⁹. According to Miquel Gros, this ordinary was developed in the late 8th and early 9th centuries, following the condemnation of the Hispanic liturgy at the Council of Frankfurt in 794, and the unification of the liturgy in the Empire²⁰. The Roman-Frankish liturgy was gradually established and mixed with previous Hispanic liturgical practices²¹.

The Catalano-Narbonnese ritual for the consecration of the church is known by four manuscripts from the 11th and 12th centuries²². It was a long and complicated ritual, made to transform a common place into a divine one. The burial of the relics in the altar determined the fixity of the now sacred locus, this earthly point of divine incarnation. Preceded by a vigil the night before, the ritual took place in more than 90 steps, including purification rites, processions outside and inside the church, the drawing of the Greek and Latin alphabet on the pavement, blessings, many orations and prayers, the benediction of the donations, the deposit of the relics and the celebration of the first Mass.

¹⁷ It could be on the side of the foot, or in the table. It is the case of the marble altar of Santa Maria Santiga which has a *loculus* for the relics on top of the table (Alavedra i Invers 1984: 45-80; Dourthe 1995: 18-19; Ripoll, Chavarria Arnau 2005: 32-33; Narasawa 2015: 512).

¹⁸ Dourthe 1995: 11-14; Narasawa 2015: 476-499.

¹⁹ The study of the *Ordo Narbonensis* has been largely dominated for more than 50 years by the work of Miquel Gros i Pujol at the Episcopal Archives of Vic, but his work depends on a long tradition of liturgical studies in the county of Osona, which dates to the 18th century and whose main figures were Jaume Ripoll i Vilamajor (1774-1843), Josep Gudiol i Cunill (1872-1931), Eduard Junyent i Subirà (1901-1978), then, more recently, that of Joan Bellavista i Ramon. This article offers a short historiography of the subject and an exhaustive bibliography up to 2002: Gros i Pujol 2002: 369-370.

²⁰ Gros i Pujol 1976: 127-154; Gros i Pujol 2008: 66-68. On the context of liturgical unification during the 8th and 9th centuries, see Rubio Sadia 2022: 205-218.

²¹ Méhu 2016: 86.

²² The Pontifical of Roda (Lleida, Arxiu Capitular, ms 16, f. 110r-126v; Barriga Planas 1975); the Pontifical of Narbonne, from which the original was lost, but is conserved in a 18th century edition (Martène 1736: col. 733-747); the Pontifical of Vic (Vic, Arxiu Capitular, ms 104 (CV), f. 68r-88r; Gros i Pujol 2004: 169-181); and the Pontifical of Ramon de Barbastro (Tarragona, Biblioteca Publica, ms 26, f. 203v-217r), which has not been edited.

The consecration parchments were prescribed by the ordinary, as were the wax seals and, of course, the relics²³.

None of the manuscripts mentions anything related to inscriptions. However, in the *Ordo ecclesiae consecrandae* of the Pontifical of Narbonne, from the 11th century, when describing what the *capsa* should include, it mentions: *Si autem pontifex, aut clerus, vel populus suorum nomina, aut etiam fidelium defunctorum inserere voluerint, non prohibeatur*²⁴. This testimony shows that the tradition of including the faithful's names inside the altar (on parchment, in this case) was strong, or at least widespread enough to be included in the official discourse.

Part Two: Nominal Inscriptions, *in altare*

Corpus and Typology

The *in altare* inscriptions are found on three types of support, closely linked to each other: *lipsanoteques*, sepulchres and their lids. To classify the nominal inscriptions, I use Javier de Santiago Fernández's second and third categories²⁵, with some modifications, based on the larger corpus and the revision of some inscriptions. The second type (the ones who contain a verb) is widened to include any inscriptions which promote the action of one or two individuals, whether by a using a verb or by the display on the object. The third category (list of names) stays the same. The mixed category has been eliminated, not because mixed inscriptions don't exist, but because I don't think that creating another category for them helps in the analysis of their meaning. I thus prefer to consider two categories that are not exclusive.

The inscriptions are distributed between the two categories quite evenly: 16 promote individuals and 15 lists of names. On a total of 25 objects with 31 inscriptions, 1 is from the 9th century, 2 are from the 10th century, 17 are from the 11th, 4 from the 12th and 1 from the 13th. Most of the inscriptions of our corpus are thus from the 11th century, all types combined. As for their distribution on the territory, nominal inscriptions are concentrated in the North-East of the Pyrenees, in the Catalan dioceses of Barcelona, Elne, Girona, Urgell and Vic, and in the diocese of Roda-Barbastro.

Origin

The recommendation to a saint by the association of the name with a sacred place is very antique. The origin of the 'promotion' inscriptions can be seen in donation and patronage inscriptions from Roman Antiquity, using the same formulas and similar layouts. As for the 'lists of names', they can be associated both with paleochristian sanctuary nominal inscriptions, called *proscynèmes*, and the altar 'graffitis' from the 9th-11th centuries. The link between these 'graffitis' and the Carolingian *Libri Vitæ* has been studied by Cécile Treffort²⁶. The presence of the name of the deceased in the *Libri Vitæ* or on the altar themselves have their theological origin within the Old Testament, with the white stone

²³ For a general analysis of the meaning of this ritual, see Méhu 2016: 83-110.

²⁴ Martène 1736: col. 746.

²⁵ Santiago Fernández 2002: 53.

²⁶ Treffort 2007: 43-83.

of the apocalypse on which the names of the elected were written until the Last Judgment. Though the *lipsanoteques'* inscriptions are inside the altar and not on it, the similarities between them and the altar 'graffitis' are impossible to deny. The formulas are the same, they both associates the living and the dead, they both aren't read, they both are recommendation to God and thus have an eschatological dimension. Though the nominal inscriptions inside the altar are clearly linked to these two traditions, they are the only ones that can be linked with the deposition of the relics or the consecration ritual²⁷.

Individual Promotion

CHURCH	T.	C.	DIOCESES	LOCATION	ID
Andorra la Vella, Sant Esteve	L	11	Urgell	PCA	000424
Ardanué, San Esteban	L	12	Roda-Barbastro	MDBM	00025
Bestracà, Sant Andreu	L	11	Girona	MAG	MD 134
Cabanelles, Santa Coloma	L	11	Girona	MAG	MD 82 763
Cóll, Santa Maria	S	12	Roda-Barbastro	<i>Casa rectoral del Pont de Suert</i>	n.i.
Cruïlles, Sant Miquel	L	13	Girona	MAG	MD 130
Fluvià, Sant Miquel (2+3)	S	11	Girona	MAG	MD 59
Girona, Palau episcopal (2+3)	S	11	Girona	MAG	MA 2504
Grau, Sant Pere (2+3)	L	11	Vic	MEV	3964
Lillet, Santa Maria (1+2)	L	9	Urgell	MCM	358
Lledó, Santa Maria (2+3)	L	11	Girona	MAG	MD 87
Montauriol, Saint-Saturnin	L	10	Elne	Unknown	n.i.
Montgrony, Sant Pere	S	11	Vic	MEV	325
Nagol, Sant Serni	S	11	Urgell	Espai Columba	n.i.
Vilatorta, Sant Julià (2+3)	S	11	Vic	MEV	9719
Vivès, Saint-Michel (2+3)	L	10	Elne	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.

This first group of inscriptions is formed by the objects on which a name or two are especially underlined. This individual promotion was done in several ways. The names could be putted forward by graphic manners: with higher and wider letters, with monumental capital letters, with chisel carving instead of drypoint graving, with a ductus and/or with their layout on the object. Names could also be putted forward by underlining the person's action, with a verb.

The marble *lipsanoteca* of Sant Andreu de Bestracà (fig. 1 – table 5) has two names engraved on both large faces of the rectangular container, each with their respective title²⁸. On the first face, the name of *BORRELLU* appears, followed on the smaller side by the abbreviation *PRB* for *presbiter*. This first name is written in rustic capital letters and

²⁷ About consecration inscriptions, see: Codou 2008: 253-282; Gagné 2020.

²⁸ The general bibliography related to each *lipsanoteca* or sepulchre is in the Annex, with the editions of the inscriptions.

was engraved with a point chisel. It doesn't follow a ductus. On the back face, there is another name with a title inscribed below, but with a less skillful rustic capital letters and engraved directly with a drypoint: *BERNARDUS / LACH*, *lach* meaning laymen²⁹. This type of writing, which is neither of current epigraphic nor cursive forms is also hard to date, because it has been made by unprofessional hands and thus do not follow the norms. However, if compared to the signatures on some charters from the 10th and 11th centuries, it is possible to see a similarity between the unexperimented hands on both types of supports. The orthography of «lach» would place the second inscription in the second quarter of the 11th century.

Unfortunately, the absence of documentation related to that church impedes the identification of Borrel and Bernard and the precise dating of the inscription and thus the consecration or consecrations. It is indeed a possibility that the two names belong to two different consecrations, Borrel from the 10th century consecration³⁰ and Bernard from the 12th century³¹, but it is impossible to confirm. Despite all these difficulties, it is still possible to draw some conclusions from this inscription. Borrell, by the quality of his writing and his status as a priest, is marked as hierarchically higher than Bernard, though Bernard's place on the *lipsanoteca* is an important privilege.

It must be stressed that though the consecration is an episcopal ritual, the names written on this *lipsanoteca* and the vast majority of others are not from the bishop. Neither were they of count or countesse. In general, it seems like it was the role of the local elite in the construction of a church which was important. It was significant enough to allow them a presence in the altar. However, there are exceptions.

On a lot of these *lipsanoteques* and sepulchres, individual promotion is mixed with nominal lists (the third type of inscriptions). In those objects, the graphic elements of distinction are even more important. The sepulchre wood lid of Sant Miquel de Fluvià (fig. 2 – table 9), believed to be dating from the consecration of 1065, is a great example of that *mise en scène*. On one side appears very clearly the name *GUILLEM*, because its letters have been profoundly engraved in the wood with a drypoint. There are two short lines of text following the name, which are probably abbreviations, but that are hard to interpret. It reads *coma[.] Imis*, which could transcribe to *comitissa legitimis* according to the abbreviations³², but which doesn't make much sense in this context. On the other

²⁹ This last inscription has not been transcribed in this way either in CR IV (1990):155-159 or in Bastardes i Parera 1979. They both read *BERNARDUS / ALVICH* without explaining what «Alvich» meant. It is unknown how they reached this result, but after a meticulous review of the inscription, I propose this new edition of «lach». The existence of the spelling «l-a-c-h» to write the Latin *laicus* is attested by a parchment from Sant Julià de Vilatorrada, which dates from the consecration of 1050: Parchment MEV 17 380 (Junyent i Subirà 1946: 284-285; Ordeig i Mata II-1 1996: #188B-II, 153).

³⁰ There is a *Borrellus presbiter vel monachus* who signed the dotation act of Sant Llorenç prop Bagà, in 983. This act confirms the possession by the monastery of the churches of Bestracà, Sant Andreu and Sant Julià (Ordeig i Mata I-2 1994: #101, 241-245). Though it is not much, it is possible that this Borrell was also linked with the construction and consecration of Sant Andreu de Bestracà. There is unfortunately no other documentation to confirm this. This Borrell was only found in one other document, the dotation act of Sant Miquel prop Bagà, in 984, where signed a certain *Borrellus monachus*, which is believed to be the same person (Ordeig i Mata I-2 1994: #102, 245-247).

³¹ Bernard could be one of the first known *castlans* from the castle of Bestracà, Bernardus de Bestrachano, who appears in the documentation in the years 1138 and 1139 as a witness to acts linked to the monastery of Sant-Joan de les Abadesses, and in 1157 as accused in a trial in the curia of Ramon Berenguer IV (Baiges 2010: #1012, 1627-1629).

³² Cappelli 1912: 59, 203-204.

side of the tap is a list of names, scarcely engraved in the wood by the same hand and very difficult to read. In the lower part, it reads again *GUILLEM coma[.] Imis*, which could well be the same person who appears twice, due to the repetition of what is probably his title. By his name's layout, Guillem was distinguished from the others whose names appear on the lid.

In the case of Fluvià, there is documentation from the consecration and thus it is possible to guess who he might be. According to the dotation act of the church, the owners of the parcel on which the monastery was built were Guillem of Fonolleres and his father, Bernard: [...] *Bernardus de Fonollariis et uxor sua Guinedellis cum filiis suis Guilelmo Sibica et Karo Domino Arsendis et Elliadrix et Bernardus filius eius et cuncta illorum progenies [...]*³³. The identification of *GUILLEM coma[.] Imis* with Guillem of Fonolleres would explain the attribute of *legitimis*. Indeed, before the 1065 consecration, there was a conflict on the property of the land on which was built the monastery. Both Gausfred of Rosselló and Guillem of Fonolleres claimed the property, but the dispute was ruled in favour of the last, making him the legitimate owner and most important donator to the monastery³⁴. However, Guillem of Fonolleres was not a count, so if the abbreviation «coma» refers to this title, it could not be him. The second option would be that the inscription identifies Guillem II, count of Besalù, who supported the construction and consecration of the monastery with the count of Empúries, Ponç I, and the count of Barcelona, Ramon Berenguer I. In this case, the mention of *legitimis* would be hard to explain, as the obvious mistake of *coma* instead of *comes*. If it is the case, it would be the only count whose presence was made material in an altar. Although it would be interesting to be able to confirm the identity of this Guillem, this inscription still reveals something. The people who were allowed to have their name written in the altar didn't have all the same status and they were distinguished, even in a locus never to be seen.

In some cases, names are putted forward on *lipsanoteques* in another manner in addition to graphic staging: they are identified as actors with a verb. The verbs used are the following: *fecit* (has done), *iussit* (has ordered), *recondit* (has hidden) and *comparavit* (has acquired). More often than not, they are used with the reflexive pronoun *me*. On the alabaster *lipsanoteca* of Sant Pere del Grau (fig. 3 – table 11) from the 11th century, there are many names, but one stands out. On the front face of the sarcophagi, written in two straight-ish lines, with rustic capital letters that are higher and wider than any others, is written: *ANSULFUS ME COM-/PARAVIT*. This inscription is not ambiguous: Anulfus (whether a priest or a layman, it is unknown) has acquired the *lipsanoteca* for the consecration, and this action has given him the privilege of having his name written on the reliquary, as an actor.

The meaning of the verbal inscription of Sant Pere del Grau is quite clear, but it is not always the case. Some other verbal inscriptions are quite problematic, and their ambiguity has led to multiple interpretations. If the verbs *iussio* (order prescribe), *comparo* (acquire, procure) and *recondo* (hide, bury) are quite straightforward in their meaning, the verb *facio* is not. This verb in Latin had, from Antiquity to Medieval Ages, many different uses. Indeed, it did not necessarily refer to the act of making or manufacturing, it could also refer to the action of consecrating, blessing, contributing, ordering, or organizing³⁵. It is important to keep this in mind, because in almost every

³³ CR IX (1990): 812-814; Ordeig i Mata II-2 1997: #221, 209-212.

³⁴ CR IX (1990): 814.

³⁵ Database of Latin Dictionaries 2022: *facio*, *-ere*.

case, these people have been identified as artisans, on the only basis that their names were written with the combination of *me fecit*, interpreted as «X made me».

The research in the field of epigraphy was, until recently, very unclear about what defines and distinguishes an artist inscription from a donator or sponsor inscription³⁶. Historians were keen to identify any «X *me fecit*» as an artist signature. But there is no way of knowing, only with the combination «X *me fecit*» if we are dealing with an artisan, a donator, a sponsor, or any other actor in the making of the object. However, recent research by Emilie Mineo has rectified the situation. In an article published in 2015, she explored the meaning of the *me fecit* inscriptions and came to some conclusions³⁷. From Latin antiquity to the 11th century, this expression was used as «X have X made», and from the 12th century onward, there is a tendency to see *me fecit* as «X materially made X»³⁸. She also argues convincingly that it cannot refer to the artist who executed the inscription and that the reflective pronoun *me* referred to the object itself or to the church³⁹. In the end, the only way to surely identify the action is to have more information about it, whether in the inscription itself or out of context.

The corpus of *lipsanoteques* offers some examples that might be possible to interpret because of the presence of two different verbs. On the stucco *lipsanoteca* of Santa Coloma de Cabanelles (fig. 4 – table 6), is written: *STEFANUS PRESBITER ME IUSIT / SENIFREDUS PRESBITER ME FECIT*. In this case, I do think that Senifredus is the artisan-priest who fabricated the *lipsanoteca*, because the verb *fecit* is in parallel with the verbs *iusit*: one orders, the other one executes. This hypothesis is supported by the existence of a second inscription, on the stucco *lipsanoteca* of Santa Maria de Lledó, a few kilometres away, which also identifies Senifredus: *SENFREDUS ME IUSIT ET / SENIFREDUS PRESBITER ME FECIT*. Since the two *lipsanoteques* are very similar both in materials and form, are from churches that are close to one another, and the inscriptions are made in the exact same writing, it is highly possible that Senifredus is the maker of this object and the inscription in both cases.

The inscription on the wooden *lipsanoteca* of Sant Esteve d'Andorra la Vella (fig. 5 – table 1) is more ambiguous: *PETRUS PECCA-/TOR FECIT / ALUNDINUS / PRESBITER RECONDIT*. First, according to this inscription, the *lipsanoteca* «was buried» by Alundinus, a priest: what does it mean? If it means that the *lipsanoteca* was deposited in the altar by this priest, it goes against the norms of the consecration ritual, which must be celebrated by a bishop. It is still possible that this Alundinus did help the bishop during the ceremony, and that is why he identified his action with this verb. It could also mean that he was responsible of the care for the relics which were inside the *lipsanoteca*, and so his action was not to bury the *lipsanoteca* but the relics inside it. As for the action of this Peter the sinner, it is quite impossible to know with the information that is available. But if the action of Alundinus is toward the *lipsanoteca*, it would be more coherent if the one of Peter was too, thus meaning he could be the artisan.

Unfortunately, even in the cases for which we have some documentation contemporary to the consecration, it is almost impossible to identify any of the actors whose names are on the *lipsanoteques*, so their action cannot be specified. This whole reflection on the meaning of those verbs as lead me to think that their precise meaning wasn't important,

³⁶ The most important works on this subject are: Favreau 1989: 214-223; Idem 1992: 681-722; Idem 2001:37-59; Mariaux 2003: 199-214; Codou 2008: 273-279.

³⁷ Mineo 2015: 106-112. It is also the subject of her PhD Diss: Mineo 2016.

³⁸ Mineo 2015: 107-108.

³⁹ Mineo 2015: 109-110.

the important is that those people were linked by their action to the construction, to the relics and to the *opus*, whatever action that might be. Emilie Mineo arrived at the same conclusion on the ambiguity of the inscriptions: «This is because the community they were addressed to did not have the need to remember this kind of obvious information, but also because the men and women of the Middle Ages did not think, as we do, in terms of ‘artist’ or ‘client’. Even if a financial, intellectual, or material contribution was made, what mattered was above all the result, the work that was proposed in the eyes of the spectator and whose final beneficiary was God⁴⁰». These different gestures and acts are understood as an integral part of the same process, which is that of building the earthly church.

To summarize, on the *lipsanoteques* and sepulchres, there are certain people who were distinguished by their actions, whether expressed with a verb or not. They had the desire to be in the altar, and it seems that their actions were rewarded with this prominent place, closest to the relics. Most of them were priests, but there were also laymen. The range of actions which are known to be rewarded remains quite large: ordering the fabrication of the *lipsanoteques* or the construction/consecration of the church, donating to the church for its construction/consecration, acquiring the *lipsanoteca* for the consecration, maybe depositing the *lipsanoteca* in the altar or the relics in the *lipsanoteca*, and, fabricating the *lipsanoteca* for the relics.

Nominal Lists

CHURCH	T.	C.	DIOCESES	LOCATION	ID
Arles-sur-Tech (Sainte-Marie)	L	11	Elne	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.
Arles-sur-Tech (Sainte-Marie)	L	11	Elne	Lost	n.i.
Fluvià, Sant Miquel (2+3)	S	11	Girona	MAG	MD 59
Girona, Palau episcopal (2+3)	S	11	Girona	MAG	MA 2504
Grau, Sant Pere (2+3)	L	11	Vic	MEV	3964
Guils de Cerdanya, Sant Esteve	S	11	Urgell	<i>In altare</i>	n.i.
Joval, Sant Martí	S	12	Urgell	MDCS	963
Lledó, Santa Maria (2+3)	L	11	Girona	MAG	MD 87
El Munt, Sant Llorenç	S	11	Vic	Private owner	n.i.
Palera, Sant Sepulcre	S	11	Girona	MAG	MD 78
Pontons, Sant Joan de la Muntanya	S	11	Barcelona	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.
Sauto, Saint-Maurice	S	12	Elne	Mairie de Sauto	n.i.
Talló, Santa Maria	S	11	Roda	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.
Vilatorta, Sant Julià (2+3)	S	11	Vic	MEV	9719
Vivès, Saint-Michel (2+3)	L	10	Elne	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.

⁴⁰ Personal translation from Castellán: «Ello es debido a que la comunidad a la que estaban dirigidas no tenía la necesidad de recordar este tipo de información tan evidente, pero también porque los hombres y las mujeres de la Edad Media no pensaban, como lo hacemos nosotros, en términos de “artista” o de “comitente”, aunque se efectuara una contribución financiera, intelectual o material, lo que importaba era sobre todo el resultado, la obra que se proponía a los ojos del espectador y cuyo beneficiario final era Dios». Mineo 2015: 111.

The inscriptions that are considered nominal lists are the one that presents an abundance of names without graphic distinctions: these names can be written by the same hand, which is the most current situation, or by different hands. They could be scattered or organized. In all cases, the lists of names are inscribed in letters that are more like cursive than monumental and are written in ink or with a drypoint, without much care. As it was mentioned before, the lists of names sometimes cohabited with individual promotion, like in Sant Miquel de Fluvià and Sant Pere del Grau. The following examples are from both combined inscriptions and lists of names alone.

The example of Santa Maria de Lledó is peculiar (fig. 6 – table 15). The stucco *lipsanoteca* is covered in inscriptions from three hands: one we discard because it is from the 19th centuries (on the small side); one that has been mentioned just before *SENFREDUS ME IUSIT ET SENIFREDUS PRESBITER ME FECIT* (on the lid); and a list of names in cursive (on the front side). This last inscription was first edited (reservedly) in the Catalog of the Museum from 1981 and was not revised neither by the makers of *Catalunya Romànica*, neither by Javier de Santiago Fernandez. The problem is that there are mistakes in its edition, which is why I propose a new one⁴¹:

Personal edition	MAG, Catalog 1981
<i>Lobetus presbiter cum Ennalegi defunct[i], Alliu, Baro, Suniario defuncti, Argeleva defuncta, Filmera, Olibani defuncti, Ermetruit.</i>	<i>Lobetas presviter cum Ennalegi defuncti Olliubaro Suniario defuncti Argeleva defuncta Tilmeta Olibasu defuncti me iussit</i>

When looking at this inscription, it is very tempting to see in it a certain similarity with Visigothic high traits writing, but it is much more comparable to poorly written Caroline letters of the 11th century. These letters are very basic cursive, not formalized, probably because the writer didn't have the experience to write well on the stucco support. In the case of the identification of these people, the mystery is total: neither the two Senifredus, neither any of these people appear in the foundational act of the monastery in 1089. However, the introduction to this act mentions the existence of a previous monastery at the same location: «Let it be known to all the faithful, both present and future, that the sacred place of Santa Maria, mother of God, commonly called Lledó, was once rich and endowed with many honours and many goods, and that later, due to the negligence of the inhabitants and the den of wicked people, was reduced to such poverty that no one dwelt there nor showed any honour to the divine worship»⁴².

Considering the type of writing, the absence of any of these people in the foundation act and the knowledge of a prior monastery, it is possible to propose two hypotheses. The *lipsanoteca* could itself belong to the anterior church; or the inscription of the names could refer, in 1089, to the prior community who promoted it, which would explain the references to dead people. Using both the *Catalunya Carolíngia*⁴³ and the Codolcat

⁴¹ I would like to thank Stefano Cingolani for his precious help in transcribing this inscription.

⁴² Personal translation from Latin: *Notum sit fidelium universitati future, et presenti sacratissimum locumbeatissime Dei genitricis Marie vulgo vocatum Lotonense quondam fuisse opulentissimum et magnis honoribus ac rebus ditatum postmodum vero incuria inhabitantium et direptione pravorum hominum ad tantam inopiam redactum quod nemo ibi morabatur nec aliquis ibi divinis cultibus honor exhibebatur.*

⁴³ Catalunya Carolíngia 2022: *antropònims*.

database⁴⁴, I have tried to identify the people in the inscription. For most it was not very concluding, but in a document from the 26th of March 1000, appears a woman named Filmera, wife of Garmi, which had three sons, Olibani, Seniofredi and the Abbot Hacfredo⁴⁵. They were owners of a gran quantity of camps and buildings in les Preses, which they donated to Bernat I de Besalú. Besalú's counts had influence in Lledó: the dotation act was signed by Bernat II de Besalú, grandson of Bernat I. Could Filmera, Olibani, and Senifredus have been linked to this community and honoured the *lipsanoteca* of the new one? It is a possibility, but this document alone is not enough to go on. What was made quite evident, though, is that the anthroponyms from this list are more common in the 10th century until the beginning of the 11th century, which would confirm that the people identified are not contemporary to the 1089 foundation.

The cursive inscription of Santa Maria de Lledó is written by one hand. The names are presented as a group, but in other cases, the names are scattered on the object without a sense of order, sometimes written by different hands. It is the case of one of the *lipsanoteca* from Sainte-Marie d'Arles-sur-Tech. This impressive block of stone, which holes are placed like a Greek cross, has inscriptions almost on every surface. It was first published by Pierre Ponsich in 1987, who said he discovered it in the garden of the monastery in 1953, serving as a trough for the chickens⁴⁶. However, during a short research stay in the Arxiu Mas of the Institut Amatller of Barcelona, I was able to consult some pictures of this same *lipsanoteca* that were taken before 1939⁴⁷. The good news is that there are more names visible on it than there were when Ponsich found it altered by the water. The pictures are of a good enough quality for reading at least some of them. There are isolated names on the top part: *Seguinus / Petrus / Tedul[f]us / Bernardus / P[...]*; and on one side, like *Dugo presbiter*. There are also names followed by formulas, which have not been mentioned until now but were very common in the 10th and 11th centuries⁴⁸. On the rim, is written:

Wilabertus cum omnibus parentibus suis; and on the sides: *Vivas monachus cum omnibus parentibus / Gaucbertus cum omnibus parentibus* and *Oto cum omnibus parentibus suis*.

These formulas, also present on parchment and altars, were common in the *Libri vitæ* in the Carolingian period, which indicated their commemorative and prophylactic role⁴⁹. Those lists of names, with or without formulas, are found in inscriptions, but also written on parchments inside the *lipsanoteques* or sepulchres. Indeed, the name lists have a parchment equivalent in the charters of consecration and the charters of recommendations from the very end of the 11th century to the beginning of the 12th century. The parchments of Oliba from the Catedral of Urgell, in 1040, are well-known examples⁵⁰. In Oliba's recommendation charter, like in Lledó's inscription, there are many members of the community who were allowed to write their name, and thus to have a place inside the altar: clerks, laypeople, both men and women, dead or alive, with or without their relatives.

The most vivid example of this community representation is found in Sant Julià de Vilatorrada, both on the lid of the reconditory (fig. 7 – table 24) and on the five parchments of recommendation that were found in one of the *lipsanoteca*. They are very well known

⁴⁴ *Corpus Documentale Latinum Cataloniae* 2022.

⁴⁵ Sobrequés *et al.* 2006: #622.

⁴⁶ Ponsich 1987a: 1.

⁴⁷ Barcelona, Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic, Arxiu Mas, Foto Gudiol R-113.

⁴⁸ Treffort 2007: 43-83.

⁴⁹ Ponsich 1987a: 3; Treffort 2007: 43-83.

⁵⁰ La Seu d'Urgell, Arxiu Diocesà, Pergamins de consagracions i relíquies 2-3. See the brief study of the charter in Sureda i Jubany 2018: 134-135.

because they have been published by Edward Junyent i Subira in 1946⁵¹, but their importance makes it impossible not to present them. On the wood lid, there are three types of writing: engraved and inked monumental capital letters, engraved mixed cursive letters, and inked minuscule cursive letters. The majority of the names are written horizontally, half of them are upside down. The engraved and inked capital letters are the more visible, partly because they have resisted better the use of time, but mostly because they are double the size of the inked minuscule letters and the ink makes them much more visible than the only engraved ones. In other words, this layout is intentionally promoting the four people who are named: *Bonefilio sacer*, *Vidal sacer*, *Engluviga* and *Guntricus sacer*.

It so happens that Bonefilio, Vidal and Engluviga also appear in one of the recommendation charters and dotation act:

*In Dei nomine. Ego Bonefilius Gitardis sacer +, filius Vitalis sacer vel Ingluigia femina +, qui istam egleciam feci reedifichare cum omnibus vicinibus suis vel vicinas et aliorum bonorum [omnium] clerici vel lachi et feminas qui ibi fecerunt adjutorium propter timorem et amorem Dei ut Deus Dominus noster Jesus Christus faciat illis et nobis retribucionem in vitam eternam. Amen, amen. Fiat, fiat, fiat. Amen +*⁵².

Their role and intention couldn't be clearer. The priest Bonefilio, together with his associate priest Vidal, and the women Engluviga, are responsible for the reconstruction of the church and the petition to the bishop of Vic, Guillem of Balsareny, for its consecration. They are the main actors of this petition, but they also include with them all the neighbouring community, *vicinibus vel vicinas*, the good men, clerks, and laypeople, *clerici vel lachi*, and the women, all who helped them out of their fear and love of God, *propter timorem et amorem Dei*. As they are included on the parchment, there are also on the wooden lid, though their names are much harder to read. On the parchments and on the wood, there are names of clerks and laypeople, with mentions of their family. They are this community around the church of Vilatorta and their action is honoured as such. They all hope for retribution in eternal life *Deus Dominus noster Jesus Christus faciat illis et nobis retribucionem in vitam eternam*.

The case of Vilatorta is an incredible and unique testimony of the importance of the community (and its hierarchy) around the consecration ritual: are conserved the dotation act, the consecration charter, the recommendation charters, two *lipsanoteques*, three bishop seals from Guillem of Balsareny, and this amazing sepulchre lid. However, I must stress out that it is the only case for which are preserved these materials altogether, and the only inscriptions for which it is possible to identify with certainty the people who appear and link them to the consecration. Vilatorta is thus an incredible exception, the summit of laypeople's representation in the altar.

⁵¹ Junyent i Subira 1946: 279-292.

⁵² Vic, MEV, 17380.

Part three: Afterthought and Conclusions

Community

What can these inscriptions teach us about the consecration, about the laity's patronage system and about the importance and meaning of writing in the church? The inscriptions that I have presented are far from being widespread. Nevertheless, they are part of a more generalized writing tradition surrounding the consecration, including the dotation acts (more than 400 conserved), the consecration and recommendation charters (more than 50), and the relic identification parchments. Altogether, they form a considerable testimony of who was involved in the ritual, of the importance the consecration and the altar itself had in the society, and of the power of the written word. More than a religious act, it seems that the consecration was crucial for the constitution of the community that surrounded the church and its hierarchy⁵³.

The inscriptions can help us determine that the people who were involved in the consecration were part of three categories: first, the direct actors in the construction and the religious actors of the consecration, which were specially honoured by the layout of the inscription (priest, clerks, donators, promoters, and artisans); second, the other members of the local community who participated in the process, without being main actors; and third, the dead members of the community who are not linked with the consecration but with the place. These inscriptions seem to be the engraved testimony of the demand of social groups for the construction of their community's church or monastic community. This whole process underlines the role of both the religious and the laic community in the construction of churches in the Catalan counties: their edification were social works⁵⁴. Participating in the consecration, by donating to the church or by any other means made them part of the building, gave them a place in their community, and could benefit them in the afterlife. All these people participated in the good *opus* which was the construction of a church, in hope of redemption⁵⁵.

Somewhere in the 12th century, laypeople stopped writing their name near the altar. The only names that can be found around it are the ones of ecclesiastics. I do believe that the end of this tradition has to do with the condemnation of the right of patronage of the laity on the churches, a fight that the Church took on in the middle of the 11th century, though it was slow to impose in the Catalan counties⁵⁶. The decisions of the Council of Toulouse in 1056 are only one example of it, as is the slow change to a unified Roman liturgy. Laypeople were more and more kept away from the altars and the uniformization of the liturgy took out what was left of the local traditions, including the charters and the inscriptions.

Power of the Verb

If there is a thigh link between the consecration and the written act in most liturgical ordinary, the sacred nature of writing was particularly valued in the Catalano-Narbonese Ordo and the territory where it was used. Indeed, in the North-East of the Peninsula, the organization of the society around law and written documentation had a central importance,

⁵³ Zimmermann 2008: 17, 26-27; Méhu 2016: 102-110.

⁵⁴ Codou 2008: 281; Zimmermann 2008: 17; Méhu 2016: 106-110.

⁵⁵ Treffort 2003: 158-160. Anita Guerreau-Jalabert makes an amazing description of the system of circulation and exchange of charity, using examples from donation to monasteries that I believe can be applied to our case. Guerreau-Jalabert 2000: 55-57.

⁵⁶ Codou 2008: 270-273.

rooted in Roman culture⁵⁷. Considering the written word as an incarnation of the truth is both a heritage of the Roman law and the translation of a very Christian interpretation of the Bible: the tables of the Law, incarnate the word of God (Ex 32, 15), and the Gospels incarnate the Verb. This is literally acted in the consecration ritual in different ways. The *A-B-C-tarium* is traced in Greek and Latin on the pavement of the Church by the bishop, to incarnate the Verb in the building. The *Alpha* and the *Omega* are traced outside the doors of the church they represent Christ, the beginning, and the end. All words that the bishop pronounce have power: *Sanctificare per verbum Dei unda caelestis, sanctificare aqua Christi calcata vestigiis*⁵⁸. The written consecration charters including the Decalogue and the Gospels are probably (with the inscriptions) the most original liturgical practice included in the ritual. It identifies the altar as the *locus* of the Law, both the Old and the New⁵⁹. If this identification between the altar and the Arch of the Covenant was common ground, here they decided to incarnate this link by writing the Laws down⁶⁰. The altar was not only metaphorically the Arch of the Covenant, but it was also materially. It pushes to the extreme the will to give the sanction of writing to all transactions and acts.

In a very similar way, the name written on matter was considered the true incarnation of the self⁶¹. Though the action of the donators, clerks and community was itself crucial, it seems that it was important that it was written for it to be true. As Patrick Henriët said, the altar attracted words, because it was the centre of liturgical speech⁶². By writing their name on the *lipsanoteques* and sepulchres, they were present, and they were made materially part of the church, and the *Ecclesia*.

Purpose

Cécile Treffort reflected on the eschatological dimension of hidden nominal inscriptions, both of the endotaphs and the altar 'graffitis'⁶³. Writing one's name close to the relics was an essential devotional practice in the High Middle Ages. The will was to benefit from the Saints' intercession, to be identified, recognize during the Last Judgment⁶⁴. In most cases, it doesn't seem important to be able to even read the names with human eyes, only their presence suffice, although even inside the altar, the social hierarchy remains important⁶⁵. Taking that into account, the nominal inscriptions *in altare* seem to be the extreme expression of the will to be close to the Saints. Closest to the relics as they could be, inside the *locus* of the Eucharistic miracle, people related to the church and its edification were profiting of the intercession of the saints and of the spiritual status of the altar, from that moment and perpetually.

The inscriptions in the field of epigraphy are studied as written objects which belong to the visual and sensitive realm. They were part of a public discourse. I believe the *in altare* inscriptions belonged to the spiritual realm: they are to be read only by the Saints and Christ. However, they are still part of a discourse, one on the community of Christians and each other's chances to access eternal life.

⁵⁷ Cingolani 2015: 36-37.

⁵⁸ Pontifical of Narbonne, Martène 1736: col. 735.

⁵⁹ Henriët 2013.

⁶⁰ Gros i Pujol 2008: 70-74; Henriët 2013: 76-77.

⁶¹ Bourin 1998: 193-213; Treffort 2003: 158; Codou 2008: 279-282.

⁶² Henriët 2013: 86-87.

⁶³ Treffort 2016: 39-46.

⁶⁴ Treffort 2016: 140.

⁶⁵ Codou 2008: 280.

ANNEX

Edition criteria

Text transcribed in lowercase (except text carved with a chisel, transcribed in capital letters).

Restitution of the modern rules of punctuation and use of capital letters.

Separation of the words.

Re-establishing of the difference between U/V and I/J.

Developing the abbreviations between parentheses.

Indicating the gaps by [...]

Restitution between []

Crosses marked by a +

1. Andorra la Vella (Sant Esteve)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Wood
Location	PCA	000424
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	11 th century	Approx.
Description	The inscription is made on one of the large faces of the wood container. It is engraved with a flat chisel in footed monumental capital letters. The 'B' and 'D' are uncials. It doesn't follow a straight ductus. It doesn't use many abbreviations.	
Inscriptions	<i>[P]ETRUS PECCATOR FECIT. +ALUNDINUS PR(E)SB(ITE)R RECONDIT</i>	
References	CR XXIII (1986): 257; CR VI (1992): 416-417; Santiago Fernández 2002: 51.	

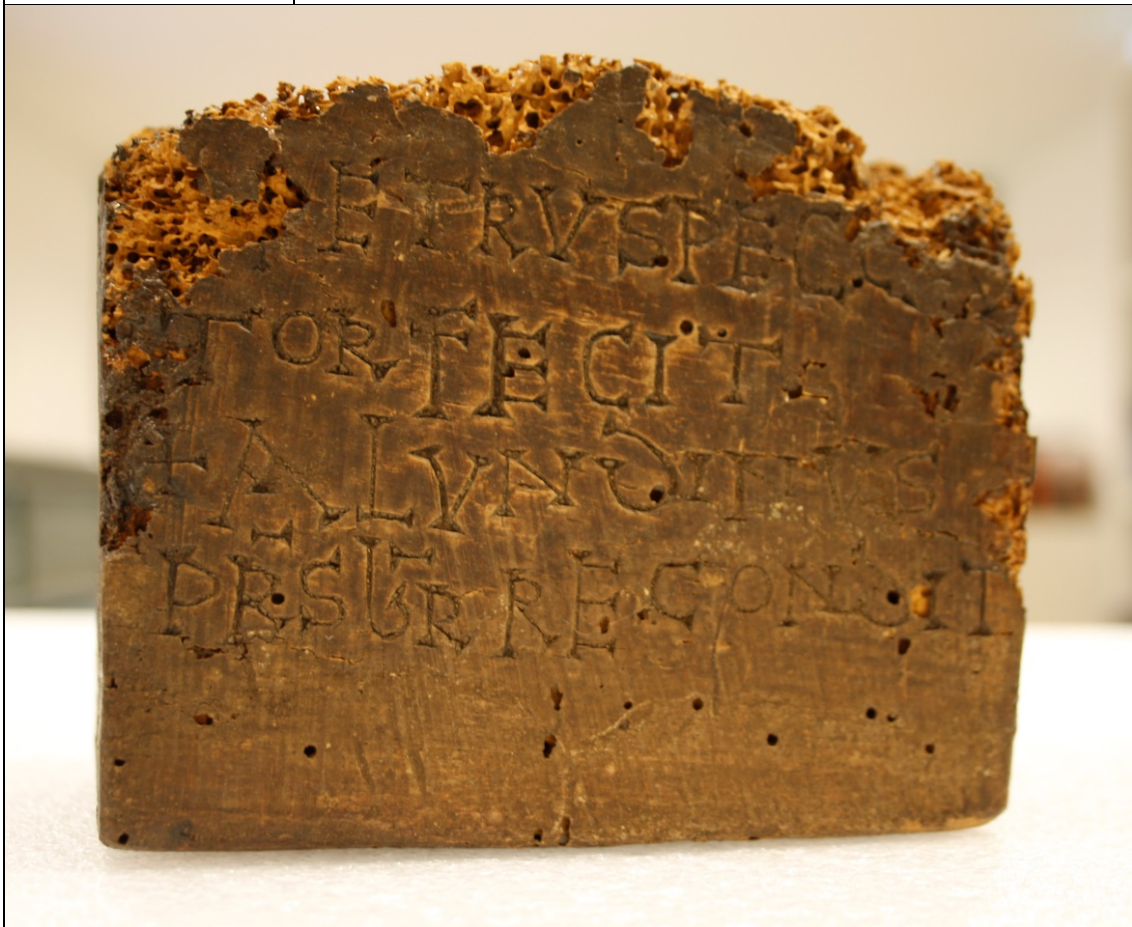


Fig. 5 (Picture by Author © Patrimoni Cultural d'Andorra)

2. Ardanué (San Esteban)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Wood
Location	MDBM	00025
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	12 th century	Approx.
Description	The inscription is made on top of the wood container. It is profoundly engraved with a drypoint in rustic capital letters. The ‘A’ has a top bar curved upwards and the ‘T’ is footed. It doesn’t follow a straight <i>ductus</i> .	
Inscriptions	<i>[Ab]stone pr(e)s(biter)</i>	
References	Iglesias Costa 2003 [1985]: I, 146-151; Montaner 2019: 69-70.	

3. Arles-sur-Tech (Sainte-Marie)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Stone
Location	<i>In situ</i>	n.i.
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	881/891 and/or 1046	Hypo.
Description	The names are spread on all surfaces of the container except under it. They are lightly engraved with a drypoint in a cursive style that mixes minuscules and capital letters. They do not follow any direction or <i>ductus</i> . They were written by different hands, maybe at different consecrations.	
Inscriptions	<p>Top centre: <i>Petrus, Seguin(us), Tedul[f](us), Bernard(us), P[...]</i>.</p> <p>Top rim #1: <i>Wilab(er)t(us) c(u)m om(n)ib(us) par[en]tib(us) [s]uis.</i></p> <p>Top rim #2: <i>S[...][s][...]n[...]</i>.</p> <p>Side #1: <i>Dugo [presbi]t[er]. Oto cu(m) om(n)ib(us) parentib(us) suis.</i></p> <p>Side #2: <i>Vivas monachus cu(m) omnib(us) [parentibus]. Gaucb(ertus) c(u)m omnib(us) paren(tibus). Lo[...]</i>.</p>	
References	Demaux, Roumailhac 1987: 9-15; Ponsich 1987a: 1-4; CR XXV (1996): 85; Santiago Fernández 2002: 51-52.	

4. Arles-sur-Tech (Sainte-Marie)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Wood
Location	Lost	–
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	1046 and/or 1157	Hypo.
Description	«The writing, quite poorly made, seems to be – he added – from the 11 th or 12 th century. On one of the sides, I read: “ <i>Oliba..., Petrus, Wilelmus, Guanlangater (?) cum omnibus illorum...</i> ”. Wouldn’t this small cube have contained the relics placed in an altar, and couldn’t the transcribed text be a fragment of the act of consecration?» ⁶⁶	
Inscriptions	<i>Oliba [...], Petrus, Wilelmus, [Guanlangater] cum omnibus illorum [...]</i>	
References	Brutails (1901): #4, 179; Demaux, Roumailhac 1987: 9-15; Ponsich 1987a: 1; CR XXV (1996): 85; Santiago Fernández 2002: 52.	

⁶⁶ Personal translation: «L’escritura, bastant mal formada, me sembla ésser – afegia – del segle XI o del XII. En una de ses cares llegeixo: “*Oliba..., Petrus, Wilelmus, Guanlangater (?) cum omnibus illorum...*”. Aquest petit carreu no hauria contingut les relíquies col·locades en un altar, i el text transcrit no podria ésser un fragment de l’acta de consagració?». Brutails (1901).

5. Bestracà (Sant Andreu)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Marble
Location	MAG	MD 134
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	10 th and 12 th centuries	Approx.
Description	This <i>lipsanoteca</i> has two inscriptions. The first occupies two sides, was made with a point chisel, and uses rustic capital letters, except for the uncial 'B'. The second uses only one side and is written with a drypoint on two lines in rustic capital letters, except again for the uncial 'B'. This last one is from a much less habile hand. Both do not follow a <i>ductus</i> .	
Inscriptions	Side #1 and #2: <i>BORRELLU(S) PRB</i> . Side #3: <i>Bernardus lach</i> .	
References	CR XXIII (1988), p. 115; Bastardes i Parera 1989: 21-22, 27; CR IV (1990): 158-159; Santiago Fernández 2002: 52; Blanchard 2022: 1-4.	



Fig. 1 (Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

6. Cabanelles (Santa Coloma)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Stucco
Location	MAG	MD 82763
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	11 th century	Approx.
Description	The inscription is inscribed with a point chisel on the lid and on one of the large sides of the stucco box. It uses rustic capital letters and does not follow a ductus. It uses abbreviations for the 'm(e)' and 'p(resbite)r'. It is the same writing and abbreviations as on the lid inscription of the <i>lipsanoteca</i> of Santa Maria de Lledó.	
Inscriptions	Lid: <i>STEFANUST M(E) IUSIT.</i> Side: <i>SENIFREDUS P(RESBITE)R M(E) FECIT.</i>	
References	Godoy Torrijos 2018: 1-2.	



Fig. 4 (Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

7. CólI (Santa Maria)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Slate
Location	Casa rectoral de Pont de Suert	n.i.
Type(s)	Individual promotion	Consecration
Date	1110	Exact
Description	The inscription is on one side of the slate on four lines. It is written with a drypoint, uses a mix of minuscule and capital letters, in a cursive style. It is followed by an inscription from 1925.	
Inscriptions	<i>Bernard(us) Roroger p(resbiter) hoc fecit era t(rabeationis) m(i)l(lesim)a c(e)n(tesim)a (decima) [K](a)l(endas) XI in mense otubrio</i>	
References	CR XVI (1996): 197-198.	

8. Cruilles (Sant Miquel)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Wood
Location	MAG	MD 130
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	13 th century	Approx.
Description	This inscription is on the cylinder body of the container, written from right to left in rustic capital letters. It is barely engraved, with a drypoint.	
Inscriptions	<i>Remun(dus) p(res)b(ite)r</i>	
References	CR XXIII (1988): 122; CR VIII (1989): 289-290.	



(Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

9. Fluvià (Sant Miquel)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Wood
Location	MAG	MD 59
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	1065	Hypo.
Description	The lid from Fluvià is inscribed on both sides. On the first, there is the promotion inscription, with the name deeply engraved with the drypoint, and the tittle more lightly engraved in minuscules. On the other side, there is a list of names, all written with a drypoint and barely readable. The names vary in size, but I am unsure if they are made by the same hand or not. Both inscriptions use a mix of minuscule and capital letters, in a cursive style. It seems like it lost a part of the wood, as the list of names is partial at the beginning.	
Inscriptions	<p>Side #1: <i>Guill(e)m [coma? lmis]</i>.</p> <p>Side #2: <i>[...] om(n)ibus parentib(us) vivis (et) defu(n)ct[is]</i>. <i>[...] s [...], Will[af]red(us), S[...], [...], Vitalus p(resbi)t(er), Sn[...], [...]</i>. <i>Guill(e)m [coma? lmis]</i>.</p>	
References	Monsalvatje y Fossas 1917: 68-69; Marquès y Casanovas 1955: 45-46; CR IX (1990): 827 (wrong <i>lipsanoteca</i>).	



Fig. 2 (Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

10. Girona (Palau episcopal)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Stone
Location	MAG	2405
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	11 th century	Approx.
Description	This lid is only inscribed on one side with two inscriptions. The first is of individual promotion, it is engraved with a point chisel with a mix of rustic capitals and uncials, following a ductus. The 'M' is footed. It is parallel to the shorter side of the stone. The second one is a list of names and is perpendicular to the first one. It is engraved lightly with a drypoint, barely readable, with capital letters in a cursive style.	
Inscriptions	Parallel: <i>ERM(E)NGOD(US)</i> Perpendicular: <i>Tulj[cane], Cind[eleva]</i> .	
References	–	



(Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

11. El Grau (Sant Pere)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Alabaster
Location	MEV	3964
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	11 th century	Approx.
Description	The promotion inscription on the <i>lipsanoteca</i> of Sant Pere del Grau is on the front of the little tomb, engraved with a point chisel in rustic capital letters that are a little bit erased. The other names are written with a drypoint, dispersed on all the other surfaces of the container. They do not follow an order, but they are written in similar letters, mixing capitals and minuscules in a cursive style. The writing is clumsy and quite hard to read.	
Inscriptions	<p>Front, low: <i>AUSULFUS ME COMPARAVIT.</i></p> <p>Front, up: <i>Et Arnatgo.</i></p> <p>Lid: <i>Guitard(us), Wihelm, Galin.</i></p> <p>Side #1: <i>Bonofilio.</i></p> <p>Back: <i>At[t]lo, Arnalus, Durandus.</i></p> <p>Under: <i>Oliba, Isarn, Ermenir, Guitardus, Adam.</i></p>	
References	Gudiol i Cunill 1906; Alavedra i Invers 1979: I, 350 et II, 65-69; CR II (1984): 287-288; CR XXII (1986): 251-252; Bastardes i Parera 1989: 19, 23-24; Santiago Fernández 2002: 50; Trullén 2003: 254; Sureda 2010: 58.	



Fig. 3 (Pictures by Author – © Museu Episcopal de Vic)

12. Guils de Cerdanya (Sant Esteve)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Stone
Location	<i>In altare</i>	–
Type(s)	List of names	Consecration
Date	1042	Hypo.
Description	This lid is serving as a parchment for the consecration act of the church. It is the only known case that is not on parchment. It is followed by lists of names, on both sides of the stone, which are unreadable, according to Martí Sanjaume.	
Inscriptions	<i>[...] Bonushomo sacer. Vives sacer. Aairo sacer. Seniofredus sacer. Gentilus. Xixol. Wifredus presbiter cum omnibus parentibus suis. Quimara. Requilles vivis vel defuntis. Segario cum omnibus parentibus suis. Ermengaudus gratia Dei episcopus [...].</i>	
References	<i>I chose not to include the whole consecration act in this paper because it is not necessary for our argument. It is easily available in the bibliography.</i> Martí Sanjaume 1928: 481-482; Baraut Obiols 1978: #53, 131-132; Baraut Obiols 1986: #56, 141; CR VII (1995), p.148; Ordeig i Mata 1996 II-1: #171-I, 119-121.	

13. Joval (Sant Martí)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Wood
Location	MDCS	963
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	11 th century	Hypo.
Description	The inscription is on the irregular side of the lid. The names are engraved with a drypoint on four irregular lines. The letters are a mix of capitals and minuscules, in a cursive style, and are quite easy to read. They could be from different hands, because there are significant differences between the type of letters used in the names: the 'R', 'D' and 'N' in particular.	
Inscriptions	<i>Vodolardo, Miro sacerdo, Seniofre sacer(do), Bernardo</i>	
References	CR XXII (1986): 371-372; CR XIII (1987): 94; Calderer i Serra <i>et al.</i> 1990: 148; Santiago Fernández 2002: 47.	



(Pictures by Author – © Museu Diocesa i Comarcal de Solsona)

14. Lillet (Santa Maria)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Alabaster
Location	MCM	10470
Type(s)	Individual promotion	Relic identification
Date	833	Hypo.
Description	The inscription of Lillet is on the cylindric lid of the container. It was finely engraved with a flat chisel on two lines inside a line mark. Each line is preceded by a cross. The letters are a mix of monumental capitals and uncials, all footed.	
Inscriptions	+VIDALUS P(RES)B(ITE)R Q(UI) ME F(E)CIT IN O(NO)RE. +S(AN)C(T)A MARIA ET S(AN)CT(US) MARCIALIS CO(N)FES(O)R.	
References	Vigué, Bastardes 1978, p. 291-292; CR XII (1985): 367-369; Bastardes i Parera 1989: 18, 25-26; <i>Millenum</i> 1989: 106; Santiago Fernández 2002: 47.	

15. Lledó (Santa Maria)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Stucco
Location	MAG	87
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	10 th century and 1069	Hypo.
Description	There are three inscriptions on the <i>lipsanoteca</i> of Lledó: two from the Middle Ages, on the lid and front, and one on the side front 1811. The lid inscription, which is of individual promotion, is engraved with a point chisel in rustic capital letters, the same as on the <i>lipsanoteca</i> of Cabanelles. The one on the front is a cursive inscription made with a drypoint and is a list of names, all written by the same hand.	
Inscriptions	Lid: <i>SENIFREDUS M(E) IUSIT ET SENIFREDUS P(RESBITE)R M(E) F(ECI)T.</i> Side #1: <i>Lobetus presbiter cum Ennalegi defunct[a], Alliu, Baro, Suniario defuncti, Argeleva defuncta, Filmera, Olibani defuncti, Ermetruit.</i> Side #2: <i>Se feu est Altar en lo any 1811 per Baltasar Subietas [...] axó ya se trobà en lo Altar bell.</i>	
References	<i>Museu d'Art</i> 1981: 36-37; Calzada i Oliveres <i>et al.</i> 1984: 15; CR XXIII (1988): 115; Vayreda i Olivas 1989 [1931]: 143-146; CR XI (1990): 545-546; Santiago Fernández 2002: 47-48; Godoy Torrijos 2018: 1-2.	

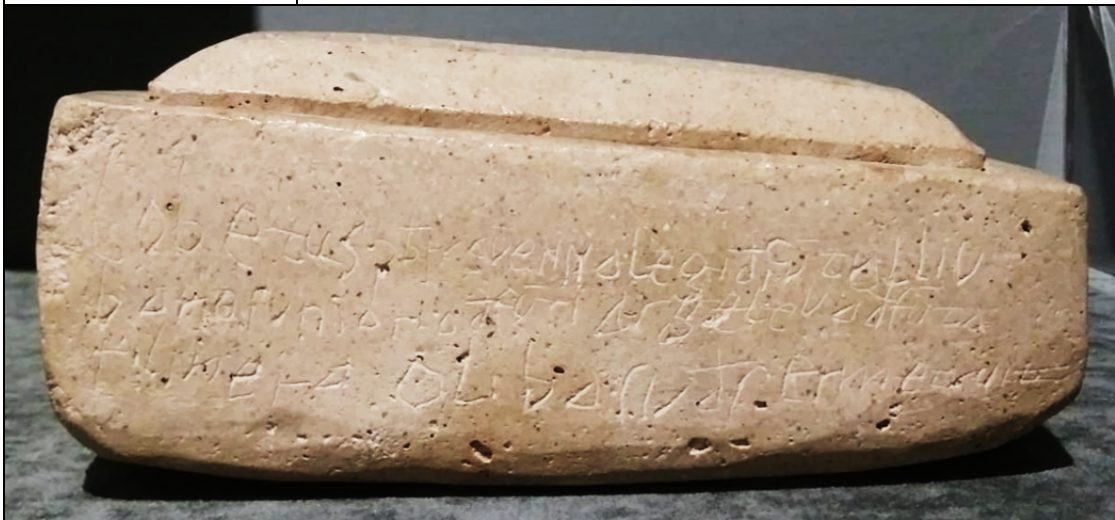


Fig. 6 (Pictures by Author – © Bisbat de Girona)

16. Montauriol (Saint-Saturnin)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Stucco
Location	Lost	–
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	10 th century	Approx.
Description	The inscription of Montauriol is on the front and side of the container: the name followed by the title. The name is engraved with a flat chisel in monumental capital letters that occupy all the surface available. The title in minuscules abbreviated.	
Inscriptions	<i>BERNARDUS P(RES)B(ITE)R.</i>	
References	Durliat 1954: 110; <i>Dictionnaire des églises de France</i> 1966: 88; Ponsich 1987b: 5-6; CR XIV (1993): 262; Santiago Fernández 2002: 46.	

17. Montgrony (Sant Pere)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Stone
Location	MEV	325
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	12 th century	Approx.
Description	The inscription of Montgrony was made with a drypoint on one face of the stone lid, in diagonal. It is in minuscule cursive and is easy to read.	
Inscriptions	<i>Fortunius p(res)b(ite)[r].</i>	
References	–	

18. Nagol (Sant Serni)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Slate
Location	PCA	000432
Type(s)	Individual promotion	–
Date	1055	Exact
Description	The inscription of Nagol was made with a drypoint in rustic capital letters. It is on the side of the lid that faced down to the <i>lipsanoteca</i> .	
Inscriptions	<i>Arnallus Bonefilius</i>	
References	Canturri 1979: 5-17; CR XXIII (1986): 257; CR VI (1992): 515.	



(Picture by Author – © Patrimoni Cultural d'Andorra)

19. Palera (Sant Sepulcre)

Support	Sepulchre	Stone
Location	MAG	MD 78
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	1086	Hypo.
Description	The sepulchre of Palera is engraved on almost all surfaces, except the bottom. The names are scattered on the object without any order, in different directions. They were made with a drypoint by different hands and in cursive minuscule letters.	
Inscriptions	<i>Unfortunately, I was unable to directly access the sepulchre and the pictures available do not allow to distinguish the letters.</i>	
References	–	

20. Pontons (Sant Joan de la Muntanya)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Stone
Location	<i>In situ</i>	–
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	c. 1075	Hypo.
Description	The list of names is on the face of the sepulchre lid, written with a drypoint in cursive minuscule letters. The inscription is barely readable.	
Inscriptions	<i>[...] Igela, P[...], [...]dis, [...]erti[...]</i>	
References	CR XIX (1992), p. 167; Pladevall (1970), p. 143-155.	

21. Sant Llorenç del Munt (*Idem*)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Ceramic
Location	Home of the owner	–
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	11 th century	Approx.
Description	The lid was carved with different names with a drypoint, it seems by different hands. The size of the letters varies, the inscription mixes rustic capitals and minuscule letters and they do not follow a ductus.	
Inscriptions	<i>[...] sacer(dos), [F]lav[ius], [...]s s[.]atas un[...]. Adalbertus, Bone[filio], Eldemaru(s) sac[er]dos, Bonefilio l(evi)ta.</i>	
References	CR II (1984): 492; Santiago Fernández 2002: 52-53.	

22. Sauto (Saint Maurice)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Slate
Location	City Hall of Sauto	–
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	12 th century	Approx.
Description	The lid of Sauto is marked with a large circle, following the circumference of the disc, and a cross, going from the centre of the disc to the circumference, which creates four different spaces. Two names are in the top left corner, two others in the top right corner, and one in each bottom corners. They are written in cursive letters, hard to read, and are preceded by footed crosses, like in medieval charters.	
Inscriptions	<p>Top left corner: + Agso [or Agio], + Siginus</p> <p>Top right corner: Agose [or Agone] + Milaro [or Miliro, Milano]</p> <p>Bottom left corner: + Exa[l] [or Eco]</p> <p>Bottom right corner: G[o]derago [or Godemaro]</p>	
References	–	




(© CCRP/Conseil Départemental 66)

23. Talló (Santa Maria)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Slate
Location	<i>In situ</i>	–
Type(s)	List of names	–
Date	1098	Hypo.
Description	The lid of Talló is partly broken, but some letters are still visible on it. They are a mix of rustic capital and minuscule letters, hard to read, and are carved with a drypoint. The difference of size and the chaotic dispersion of the names indicates that they are probably written by different hands.	
Inscriptions	In large letters: <i>[Bern]ard, Anam, [...]us, Mi[ro]</i> . In small letters: <i>Tor[...], Hono[ratus], Tom[as], [...]</i> .	
References	CR VII (1995): 95; Santiago Fernández 2002: 48.	

24. Vilatorta (Sant Julià)

Support	Sepulchre (lid)	Wood
Location	MEV	9719
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	1050	Exact
Description	The lid of Vilatorta has inscriptions on both sides. On the first, here are three types of writing: engraved and inked footed monumental capital letters (with triangular interpunctuation), carved mixed cursive letters, and inked minuscule cursive letters. The names are written horizontally, but half of them are upside down. The different types of writing are overlapping.	
Inscriptions	<p>Recto, up, inked and carved: <i>BONEFILIO SACER, VIDAL SACER, ENGLUVIGA, C(U)M PARENTORUM OM(NIUM) EO(RUM)</i>.</p> <p>Recto, up, carved: <i>Gischafré. Guitard. Guifre cum parentibus. Rechel femina. Guilelmus p(res)b(iter) cum parentorum eorum.</i></p> <p>Recto, up, inked: <i>Bernard(us) Guifre cu(m) sociis suis. [...] Jus pare(n)tib(us) suis. [Am]alricus.</i></p> <p>Recto, upside down, inked and carved: <i>GUNTRICUS SACER.</i></p> <p>Recto, upside down, carved: <i>cu(m) parentibus suis. Floresinda. Galin cum parentibus suis.</i></p> <p>Recto, upside down, inked: <i>Fredulfus levita cu(m) co(n)[san]guinitatib(us) suis v(e)l cu(m) sociis suis. Earnusga levit[a] [cum omnibus] suis parentib(us). Adalbertus levita cum parentib(us) suis. Reimund(us) Atila cum parentib(us) suis. Alera(n)d(us) cu(m) om(n)i[bus] pare(n)tib(us). Guil(el)m(us) cum parentibus suis et suis parentibus. Oliba [...] cu(m) om(n)i[bus] parentibus] suis. Lengard(us) [Atila]. Isarnus et cu(m) om(n)ium parentorum su(or)um. Guilielm[us] cu(m) omnib[us] parentibus]. [...] cu(m) sociis suis.</i></p> <p>Verso, inked: <i>[...] Petrus [...].</i></p>	
References	CR XXII (1986): 250; CR III (1986): 502; Gudiol i Cunill 1915-1917: 4-6; Junyent i Subirà 1946: 279-292; Santiago Fernández 2002: 48-49; Trullén 2003: 253.	
		
	Fig. 7 (Pictures by Author – © Museu Episcopal de Vic)	

25. Vivès (Saint-Michel)

Support	<i>Lipsanoteca</i>	Stucco
Location	<i>In situ</i>	–
Type(s)	Individual promotion	List of names
Date	10 th century	Approx.
Description	The lipsanoteca of Vivès is inscribed on the top with two names (with verbs) and on one side with a list of names. All of them are carved with a drypoint, except the last two names of the name list, which are engraved more deeply with a point chisel. The letters are mostly rustic capitals, with some uncials, in a cursive style.	
Inscriptions	<p>Top: <i>Gaucelmus p(res)b(ite)r me fecit. Seniofredus p(res)b(ite)r.</i></p> <p>Side: <i>Seniofredus p(res)b(ite)r, Gaucelmus p(res)b(ite)r, Amelius sacerdos, Seniofredus, Vergell e(t) Sibia, Susanna, Spera(n)d(e)o, Engo(n)te, Adroarius, Pozo, Albarig cu(m) om(n)ium co(n)sang(ui)neoru(m) benefactoru(m) nostro(rum), [...].Jennillo, Agilla cu(m) an(im)aru(m) suaru(m).</i></p> <p><i>WITICA P(RES)B(ITE)R, GAUCELMUS P(RES)B(ITE)R.</i></p>	
References	Ponsich 1980: 327-329; Ponsich 1987b: 5-6; CR XIV (1993): 450-451; Ordeig i Mata 1999: #136, 387; Santiago Fernández 2002: 46.	

Abbreviations

MAG	Museu d'Art de Girona
MCM	Museu Comarcal de Manresa
MDBM	Museu Diocesa de Barbastro-Monzón
MDCS	Museu Diocesa i Comarcal de Solsona
MEV	Museu Episcopal de Vic
PCA	Patrimoni Cultural d'Andorra
CR	Vigué J., Pladevall A. (eds), <i>Catalunya Romànica</i> , 27 vols, Barcelona 1984-1999

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