

INDIGENISM AND ROMANIZATION IN THE HIGHLANDS OF SORIA. New epigraphic testimonies.

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Seven unpublished Latin epigraphs from the same region in the north of the province of Soria are described below. What makes these inscriptions interesting is their common geographical origin and that in them a singular mixture of Latin features is detected - language, formulas and function of the monuments -, with others attributable to what we generally call indigenous substratum, mainly onomastics and decor.

This work results from the confluence of two different lines of research. EAP is responsible for the first and consists of the location, cataloging and study of archaeological resources from the Iron II and Roman periods in the region of origin of the epigraphs, a project carried out with financing from the Junta de Castilla y León and the the discovery, identification of the pieces, determination of their archaeological context and other data only accessible to those who have daily contact with the natural and human landscape of a region. The other signatory (JGP) is familiar with the area thanks to more than a dozen years dedicated to the cataloging and revision of the Latin epigraphy of the province of Soria for the new edition of volume II of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*.

It has already been said that all the pieces have the same geographical origin, the riparian lands of the upper courses of the Cidacos and Linares rivers that, in their first kilometers, coincide respectively with the natural regions called "Tierra de Yanguas" and "Tierra of San Pedro Manrique", administratively dependent on the province of Soria, in the Autonomous Region of Castilla y León. Morphologically, these are two holes located in the central sector of the Iberian System, where the summits sometimes exceed 1700 meters; The mountains descend towards the valley forming a more or less staggered succession of hills and hills and the river network, formed by the two main rivers mentioned above and their tributaries, has nestled at the bottom of the hollows; Villages and towns are located in the small and narrow alluvial plains below, which are ranked around San Pedro Manrique in the Linares valley and Yanguas-Villar del Río on the Cidacos. Despite the ruggedness of the terrain, communications between both relief units are not very difficult, since the roads follow the secondary water courses.

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The two main rivers run towards the North to pour their waters into the Ebro and in that direction the mountain loses height but becomes more massive, forcing the waters to make their way through deep gorges and narrow ravines; The extraordinary bravery of the region represents a serious road obstacle that, however, is compensated by the ease of travel offered by streams and secondary channels, as is the case with the route that through Navalsaz and Ambasaguas connects the lands of Munilla and Enciso, on the banks. Rioja of Cidacos, with those of Cornago and Grávalos, on the Soria slope; Despite such obstacles, it is important to point out that the people of these places, even though they belong morphologically and administratively to the lands of the Meseta, since time immemorial have been related as much or more with the riverside cities of the Ebro. The Western and Southern limits of the

The regions that interest us are clearly defined by the watershed between the Duero and the Ebro. To the west, the crest of the Montes Claros, continued in the south by the Sierras de Oncala and the Rodadero, separate the tributary waters of the Ebro (regions of Yanguas, Oncala and San Pedro Manrique) from those of the Duero (Almarza and Castilfrío); To the east, however, the heights of the Sierra de Alcarama mark the dividing line between the waters of the Linares and the Alhama, both tributaries of the Ebro, and distinguish the Lands of San Pedro from those of Magaña.

Being valleys located between 1000 and 1300 meters of altitude, their climate mixes continental features with mountain ones, which translates into a harsh and long winter with frequent snowfalls and strong night frosts. Such unfavorable weather considerably limits the range of human activities and the economic dedication since time immemorial to the Lands of Yanguas and San Pedro Manrique has been animal farming, in a version adapted to the peculiar environmental circumstances of the area: such as the conditions atmospheric conditions do not guarantee the subsistence of the cabin during the cold season, its inhabitants chose to move their livestock towards warmer winters, returning in summer to take advantage of the cool and abundant rangelands of the valleys. Since at least the middle of the 15th century, the frequent and numerous mentions of the presence of "serranos" in the pastures of the Guadiana and the Portuguese Alemtejo demonstrate that these people were among the earliest and most assiduous practitioners of the great peninsular transhumance, a custom that has been vigorously maintained until a couple of decades ago.¹ There is no evidence that this also happened in ancient times - although there may be signs of it in neighboring regions.² but it is likely that smaller radius movements were then practiced seeking the easy complementarity of pastures offered by the Ebro Valley, as has been recently suggested.³ In conjunction with this cattle movement there are now (and it is not difficult to imagine that also in the past), herds of larger cattle that graze in semi-freedom in very large reserves or "cerradas". The riverside solanillas near the towns allow farming in tiny orchards while on the larger plains grains that can thrive in the extreme weather conditions of the area are grown: barley, rye and some wheat. Finally, the area also allows the use of mountain resources - wood, firewood, charcoal, honey and wild fruits - but, as happens in other places in the ancient Mediterranean, these activities have left very few archaeological remains and when these exist, its importance and volume is impossible to conceptualize.⁴

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Due to the isolation and marginality, interest in the area's antiquities is relatively recent. In the 1920s, Blas Taracena explored—and in some cases, excavated—some mogotes in search of fortified habitation sites surrounded by alignments of *frisie cheveaux* or driven stones; One of the most famous is the Cerro de los Castillejos, in Tañine, whose findings allowed its excavator to include the surrounding lands in the cultural sphere of what he called "the Soria forts" and to imagine that its inhabitants belonged to what the sources Greco-Latins designated as "Pelendones",⁵ a Celtiberian fraction whose apparent linguistic and cultural archaism is attributed, according to the well-known theory of Bosch Gimpera, to having been the advance guard of the second Celtic wave that received the lands of Hispania, whose main contingent ended

¹MJ Trindade 1965, pp. 130-131; M.-Cl. Gerbet 1991, pp. 353-384.

²J. Gómez-Pantoja 1995, pp. 495-505.

³U. Espinosa and L. Usero 1988, p. 492.

⁴J. Sasel 1988, p. 214; A. Chaniotis, pp. 255-258.

⁵B. Taracena 1926, pp. 11-15; 1941, pp.13-14.

settling in the Alto Duero and constituted the human group that classical authorities designate as “Arévacos” and whose Celtiberian affiliation is undoubted;⁶ These ended up cornering their Pelendones relatives in the highlands of Soria and La Rioja, where they survived until the moment when History appeared in this part of the Plateau.

Bosch Gimpera's hypothesis was based on classical literary sources, toponymy and archaeological findings: the culture of the Soria forts defined by Taracena was linked to the Northeast Urn Fields - which Bosch Gimpera considered archaeological evidence of the first wave Celtic -, being a late echo of the arrivals through the Ebro valley; From this invasionist perspective, it was considered that the ethnic origin of the Castro culture was Celtic and prior to the last great Celtic wave. *posthallstatic* represented in the upper Duero by the Arévacos. However, the most recent archaeological works have made it possible to clarify and refine the concept of “Northwest Urn fields” and the current perspective advocates more for highlighting the role of the autochthonous to the detriment of foreign influences.⁷

But, in 1988, and based on epigraphic testimonies similar to those presented below, it was suggested that in Roman times, the inhabitants of the regions that we today call “Lands of Yanguas and San Pedro Manrique” / had a “differentiated identity” regarding to the usual Celtic horizon in the region of the middle and upper reaches of the Ebro and in the Plateau and the Iberian or at least Iberized character of this town with an unknown name was insisted on.⁸ From this hypothesis it follows that the space traditionally attributed to the Pelendones must be divided into two, one that would include the riverside regions of the Alto Duero and the easternmost area of the Meseta that drains towards the Ebro (that is, the territory of Augustóbriga, which Ptolemy describes as Pelendona), while the other, located in the upper reaches of the Cidacos and Linares, belonged to an ethnic group of unknown name and whose most significant hallmarks are precisely its peculiar epigraphic vestiges. p. 172

Precisely the Latin inscriptions that appeared in the Lands of Yanguas and San Pedro Manrique are the most consistent and abundant ancient testimonies, since their number has been increasing continuously since Camporredondo published the first pieces in 1934.⁹ It is a mostly funerary complex — only three votive epigraphs have been revealed so far (four, including the one published here), made on barely carved slabs of slate or local schist, and homogeneous in terms of styles and themes of decoration: at the head, shallow human busts from the front or profile, almost always in number coinciding with the number of deceased mentioned in the inscription. On the foot, however, expressionist images of bovids and horses, sometimes pairing an adult with a calf and only in one case do the human figure of a rider accompany the bulls and horses. In line with the above, the inscriptions show characteristic anthroponymy and forms: on the one hand, a mixture of Roman personal names (Aemilius, Antetius, Antonius, Flavius, Minicia, Sempronius, Paternus, Titullus, Valerius... etc.) along with others of more uncertain roots

⁶P. Bosch Gimpera 1932, pp. 541-597; 1944, pp. 125-126.

⁷M. Almagro Basch 1952, p. 214; G. Ruiz Zapatero 1983, pp. 535 et seq.; F. Romero 1984, pp. 5-6; G. Delibes and F. Romero 1992, p. 249.

⁸J. Espinosa 1992, pp. 901-910.

⁹L. Camporredondo 1934, pp. 35-36; B. Taracena 1941, p. 179; T. Ortego 1977, pp. 257-258; M. Caballero and MJ Caballero 1977, no pp.; A. Jimeno, 1980, pp. 51-53, 124-125, 138-145; J. Mangas and MJ Ramírez 1980, pp. 220-221; F. Morales and A. Jimeno 1982, p. 160; MJ Borobio, J. Gómez-Pantoja and F. Morales 1987, p. 249; T. Ortego 1988, pp. 330, 335-340.

(Agirsenius, Arancisis (gen.), Lesuridantaris (gen.), Oandissen, Onso); on the other, a combination of forms that signify the group with respect to habitation practices in neighboring regions, since they generally omit the consecration to the Manes,¹⁰ prefer *buried* instead of the most common *sita/us* and they commonly abbreviate the names.

Such peculiar features allowed Espinosa and Usero to typify an epigraphic province in 1988 made up of tombstones from Soria and some other similar ones from Riojan places also on the banks of the Cidacos and Linares rivers.^{eleven} In total, the catalog thus formed included a total of 18 specimens and from them two important conclusions were drawn, namely, that the formal and plastic features that are repeated in the stelae of the group are not so much due to the existence of a *lapidary office* but to “the social and cultural homogeneity of the people / who carved them”;¹² and that the anthroponymy of the complex is more similar to that of the Ebro Valley than to that of the Meseta. The similarities are especially evident with the little we know of the *albumunicipal of municipium Calagurris Iulia*, today Calahorra, a circumstance that they explained by assuming that the Lands of Yanguas and San Pedro Manrique were in Roman times the “*veranadas*” or high pastures of the cattle of the lands bordering the Ebro, whose hot and arid summer is especially harmful to the animals. flocks. Such pastoral use allowed them to propose the hypothesis that the legal status of the mountaineers was that of *adtributi* dependent on the municipalities of Roman citizens established on the banks of the Ebro.

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After this study, a few more findings have been made and the reading of already published pieces has been corrected,¹³ in such a way that, including the seven described below, the number of headings in the area currently far exceeds thirty. Of them, 26 maintain the characteristics that caught the attention of Espinosa and Usero and that have been highlighted before; Two other epitaphs, that of Santa Cecilia and one of Yanguas, differ from the group due to the absence of figurative decoration, their morphology and the onomastics and formulas used.¹⁴ The remaining four are votive altars, two known by Espinosa and Usero and two others discovered later; In any case, these researchers did not consider them in their study because they did not present any other features than those common to this type of inscriptions and because their onomastics were aberrant in relation to the other testimonies; Now it has been seen that they are consecrated to aquatic divinities - the area has a modest hydromedicinal potential.^{fifteen} and it has been speculated with the possibility that the contrast between the onomastics of the devotees and that of the stelae could be explained because the latter represented the majority of the aboriginal population while the others were the outsiders who came to the valleys attracted by the healthiness of their waters.¹⁶

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¹⁰This characteristic is strictly applicable to the 18 pieces that appeared in different places in the Cidacos valley; Curiously, however, it constitutes a differentiating feature with the inscriptions from the Linares basin, where it appears in 5 of the 7 known pieces.

^{eleven}U. Espinosa and LM Usero 1988, pp. 477-504.

¹²U. Espinosa 1992, p. 903.

¹³J. Gómez-Pantoja 1992, pp. 918-919 and 922-923; L. Sagredo and D. Pradales 1992, p. 25.

¹⁴A. Jimeno 1980a, pp. 124-125, with the additional data indicated by L. Sagredo and D. Pradales 1992, p. 25; F. Morales and A. Jimeno 1982, p. 163.

^{fifteen}J. Sanz and E. Sanz 1995 pp. 25-28.

¹⁶J. Gómez-Pantoja 1992, pp. 923-924; 1997, pp. 277-281; and 1999, pp.351-362.

We now describe the new findings; Except for the last one, which is a votive altar, the other six are stelae whose characteristics correspond perfectly with those defined ten years ago by Espinosa and Usero.

1-. The first piece (plate 1) is not strictly unpublished since there is printed news about it, but it achieved such limited circulation that the published condition is only formally met.¹⁷ It is a rectangular tombstone, carved on local hard sandstone and whose present dimensions are 118 x 32 x 19 cm. Its current state does not seem very different from the original, except for some blow that removed splinters from the surface and part of some letter at the end / of the first line; The large chip existing in the fourth line, however, seems to have occurred prior to the recording of the epigraph. The inscription is divided into six lines with letters of about 5.5 cm in diameter, engraved with deep and clear lines; The shape of the letters tends towards a square capital, but they were executed quite rustically. As the *computer* placed one word per line, only two interpunctuations can be seen: one in the fourth line between the F and A and the other in the next line between the I and the S.

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The inscription was found in the summer of 1995 covering a water pipe in Tañine, which today is a district of the San Pedro Manrique City Council; Its discoverers suspect that before its hydraulic use it could have been in the ruined church of the place. Even though it is the first remains from the Roman period that is known in Tañine, it should be noted that it is a site with a wide *pedigree* archaeological.¹⁸

After its discovery, the tombstone was moved to San / Pedro Manrique and is now deposited in the Plenary Hall of the City Council, where we saw it and photographed it in August 1998.

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Marcus
Iulius
Balani
f(iilius) · ân(norum) L
Hei · se(pultus)
is



Plate 1: Tañine, San Pedro Manrique, Soria
(JGP photo)

rr. 5-6: *Hei se(pulturae) l(ocus) est*, San Miguel, mistaking the L for a wound in the stone, since neither the depth of the feature nor its shape correspond to a letter; the same can be said regarding the T, which is also located far below the line box. On the other hand, after the final E of the r. 5, a half-erased S is clearly seen, which may correspond to an amendment made by the quadratary.

The most notable thing about the epitaph is the bi-member name of the deceased with the *praenomen* unabbreviated; Regarding the patronymic, *Balanus*, Palomar points out that he also

¹⁷MA San Miguel 1995, sp; It is a small flyer printed at the expense of its author and has barely circulated outside the local area; In it, a very brief comment accompanies an excellent photograph and a correct transcription of the inscription.

¹⁸B. Taracena 1941, pp. 157-159.

He carried one of the regulos of Transalpine Gaul; Epigraphically it is attested at least in an inscription seen at the beginning of this century in Torre de Santa María, in Cáceres.¹⁹ The sepulchral formula is notable for several reasons. What is common in the area is the use of *Hic sep(ultus/a) est* instead of the most common *situs*. Our inscription is adjusted to that use, although the abbreviation is anomalous. Note the verb in the second person, an unusual but not impossible form and for which a parallel can be found on a tombstone in Dombellas, a place near Numancia and just fifty kilometers south of Tañine.^{twenty} Finally, the preference of *Hey* by *Hi* $\bar{\iota}$ gives the inscription an archaic air suggestive of an early dating.

2- Fragment of a funerary tombstone carved in local stone and whose current measurements are 103 x 37 x 16 cm (plate 2). At the head the profile of a human head was drawn schematically on the left; On the foot, however, you can see the silhouette of a bovid. The text of the inscription goes in between, with rustic capital letters, about 7 cm in diameter; separating words and acronyms there are correctly distributed points. The stele is currently in the home of its discoverers, the Vergizas family, in Vergizas, a district of Vizmanos, where we described and photographed it in May 1998.

We do not know the date and precise place of the discovery but it must be assumed that it occurred when one of the old houses in the town was demolished or renovated.

Saturni-
 nus · Ant(oni) · Aii· s(ervus) ·
 h(ic) · s(epultus) · est an(norum)
 XXXX



Plate 2: Vergizas, Vizmanos, Soria (Photo JGP)

The restitution of the name of the owner of Saturninus is uncertain, since the use of the *payroll* Antonius/Antestius in the inscriptions of the / zone and their frequency is more or less even. Instead, the cognomen

Aius The only thing commentable is its vulgarity.^{twenty-one} The most significant fact is precisely the servile condition of the deceased, a fact hitherto unpublished and which refutes the impression of egalitarianism in misery offered by the rest of the epigraphs of the area.

3- Fragment corresponding to the central and lower part of a funerary tombstone carved in local stone, whose dimensions are (64) x 33 x 11.5 cm (plate 3). The use for uses other than the original ones is the cause of the mutilation of the piece, which can be seen in the loss of the ends of each line, in the disappearance of the figures that are usually found at the distal ends of these steles, a figure human at the head, of which nothing remains, and another of a bovid, of which only the part can be seen

¹⁹M. Roso de Luna 1905, p. 69; R. Hurtado de San Antonio 1977, p. 222 no. 501. M. Palomar 1957, p. 47.

^{twenty}A. Jimeno 1980a, pp.80-81, with corrections by J. Gómez-Pantoja 1999.
^{twenty-one}JM Abascal 1994, p. 263.

top of the spine. The letters measure 5.5 cm and have no other particularity than the current an- in rr link. 1 and 4 and the less frequent -at- of r. 3; In this case, it seems as if the quadratary had thus corrected the omission of one of the letters. According to what the current owners of the piece informed us, it appeared in the renovation of a house in La Laguna, a village dependent on the Villar del City Council.

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River; She is now at Mr. Manuel Lozano's house, where we examined and photographed her in May 1998.

Ânfestius
 Sesenco
 Pâterni f(ilius)
 ân(norum) XX H(ic) s(epultus) e(st)



Plate 3: La Laguna, Villar del Río, Soria
 (JGP Photo)

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Both the name and patronymic of the deceased are repeated with relentless insistence in the epigraphs of the area. On the other hand, the cognomen is unprecedented, not only here but throughout the Iberian Peninsula; The suffix -nco is common in non-Latin indigenous onomastics, especially in the designation of what we call gentilities, but it could also be a mere personal name, as the cases of San Esteban de Gormaz, Clunia and Segobriga seem to allege.²²Note, however, that Sesenco is transparent in Basque and means “little bull”, which is especially appropriate considering the age of the deceased and the use of bovids as a funerary emblem.²³

4- Local stone stele found and photographed by one of us (EAP) in the spring of 1993 when it served as a lintel in the small window of a house in the village of Valdecantos, district of the Santa Cruz de Yanguas town hall (plate 4); A few months later, coinciding with the death of the last neighbor and the depopulation of the place, the tombstone disappeared and while its whereabouts remain unknown, its reading—and the news of its very existence—depends on the photograph taken at that time. The piece—or at least its inscription—seems to be completely preserved, its dimensions being approximately 70 x 38 x 10 cm, which have been calculated from the imprint of its position on the wall. The letters measure about 5 cm and are quite regular in shape, although with certain archaic features, such as the E and F written with two parallel vertical lines; Note also the particular spelling of *icbyhic*. Under the epigraphic field, a scene was represented with what appears to be two bovids, one adult and the other its calf. Reading does not present any special problems:

²²J. Gómez-Pantoja and F. García Palomar 1995, p.191

²³Verbal information from J. Gorrochategui, whom we thank for the information.

Sempr(onia)
Attasis · f(ilia)
ic · ş(epulta) · est
ân(norum) XXV
C(aius) · Se[m(pronius)] mât(ri)



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The sex of the deceased is uncertain, but here the female has been chosen based on her unique name versus the apparent *praenomen* of the dedicator; Furthermore, as we intend to show in another work, the iconography of the stele supports this interpretation, since we are convinced that the sex of the animals coincided with that of the deceased. Note the

patronymic of the deceased, a derivative of the very popular *Atta* but until now it had not been documented in Hispania, although a similar form exists in Moesia Inferior.²⁴

Plate 4: Valdecantos, Santa Cruz de Yanguas, Soria (EAP Photo)

5- The following epitaph (plate 5) is found serving as a frontal in the pool of a fountain, with the inscribed part submerged, that is, the tank must be emptied and its cover dismantled to be able to enter and for there to be enough light for the autopsy. And photography; As in the case of the previous tombstone, once again the photographic negative becomes an irreplaceable document.

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The piece, made of local sandstone, now measures (116) x ??? x 36 cm and if it is preserved in excellent condition it is, without a doubt, due to the protection offered by the water; The only noticeable defects are two cutouts of different sizes on the sides, one for the overflow and the other for drainage and emptying of the tank. *lacus*. The piece contains a double epitaph, whose letters measure between 4 and 4.5 cm, separated by a simple incised line; The first line is read with some difficulty because it is half hidden by one of the font's orthostats. The inscription is found in a fountain located northwest of the urban area of Navabellida, a semi-abandoned village dependent on the municipality of Oncala, where one of us (EAP) saw it, described it and photographed it.

²⁴Vine. JM Abascal 1994, pp. 289-290; A. Mócsy, R. Feldman and others 1983 p. 35, *Attas*. Cf. CIL III, 4942 = ILLPRON 26, *Attasaon*.

Antestia ·
 Onse Mur-
 rani filia
 annorum
 XXV
 Hic s(epulta) e(st)
 Aemilius
 Seranus
 Flavi f(ilius)
 annorum
 [-]Hic s(epultus) e(st)



Plate 5:
 Navabellida, Oncala,
 Soria (Photo JGP 2010)

Apparently, the inscription is being studied by A. Jimeno, A. Lafuente and V. Mayoral, but with a reading that, from what we have been able to know, differs in part from what we have seen. *on site* and that we confirm on the photo.

The names of the two deceased conform to the onomastic pattern of the area, whose inhabitants seem to have been distributed almost equally between *Aemilii*, *Antestii*, *Antonii* and *Valerii*. *Murranus* is, in Kajanto's opinion, a personal name with non-Latin roots, apparently typical of the most Celticized regions of Italy and Gaul.²⁵ although the two examples available in Hispania both belong to the Levantine coast;²⁶ Note, however, the Clunian epitaph of a Uxamense named *Murranius*.²⁷

Most notable is the unusual cognomen of the deceased, Onse, whose appearance allows us to amend with certainty the reading of an inscription from El Collado, a neighboring village of Navabellida, in which the name of the deceased had been read as Aeonso, although it was not ruled out. that it could be a *Ae(milius) Onso*. It is now proven that the editor's perplexity was justified and that his second guess was the correct one.²⁸ It turns out, then, that *Ons-* was a singularly productive root in the area since, apart from the two cases mentioned, we also have a *Antetia Oandissenin* Valloria²⁹ and the name of the deceased in the fragmentary epitaph of Yanguas, previously restored as *Ponti[a] Cjons<i>li[a] Na]sonis* perhaps it should simply be read as *Ponti[a] Onslif[---]*.³⁰

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²⁵I. Kajanto 1965, p. 335; for the distribution map of known cases, vid. A. Mócsy, R. Feldmann et al. 1983, p. 195.

²⁶JM Abascal 1994, p. 433

²⁷CIL II 2787, with the commentary of ML Albertos 1979, 160.

²⁸J. Gómez-Pantoja 1992, p. 918-919 = *HEp*5, 747

²⁹U. Espinosa and LM Usero 1988, p. 481 = *HEp*3, 359 = AE 1990, 566).

³⁰MJ Borobio, J. Gómez-Pantoja and F. Morales 1987, 249 = *HEp*2, 670.

6- In the home of the Valloria family, in Santa Cruz de Yanguas, there is a funerary stele (plate 6) used as the threshold of the main door of the house. The piece is apparently complete, but one of the jambs hides the header and the upper lines; The visible part measures (112) x (31) x 10 cm. What can now be seen are seven lines of text very worn by use, followed by two animal figures one below the other; The first, the lower one, presents the lateral silhouette of a standing bull that looks towards the viewer; Above him, more blurred, another animal silhouette, represented at the moment of jumping or running. The letters measure 3-4 cm and, as in the previous case, the E was written using two vertical strokes. In addition to the concealment of the upper lines by one of the jambs, the rest is extremely worn by use, especially at the beginning of each line; only the rr. 4, 7 and 8 seem complete, which allows us to assume that each of them had about 8 letters. What we could read is:

5- [-----]
 [-]iVL[---]
 [-]XII[---]
 + tet mat[er--]
 et frat̄r ·
 + o+Iiṭ [-fa-]
 c̄endum cu-
 r̄averunt



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Plate 6: Santa Cruz de Yanguas, Soria (Photo JGP6)

The meaning of the inscription is clear, but the circumstances mentioned above prevent even the restoration of hypothetically the content of the first lines; in the fifth, the temptation is to read *obiit*, but the position of the word in the formula makes it better to assume that the preserved features belong to the name of one of the dedicators.

7- Altar carved in local sandstone, which measures 75x38x36 cm and is apparently preserved complete: the upper part is decorated with a small pediment framed by scrolls, while a boxed space contains the last letter of the dedicatory formula. The epigraphic field measures 35x34 cm and the erosion is so severe that it significantly hinders legibility; The letters that can be seen complete measure about 5 cm (plate 7).

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The altar is currently placed upside down and serves as a holy water bowl in the church of the small village of Palacio de San Pedro, a district of the San Pedro Manrique town hall. No one could tell us how long the stone had been in its current location or where it previously stood. Due to surface erosion, the autopsy and tracing carried out by one of us (JGP) in August 1995 was less clarifying than expected; Therefore, the reading we offer must be taken with all precautions:

Pa+e [-]t̄
 [-]mutan
 v · s · PV[-c.3-] PR
 v(otum) s(olvit)
 5- merit)

As you can see, an uncertain and almost meaningless reading; Despite this, and with due reservations, it seems that the first line may contain the name of the divinity, perhaps *Pale*, a number recently attested in Hispania, precisely in the Guadiana regions to which the Yangese shepherds transhumated traditionally at least since the Late Middle Ages.³¹ But this is nothing more than a conjecture given the state of the stone, which makes even the reading of the last two lines uncertain; Even so, note the existence of two

Hispanic epigraphs that offer a parallel to the unusual consecration formula proposed here.³²



Plate 7: Palaces of San Pedro, San Pedro Manrique, Soria (Photo JGP)

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As has been seen, six of the seven new pieces presented here belong by right – due to their name, their decoration or both – to the peculiar group of stelae defined by Espinosa and Usero, which they increase to reach the number of twenty-six.

Based on known cases, we imagine the ideal piece or type of the set segmented into three fields: on top, the head or heads of the deceased; then the text and, finally, the scene with one or more zoomorphic figures. In turn, the epitaph was written following a fixed scheme consisting of the name and affiliation of the deceased, his age, the burial formula and the mention of the dedicators. Based on the evidence that has reached us, the most powerful nucleus was in the area of Vizmanos, where nine of the known monuments are preserved, which represents just over a third of the total; It is here where more specimens adjusted to the ideal model are preserved (six out of the eleven total) and where the supports seem better worked; Finally, it is only here that formulas of good will and remembrance are added to the writing scheme of the epitaph that we have described. In short, we think that the author (or authors) of the pieces that appeared around the Cidacos sources (Vizmanos lands) was an individual with greater capacity for graphic and grammatical resources, as well as greater skill in stone work. .

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This strength fades as we descend the Cídacos or cross into the neighboring Linares valley. In Santa Cruz de Yanguas, about 5 km downstream from Vizmanos, three pieces with characteristics very similar to those of the main focus are preserved, except for the mutilation of the head and some difference in nuance in the drawing of the bovids, the most representative animal. of the lower decoration. The passage from the Cidacos valley to its neighbor

³¹AU Stylow 1992, pp. 27-29; cf. M.-Cl. Gerbet 1991, pp. 353-384.

³²CIL II 1358, from Ronda and II 5084, from León.

It makes without difficulty through El Collado, a village in Oncala located at the sources of the Linares and about 7 km southeast of Vizmanos; The port of Campos, far from being an obstacle, has traditionally been a link between the inhabitants of both valleys, who have taken advantage of the excellent pastures on its slopes in peaceful compascuation. Three inscriptions are preserved in El Collado, which faithfully adhere to the general scheme, although they present minimal local variations.

In the opposite direction, about 10 km from Vizmanos downstream from Cidacos, is Yanguas, whose four pieces show appreciable differences with respect to the main focus, although there is no doubt that they represent the same taste and style. Following the flow of the river and already in Rioja lands, the three pieces found around Munilla-Valdeosera are located about 25 km from Vizmanos: however, it is still surprising that the only complete stele preserved presents features that more closely resemble it. with the main nucleus than with the closest Yanguas examples.

If we return to El Collado to begin the descent of the Linares, we only find stelae in Navabellida, Taniñe, San Pedro Manrique and Grávalos; The more or less numerous groups mentioned above give way to isolated finds and the distance also imposes the degradation of the ideal model: the Grávalos piece marks the furthest end of the dispersion area (it is located about 25 km from El Collado), only It has in common with the other examples of the group the rough bust of the head; However, it lacks decoration on the foot and the compositional structure of the epitaph has nothing to do with what we are used to.³³

Dispersion from a nuclear focus does not necessarily have chronological consequences; Today, the oldest of those preserved is that of Tañine (the first in our catalogue), whose simple structure and spelling clearly points to the beginning of the 1st century. Espinosa and Usero thought that the rest of the tombstones should also be assigned at an early date but the available evidence does not make us so sure of that conclusion; On the other hand, what seems clear to us is that the fashion for these peculiar tombstones took root strongly around Vizmanos and lost strength as we distance ourselves from this point in the direction of the Ebro.

We also find the absence of similar examples to the south and west of Vizmanos very striking, that is, on the southern slopes of the Oncala and Montes Claros mountain ranges. that mark the watershed between the Duero and the Ebro. This circumstance contrasts with the clear coincidences that the onomastics of our region present with respect to others in the Iberian Depression; Espinosa and Usero already noted this phenomenon but referred only to the demonyms, which they attributed to the clientelist ties of the mountain people with the thriving and well-established Roman and Latin municipalities along the Ebro; However, it seems even more striking to us in the non-Latin anthroponyms (Lesuridantaris (gen.), Oandissen, Onso/Onse, etc.), which allow easy comparison with some well-known examples from the north bank of the Ebro; In the case of Sesenco (nom.), its semantic transparency in Basque has already been noted and it does not hurt to note that the until now problematic reading of a tombstone from Tafalla (Navarra), of which only a handwritten memory is preserved, can be resolved by comparison with a Vizmanos piece. In the Navarrese epigraph, the name of the deceased seems to be Acirsenio (dat.), a demonym or nickname so unusual that it made the first editor doubt him and it does not even appear on the list.

³³U. Espinosa 1986, pp. 87-88.

from Abascal; but the Vizmanos epigraph certifies the rectitude of the tradition, since it surely contains the patronymic Agirseni (gen.).^{3. 4}

All of the above, plus the attraction that the Iberian lands seem to have traditionally exerted on our region, allows us to suspect that, contrary to the geographical-political distribution of recent centuries, the riverside regions of the headwaters of the Cidacos and Linares rivers belonged in the Antiquity to *conventus Caesaraugustanus* and not to *Cluniensis* has been mechanically defended since the time of Albertini, who was the first who, for anachronistic and not very justifiable reasons, made the ethnic and conventual borders of the Roman imperial era coincide with the current mugas between Castilla y León and La Rioja.³⁵

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^{3. 4}Tafalla: H. Gimeno 1989, pp. 238-239 = *HEp3*, 268; Vizmanos: U. Espinosa and L. Usero 1988, pp. 485-486 = *HEp3*, 363.

³⁵E. Albertini 1923, p. 99-101; B. Taracena 1933, pp. 393-401.

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