

“Cult contexts of the Gallaecian corpus”.

SUMMARY

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The scholarly tradition has usually neglected the study of the Gallaecian corpus of inscriptions with vernacular theonyms from a contextual perspective, focusing mainly on epigraphic and/or linguistic approaches to these votive texts. However, to go further in our knowledge of the indigenous-roman religious systems of the Northwestern *Hispania*, which is still frustratingly patchy and provisional, it now seems appropriate to focus on more specific tasks. One of these is the question of the contexts of these inscriptions and their relationships with cult topographies, ritual dynamics, social memories and audiences in a provincial setting.

Granted that little is known and reliable as regards the dossier of almost two hundreds epigraphs with indigenous theonyms from the Galician territory of the Roman period, the aim of this paper is to offer an updated statement of the cultic contexts of these texts based on direct fieldwork –carried out as part of the research project directed by M^a. C. González - and systematic revision of old documentation and materials but also first reports of the recent finds in ‘As Burgas’ (Ourense), *Lucus Augusti* (Lugo), ‘San Cibrán de Las’ (Ourense) and ‘Monte do Facho’ (Donón, Pontevedra). Nevertheless, to explore the cultic contexts of these inscriptions and their implicit socio-religious dimensions is not an easy task. The main problem is the lack of trustworthy information of the places of discovery or the original settings of these texts: the data about the circumstances of the finds are scarce and tricky, and in most cases the epigraphs lack of a proper archaeological context since are reused as part of Christian churches or private constructions.

The purpose of this paper is to help to narrow that gap through a comprehensive, actualized and interpretative revision of the archaeological and cult(ural) contexts of the Galician inscriptions, thus contributing to improve our understanding of the socio-religious strategies involved in these votive texts and laying out the ground for future works on the subject. But the aim of this contextual study is also to explore issues relating to sacred topography, ritual dynamics and cultural traditions in *Gallaecia* in the Roman period, such as the phenomenon of (re)use of the *castros* (hillforts) as venues to perform cult practices dedicated to gods with ‘indigenous’ names...