

EVOLUTION OF SANT VICENÇ DELS TORRENTS: A SMALL MONASTERY THAT BECAME A PARISH (10TH-20TH C.)

Climent Miró Tuset

Institut d'Estudis Comarcals de l'Alt Urgell

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Resum

En aquest article mostrem l'evolució del monestir de Sant Vicenç dels Torrents: la seva fundació o reforma en època carolíngia, la seva donació al monestir de Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles al 914 per part dels bisbes d'Urgell i de Ribagorça, la seva posterior transformació en parròquia, la consolidació del seu territori amb donacions, la influència del Concili de Trento, l'annexió de la parròquia de Sant Climent de la Torre, el paper dels feligresos a través de les sagristies i la seva segregació per ordre episcopal el 1904.

Paraules clau: Monaquisme, parròquia, església, comunitat, muntanya

Abstract

In this article we show the evolution of the monastery of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents: its foundation or reform during the Carolingian period, its donation by the bishops of Urgell and Ribagorça to the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles in 914, its subsequent transformation into a parish, the consolidation of its territory through donations, the influence of the Council of Trent, the annexation of the parish of Sant Climent de la Torre, the role of parishioners through the sacristies and its segregation by an episcopal order of 1904.

Keywords: Monasticism, Parish, Church, Community, Mountain

1. The Carolingian Precepts

This work shows the evolution of the monastery of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents, founded at the expense of a Carolingian precept, as a parish dependent on the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles. The starting point is a donation in 914, and ends in 1904 with the segregation of the annexe of Albet, the most important nucleus of the parish at the beginning of the 20th century.

The Carolingian Reformation entered Urgell through the fight against Adoptionism, the heresy defended by the archbishop of Toledo, Elipand, and the bishop of Urgell, Felix. The intervention in Urgell of the Carolingian religious authorities was epitomised by the presence of the reformer of monasticism, the Goth Witiza from the Septimania, son of the Count of Maguelonne, known as Benedict of Aniane, the Bishop Nebridius of Narbonne, also a Goth, and the new archbishop to replace the bishop of Toledo, and the Frankish religious Leidrad, archbishop of Lyon, who acted as administrator of the bishopric until Posidonius took possession before 814 (BARAUT et al. 2002: 34 and 35).

A series of small monasteries were founded in Posidonius' time, some of which were short-lived, such as the one studied in this article, Sant Vicenç dels Torrents. This monastery and others were given to the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles in 914 by the bishops of Urgell and Ribagorça, Nantigis and Adolf, and the Count of Urgell, Sunifred II, given its ruinous state (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 83 i 84, doc. 9). These monasteries replaced and renewed Visigothic monasticism, and constituted a portion of territory administered by the Carolingian authority and its allies. These communities were required to observe the Rule of Sant Benet, which became obligatory with the promulgation of the *Capitulare monachis* in the Council of Aachen in 817. These foundations were linked to a set of precepts that the Carolingian authorities gave to the Bishopric of Urgell, specifically to one of Louis the Pious from 814. This precept confirmed an earlier one in the attribution to the Bishopric of Urgell of the parishes of its *pagus* and those of Berga, Cerdanya, Pallars, Àneu, Cardós, Tírvia, Gistau and Ribagorça. This precept contained a special clause granting Posidonius wasteland for the construction of monasteries and for the congregation of monks.¹ These precepts were part of the political action taken by the Carolingian authorities in the region after the Adoptionist crisis.

¹ There are no extant copies of the first precept, the one that d'Abadal calls *Urgell I*. It must have been written between 800 and 814, when Leidrad of Lyon was the administrator of the bishopric of Urgell. We know about its content thanks to two other precepts called *Urgell III* (835) and *Urgell IV* (860) (D'ABADAL 1955: p. 282 – 285). There is no copy either of the precept *Urgell II* (814), and what we know about it is also through the aforementioned precepts *Urgell III* and *IV*. This is a precept granted by Louis the Pious while he was king of Aquitaine, before the death of his father, Charlemagne. This precept confirmed the above in the attribution to the Church of Urgell of the parishes of the *pagi* mentioned and contained a special clause that granted Posidonius wasteland for the construction of monasteries and to congregate monks (D'ABADAL 1955: 281). Another precept also granted by Louis the Pious, already as emperor, to the aforementioned Posidonius, for the construction of the monastery of Santa Grata, proves its existence (D'ABADAL 1955: 259).

The small monasteries abandoned at the beginning of the 10th century were possibly built on wasteland at the expense of the precept of Louis the Pious. The Church of Urgell had the permission of the king or emperor for the construction of these monasteries. The donation of 914 that the bishops made, together with Count Sunifred II, in Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles, is a demonstration of the power that the Church had for the construction of these monasteries.

2. The Donation of the Count and the Bishops

The bishops and the Count gave Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles the monastery of Sant Vicenç, with its parishes and alodia, which were that of Sant Martí and that of Sant Sadurní *Aganensi*, with its tithes, first fruits and oblations of the faithful; the village called *Albezèd*, also with its tithes, first fruits and oblations; Sant Martí with its hamlets and properties; *Semitas* and *Bescaron* with its tithes and first fruits; and other similar villages, with their tithes and first fruits, that were not mentioned in the document. Other villages that were included were Sant Esteve, with its tithes and first fruits; Sant Jaume, with its tithes and first fruits; and Sant Andreu with its tithes, first fruits and other payments.²

Cebrià Baraut places the monasteries of the donation of 914 in the Valley of Castellbò. We can be sure that Sant Vicenç, with the parishes of Sant Martí and Sant Sadurní were located there (map 1). As far as Sant Esteve, Sant Jaume and Sant Andreu are concerned, we have our doubts and we opt for other hypotheses: Sant Esteve probably corresponds to the church of Sant Esteve d'Umfret, located in Cerdanya, in the Molina valley, and mentioned in a false document dated 815. This document mentions a certain Frèdol, count of Cerdà, who was only Count of the counties of Pallars and Ribagorça. At that time, the county of Cerdanya was possibly ruled by Count Borrell I. This document would be a forgery referring to an ancient possession of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 76-78, doc. 9).³

The small monastery of Sant Andreu, linked to the Quera, is mentioned for the first time on February 27, 855, in a donation from the presbyter Benet to his brother Digne. According to Baraut, the dating could correspond to King Charles the Simple, year 912, instead of King Charles the Bald.

² [...] *id est Sancti Vicentii cum suis parrochiis et alodiis, hoc est Sancti Martini et Sancti Saturnine Aganensi cum decimis et primiciis et fidelium oblacionibus, cum villa que nominata dicitur Albezèd cum suis decimis et primiciis et fidelium oblacionibus, et Sancto Martino cum villulis suis ad eum pertinentibus, id est Semitas et Bescaron cum suis primiciis et decimis et aliis villulis similiter cum decimis et primiciis, et Sancto Stephano cum decimis suis et primiciis, et Sancto Yacobo cum decimis suis et primiciis, et Sancto Andrea cum suis decimis et rebus sibi pertinentibus que olim fuerant regulariter constituta et nunc, deficientibus abbatibus et monachis, ita sunt destituta ut non solum qui in his regulariter Deo serviat nullus appareat, verum etiam nec esset qui terras et vineas incoleret nec laboraret, nec domos dirutas construere non valeret...* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 83 and 84, doc. 9).

³ References can also be found in documents 85 and 166 of the aforementioned issue of *Urgellia* (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 85, doc. 11) and (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 230, doc. 166)

If the first date is true, Sant Andreu de la Quera would also be a monastery founded under the precept of Louis the Pious. This small monastery is fully linked to Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles in two donations from 924 and 930. In the first, a presbyter named David gave Sant Serni a series of lands in an area near Arsèguel bordering the possessions of Sant Andreu de la Quera.⁴ In the second, another priest, Levoni, gives Sant Andreu a vineyard also in the district of Arsèguel, close to the lands of the previous donation (map 1). Another possibility would be that Sant Andreu is the church of Sant Andreu de Castellbò. At present we have no documentary data to corroborate that this church in the village of the same name in the Valley of Castellbò is the Sant Andreu mentioned in the donation.

Sant Jaume could refer to Sant Jaume d'Engordany, a cell located in Andorra, historically linked to Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles. The first reference to the domain is in a donation of 949, which mentions a bordering land belonging to Sant Serni.⁵ It is mentioned as a cell for the first time in 1040 in the act of consecration of the monastery of Tavèrnoles (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 128 – 133, doc. 59), which is a forgery (DURAN – PORTA 2018).⁶

At the time of the donation, Sant Vicenç had two parishes, Sant Martí and Sant Sadurní, as well as some unspecified allodia. There is also mention of a villa, called *Albezed*, another nucleus corresponding to Sant Martí, *Semitas*, *Bescaron* and some villages whose name is not mentioned (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 83 and 84, doc. 9). The monastery of Sant Vicenç was most probably located in the *partida de les Iglésies*, close to the *Mas d'en Pere*, in the Valley of Castellbò, on a small promontory on the mountain side, close to the confluence of the rivers Solanell and Sendes.⁷

3. Sant Martí d'Albet and Sant Sadurní d'Agarau

The parish of Sant Martí refers to the parish centred on the current church of Sant Martí d'Albet, the parish church of the village of *Albezed* (map 1). It is likely that Albet at that time was not located near the church. At the end of the 17th century, there was a parish of Albet called the *Vila Vella*.⁸ The

⁴ [...] *Et in Prixana vinea et medietate, qui affrontat de una parte in vinea Biarici et de alia in vinea Wistrimiri et de III^a in vinea Wadimiri. Et de alio Pulo sorte I^a vinea, qui afrontat de I^a parte in torrente et de alia in vinea de Sancti Andree apostoli, et bellatas [...]* (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 99, doc. 13).

[...] *ad domum Sancti Andre apostoli... Et est ipsa vinea in territorio Variense in apendicio de villa Arcekale in locum que dicitur ad illo puio Prixana. Quod de .I.^a parte afrontat in vinea de Malangecho et de alia in vinea Wadamiro et de .III.^a in vinea Sancti Petri apostoli... ad domum Sancti Andre apostoli, ut mihi sit adiutor et protector sive ad fratres qui ibidem serviunt vel servire cupiunt [...]* (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 88, doc. 14).

⁵ [...] *.I. vinea in apendicio de villa Andorra, in locum dicitur Engordan, ad illos latineros. Et afronta ipsa vinea de .I. parte in vinea Asterolde, et de alia parte in vinea Trasovario, et de .III. parte in vinea Sancti Saturnini [...]* (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 89, doc. 16).

⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 128 – 133, doc. 59.

⁷ The site is erroneously mentioned in different publications as the church of Sant Pere in the castle of Castellbò (ANGLADA, RAMOS 1992: 232) and (BOLÓS, HURTADO 2006: 31).

⁸ [...] *a sol ponent ab lo camp dit de la vila vella del Monsarrat de Albet y lo camp de les quadres del Pere Joan Canturri y Roy de Albet a migdia ab lo cami real que a Castellbo de son costat ab lo camp de la vila vella [...]* Arxiu Diocesà d'Urgell (ADU), Parròquia de Sendes, Manual notarial, UI 297.

construction of the castle of Albet during the 12th century could have clustered the population in the area around it, in the current location, near the church of Sant Martí.⁹

The parish of Sant Sadurní *Aganensi* does not refer to the one of Sallent de Castellbò. *Aganensi* corresponds to an early 16th century *mas rònec* [abandoned farmhouse] mentioned as Agarau in the *capbreus* [rent rolls] of Castellbò of 1493-1494 and 1519. Both *capbreus* describe the *masos* [farmhouses] and the different population centres. The description seems to follow a specific itinerary, as can be seen first in the *capbreu* of 1493 - 1494 and its reference to the places and uninhabited *masos* (map 2):¹⁰

[...] *lo loch de Castelnou* (Castellnou dels masos o Castelnovet). Ítem *lo loch de Eres* (Eres). Ítem *lo mas de Leguna Sobirana* (la Llaguna de sota del nucli de Sant Andreu), *lo qual té l'hereu d'en Pinyol de Castellbò*. Ítem *lo mas de Leguna Josana* (com l'anterior), *lo qual té mossèn Salvador Tragó*. Ítem *lo loch de Romidrols* (Aristot de Dalt), *lo qual té Joan d'Aristot*. Ítem *lo mas dels Torrents* (Les Iglésies). Ítem *lo mas de Sonils* (cortal de Sobils) *lo qual vague de deguí no-l posseex*. Ítem *lo mas de Guaran*. Ítem *lo mas de Santa Lúcia* (Santa Llúcia d'Aravell), *lo qual posseex en Duró Girvella de Castellbò, és dels franchals*. Ítem *lo mas de Santa Eulària lo qual posseex Joan Mestre de Castellbò, és dels franchals*. Ítem *lo mas de Solans, lo qual té mossèn Pere Tragó de Castellbò, notari predit, és dels franchals* [...] (BARAUT 1982a: 131).¹¹

A list of inhabited *masos* is then listed: “*Aristot* (Aristot de Baix), *Alguants* (Algons), *Sarcedol* (Mas d'en Pere) aka “lo mas den Pere”, *Isclé* (Mardiscla), *Roca Sobirà* (Mas d'en Roca or cal Roca), and *Canals* or *Roca Josà* (Mas d'en Roqueta or Mas d'en Roca Jussà)” (BARAUT 1982: 131).¹²

As we can see, *Guaran* is said to be located between the present-day Sobils and Santa Llúcia d'Aravell, in an undetermined spot in the Morral mountain range. In the *capbreu* of 1519, it is mentioned as “*lo mas de Agarau*” (BARAUT 1982: 131).

The description of the churches in the act of consecration of the cathedral of Urgell, falsely dated 839, also seems to follow an itinerary (map 3):

[...] *Deinde Napinerios* (Nabiners) *sive Ollafracta* (la Freita) *atque ipsa parrochia de Tost* (Tost) *vel Montedamno* (Montant) *sive ipso Plano* (el Pla de Sant Tirs) *cum Villanova, atque Assoa* (Arfa) *vel Adralle* (Adrall) *sive Kastillione* (Castelló de la Parròquia d'Hortó), *vel Villamediana* (Vilamitjana) *sive Kasamuniz* (Carmeniu) *et Santa Cruce* (Santa Creu) *cum Stacione, vel*

⁹ The castle of Albet is one of the assets that Count Ermengol VII, as high jurisdictional lord of the county, gave to Bishop Bernat. This donation is situated in the dynamic of feudal violence between the bishops of Urgell and the viscounts of Castellbò. The castle possessions that appear in this donation were part of the viscount's domain. It is possible that the castle of Albet was erected at a slightly earlier period, when feudalism was being established and the territory was being organised by the Viscount of Castellbò (BARAUT 1990 and 1991: 56, doc. 1541).

¹⁰ In brackets we show the name of all the nuclei we know and have located.

¹¹ Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó (ACA), Vària 50, Cancelleria, Capbreu del vescomtat de Castellbò.

¹² (ACA), Vària 50, Cancelleria. Capbreu del vescomtat de Castellbò.

Palierolus (Pallerols del Cantó) *sive eciem Cutenabarcii atque Aniano, Ortone, cum Solanello vel Cerketa atque Kampilias* (Sant Climent de la Torre o de Campelles) [...] (BARAUT 1978: 50 - 53, doc. 2).

The church mentioned as *Aniano* may correspond to that of Sant Sadurní d'Agarau of the donation of 914.

The act of consecration of San Clemente de la Torre or Campelles, from 857, mentions the territory between (lam. 4):

[...] *Gavarneto* (Gavernet a l'est de Mardiscla) *usque Albigiano, et de alia parte in illa Guardia qui est super ipsum Puium de Saldana* (Roc de Guàrdia) *que dicitur, et tercia parte in Tragina de illa Alga, et de quarta parte in villa Cerdaniola, et de parte orientis in serra Cuncagata* [...] (BARAUT 1978: 57 and 58, doc. 4).

This *Albigiano* might be related to Agarau, given the location of the bordering land. This could be an erroneous transcription of the original. The location of the bordering land would correspond to the south of the parish boundary, the one located between Gavernet and *Albigiano* (Agarau). The difference between transcription and pronunciation casts doubt on its validity.

4. Santa Eulàlia of Cerqueda

The itinerary of the aforementioned act of consecration of the cathedral of Urgell mentions *Cerketa* (Cerqueda), which has traditionally been located between Arfa and the Seu d'Urgell (BOLÓS, HURTADO 2006: 30). If it were to be found on this location, it would disrupt the itinerary of the writer of the act, given that most of the churches he describes shortly before and after are in the Valley of Castellbò. To locate the area where this Cerqueda would be, we must move forward in time and place ourselves in the 11th and 12th centuries.

Sunifred, sacristan of Santa Maria d'Urgell, made his testament on October 20, 1037, before going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Amongst the bequests we highlight one to the church of Santa Eulalia de Cerqueda (BARAUT 1982b: 42 - 45, doc. 502).

In 1105, some private individuals gave the cathedral of Santa Maria d'Urgell an allodium in the Valley of Castellbò, in Santa Eulàlia, in the place called *Ronfla*. This allodium bordered with (map 5):

[...] *a parte orientis in villa Campelles* (Campelles or Sant Climent de la Torre) *et de meridie in via de Cercheda* (Cerqueda), *que pergium ad Kastrum Leonem* (Castellbò), *et de occiduo in viljarunculo Sovilis* (village of Sobils), *de parte vero circi in monte Cucullo* (land between Burbre and the hill of Roure) [...] (BARAUT 1988 and 1989: 51 and 52, doc 1221).

As we can see, Cerqueda corresponds to a population centre that was administered by a church, called Santa Eulalia. One of the bordering lands corresponds to Sobils, which at that time was a hamlet and not a *mas*, and another to the village of Campelles (Sant Climent de la Torre). Montserrat López Vilaseca and Mateu Vidal Sanvicens identify the church of Santa Eulàlia and the hamlet of Cerqueda in their book *Romànic de Biscarbó* (VIDAL, VILASECA: 150 and 151).¹³

Ronfla is mentioned as a mountain range in the act of consecration of Saint Eugenia de la Torre in 914: «*Et habent affrontaciones predicta ecclesia et parrochia in ipso vilar que vocant Morters (Morters) et de alia in villa de Hereduz (Montferrer) et de .III. in serra de Romfla sive in villa que vocant Agnanes, de .III. vero parte in ipsa Cernadola*» (BARAUT, 1994 and 1995: 83 and 84). The mountain range of *Romfla* or *Ronfla* corresponds to the current mountain range of Morral and the village of *Agnanes* to Agarau.

The church of Santa Eulàlia is also mentioned much later in documents from the notarial manuals of the parish of Castellbò linked to Mardiscla (Mas d'Iscla) and located in an undetermined place in the space between this house and the land of Castellbò.¹⁴

One of these notarial deeds mentions *Solano* as a place in the tithe roll of Santa Eulàlia del lloc dels Torrents.¹⁵ It might correspond to the abandoned *mas* of Solans that appears in the capbreus of Castellbò from 1493-1494 and 1519 (BARAUT 1982b: 131). It might also refer to *Solanello* of the act of consecration of the Seu d'Urgell, given that it would be located between «*Aniano (Agarau), Ortone cum Solanello (Solans) vel Cerketa (Cerqueda or Santa Eulàlia) i Kampillas (Sant Climent de la Torre or Campelles)*» (BARAUT 1978: 50 – 53, doc. 2).

5. Els Torrents in the act of consecration of Tavèrnoles

Sant Vicenç and Sant Martí are mentioned in the act of consecration of the abbey church of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles, 1040, as the main invocations of a parish church (map 6).¹⁶ It would have

¹³ Vidal and Vilaseca have always generated great controversy among specialists in the field because of their subjective interpretations of the Romanesque and the way they underestimate the preceding bibliography.

¹⁴ [...] *dictum lo camp de Sancta Eulaia confrontat a parte supra cum via publica qui itur ad mas de Iscla, a parte infra cum terres de la borda* [...] ADU, Parròquia de Castellbò, *Llibre notarial*, 1688-1689, UI283, (12-9-1688).

[...] *illa partem vinee nostre quam nos habemus et possidemus in Solano, in termino Villa et Vallis Castriboni in decimario Sancte Eulallie loci dels Torrents* [...] ADU, Parròquia de Castellbò, *Llibre notarial 1688 - 1689*, UI283, (7-11-1688).

[...] *Jo Eularia Llay y Iscla pagesa de Masdiscla de la Rectoria de Sant Clemens de la Vall de Castellbò... Ítem elegesch la sepultura al meu costat fahedora en lo cementiri de Santa Eulària en lo vas o carnera de hom mos avantpassats estan sepultats... que se sien fetes totes las honras... en dita Iglèsia...* [...] ADU, Parròquia de Castellbò, *Testaments 1667 -1896, Llibre de testaments 1707 – 1708*, UI282, (23-12-1707).

¹⁵ [...] *illa partem vinee nostre quam nos habemus et possidemus in Solano, in termino Villa et Vallis Castriboni in decimario Sancte Eulallie loci dels Torrents* [...] ADU, Parròquia de Castellbò, *Llibre notarial 1688-1689*, UI283, (7-11-1688).

¹⁶ [...] *Ipsam parroquiam de Sancto Vicentio sive de Sancti Martini dels Torrents cum villulis ad eum pertinentibus*

been a parish that had two dedications located in two different churches. At no point does the act mention Sant Vicenç dels Torrents as a monastery or cell dependent on Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles. At that time, the two main churches, Sant Vicenç and Sant Martí d'Albet, were linked as part of a single parish. The church of Sant Sadurní d'Agarau is not mentioned, nor does the village of Agarau appear among the villages dependent on the monastery.

The donation of 914 also mentions «*Sancto Martino cum villulis suis ad eum pertinentibus id est Semitas (Sendes) et Bescaron*» (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 83 and 84, doc. 9). The act of consecration of the church of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles mentions a church in Sant Martí dels Canals with its tithes, first fruits and oblations.¹⁷ The *mas* of Canals or d'en Roca Jussà –currently the *mas* d'en Roqueta– is mentioned in the *capbreus* of Castellbò (BARAUT 1982a: 131).

The act of consecration of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles mentions some lands that are also mentioned in the donation of 914. Besides the aforementioned parish of Sant Vicenç and Sant Martí dels Torrents, the act mentions Cercèdol (Mas d'en Pere), *Sempdes* (Sendes), mentioned in the donation of 914 as *Semitas*; *Albes* (Albet) mentioned as *Albezed*; *Bescharrio*, that might correspond to *Bescaron* in the donation; an allodium called *Toro*, linked to Albet; and *Serchatera* and *Lesonoves*, that might have been located along the valley of Castellbò.¹⁸

The *mas* of Cercèdol –current Mas d'en Pere– must not be mistaken for the population centre of Cercèdol, situated between Vilamitjana and Castellbò, to the south of the valley. Another Cercèdol is also mentioned in the act of consecration of Santa Eugènia de la Torre (914), together with other villages.¹⁹ These places match others mentioned in the act of consecration of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles.²⁰ The *mas* of Cercèdol and the village of Cercèdol mentioned in these documents would be different.

Bescaron is related to *Bescharrio* and not with *Sancti Vicentii de Bescaran* also mentioned in the act of consecration of Sant Serni. *Bescaron* is mentioned together with *Semitas* (Sendes). The church of sant Vicenç de Bescaran must be the current romanesque church of Sant Martí of the

[...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 128 – 133, doc. 59).

¹⁷ [...] *Et ipsam ecclesiam de Sancto Martino de Canals cum decimis et primiciis atque oblationibus et cimiteriis et omnibus sibi pertinentibus...* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 128 – 133, doc. 59).

¹⁸ [...] *et ipsum mansum de Sercerdol cum decimis et primiciis omnibus suis. Deinde ipsam parroquiam de Sancto Vicentio sive de Sancti Martini dels Torrents cum villulis ad eum pertinentibus. Item Sempdes et Bescarrio et Serchatera et Albes cum ipso alodio de Toro et Lesonoves cum decimis et primicis atque oblationibus, una cum cimitieris earum domibus cum terris et vineis et cum adiacentiis et pertinentiis eius* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 128 - 133, doc. 59).

¹⁹ [...] *ipsa Torre, Savigna, Capmaior, Vilela i Arabago, Aristot i Cercedol i Abiglers i Hiel i Zvert i Hedra, Envergera i Enval Puïol* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 81 - 82 , doc. 8).

²⁰ [...] *Aristot et Aranso et Sangria et ipsa torre de Vileba et Campaïor, et Cercedoll et Avillers et [Yell] et Sener et Edrade et Cunorguera et Envali et Pulp* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 128 - 133, doc. 59).

aforementioned village, of which only the tower and a few walls have survived. North of Sallent we find *Bescansia*. Despite the similarity, we cannot be certain about the relationship between *Bescaron* – *Bescharrío* and *Bescansia*. We could also link *Serchatera* with *Cerqueda* or *Cerketa*, although we are not entirely sure of this equivalence.

As for *Lesonoves*, we will refer to the similar toponym *Anoves*, which corresponds to a fief which the viscounts Ramon Miró and Ermessenda sold to a man named Pere. Some allodia in Vilamitjana and *Cher* were also included in the sale. The allodia were situated in the areas of Sant Iscle de Turbiàs, Sant Vicenç dels Torrents, and Santa Coloma de Vilamitjana (BARAUT 1986 and 1987: 109 and 110, doc. 1183). The toponym *Anoves* cannot refer to Noves de Segre, given that all the land sold was situated in the valley of Castellbò.

The act of consecration of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles seems also to follow a geographical pattern in the description of the lands of this monastery. It would not be logical for the same description to mention properties in different valleys or geographical areas (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 127 – 133, doc. 59).

6. Consolidation of the territories

The territories under the jurisdiction of Sant Serni in the area of our interest, and linked to Sant Vicenç dels Torrents, grew in 1033 with the donation of the villages of Llaguna Sobirana and Llaguna Jussana – which included a church dedicated to Santa Susanna– by the Count Ermengol III and Countess Belasquita, (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 121 – 122, doc. 52). These two hamlets, which are situated between the current villages of Sant Andreu and d'Albet, eventually became *masos*. Their integration into the domains of Sant Serni was through the parish of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents. The donation of the Count was part of the nobility's policy of control and administration of the territory through monasteries (MIRÓ 2014a).

The territories under the jurisdiction of Sant Serni grew again in 1131 with the donation of Count Ermengol VI: his lands in Sendes, and the *mas* of *Petra Alba*.²¹ The influence of the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles over the whole area reached a peak on 8 September 1198, when the viscount Arnau de Castellbò granted the aforementioned monastery and its inhabitants the right to move “*pro tota terra urgellensis*” [throughout all the County of Urgell] and placed them under his protection. He also granted them the right to graze and empriu [communal use] of all the lands from the mountain of the *Cogoll* (compresa entre Burbre i el tossal del Roure) to Serret, at the Ribalera (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 267 and 268, doc. 212). The parish of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents, although dependent on the monastery of Sant Serni on religious matters, was included

²¹ [...] *Et dono Deo et Sancto Saturnino ipsud totum quod habeo vel habere debeo in Semdes sine ullo retentu et sine inganno* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 204, doc. 134).

in the jurisdictional domains of the viscount of Castellbò. Proof of this is the existence of the castle of Albet.

In 1259, the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles was in a delicate economic situation. For this reason, the monks sold all their domains in the valley to Pere Cerqueda and his wife, both from a powerful family from Castellbò, for 3.000 *sous melgoresos*. The transaction included all types of farmland, houses, easements, bad uses, rents and tributes. The monks reserved the extraction of honey and wax and the possession of the church of Sant Vicenç del Torrents and its suffragans.²² As suffragans we should consider the churches included in the donation of 914: Sant Martí, which would have been linked to the village of Albet, Sant Sadurní d'Agarau, which is not mentioned in the act of consecration of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles, and possibly a church that there should have been in Sendes, given the importance of the village. As far as we can ascertain, at that time Agarau was already a *mas*, given that the sale mentions the tenant of a *mas*, called Arnau d'Agarau. It also mentions an honour that R Martina had, who was "*fatrisca mansi Arnaldi de Agaran*".²³

The sale included the tithes from Sallent, which had to be paid by the inhabitants of the aforementioned village and those of the nearby hamlet of Sant Sadurní, located in the vicinity of the church. At that time this church was linked to that of Sant Climent de la Torre. Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles also sold the *mas* of Cercèdol (Mas d'en Pere), linked to the parish of Torrents; three more *masos* at Sendes, with their inhabitants; two more at Torrents, with their *censos* [annuities] and properties; and the hamlets of Llaguna Sobirana and Jussana, also with their inhabitants and lands.²⁴ The contract included the tithes that Sant Serni collected in *Sovils* (Sobils), *Esquer, lus Onoves*, and *Albeeto* (Albet) and its lands, and also one third of the harvest of the land the monastery got from the lands of Sallent and Albet.²⁵ The fact that the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles lost most of its properties in the Valley of Castellbò did not mean the end of the

²² [...] *vendimus vobis et cui vel quibus volueritis, excepte melle et cera que nostro monasterio retinebimus et salvo iure in omnibus ecclesie Sancti Vicencii de Torrentibus et sufraganeorum suarum* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 300 - 302, doc. 251).

²³ [...] *Et omnes mansus cum hominibus et feminis et omnibus iuribus et pertinenciis suis quas habemus apud Sempdes, quorum unum tenet Arnaldus de Agaran, alterum Bartolomeus Seneti et alium quam tenet Maria de Sempdes et illum totum honorem quem tenet R Martina, qui fuit de fatrisca mansi Arnaldi de Agaran* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 300 - 302, doc. 251).

²⁴ [...] *et decimas omnes quas habemus et accipebamus in cultias de Sallent, quas colunt homines qui consueverunt morari in villario Sancti Saturnini iuxta Salent, qui modo morantur apud Salent* [...], [...] *Ipsum mansum de Cercedolil quem tenet P de Puïol* [...], [...] *Et omnes mansus cum hominibus et feminis et omnibus iuribus et pertinenciis suis quas habemus apud Sempdes, quorum unum tenet Arnaldus* [...], [...] *et duos mansos quos habemus apud Torrens cum omnibus censibus, iuris et pertinencis suis* [...]. [...] *et villaria nostra de Laguna sobirana et sotirana cum hominibus et feminis, terris cultis et incultis et omnibus aliis que ubi habebamus* [...] (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 300 - 302, doc. 251).

²⁵ [...] *et omnes decimas de Sovils et de Esquer et de lus Ono[ves] et de Albeeto et terminorum suorum* [...], [...] *et terciam partem fructum illarum terrarum quas habemus in territorio de Salent et de Albeeto* [...] (BARAUT 1994 i 1995: 300 - 302, doc. 251).

parochial administration or the end of the presence of the monastery in this area. The parish church of Sant Vicenç and all its churches, although without the tithes from its villages and hamlets, were still under the control of the monastery.²⁶ The chaplain of Torrents, together with the monks of the monastery, witnessed this important transaction (BARAUT 1994 and 1995: 300 – 302, doc. 251).

The visitor of the archbishop of Tarragona, who inspected the parishes of the bishopric of Urgell between 1312 and 1315, confirmed that the parish of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents was in good condition *es trobava en bon estat*, both in terms of its spirituality and the parish priest's care of the church. The visitor stressed the attachment to Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles: «*Es Torens est abbatis Sancti Saturnini*» (PALAU 2015).

7. Decline, plague and emigration

The food crises of the 14th century, the Black Death and the growing importance of village life, centred in Castellbò, affected many farms and hamlets that remained on the periphery of the main population centres of the territory. Small villages and many *masos* were depopulated as a result of mortality and emigration (BERTRAN 1994), (BOIS 2009), (MIRÓ 2014b).

Some medieval villages in the parish of Sant Vicenç, such as Torrents, Cercèdol, Agarau, Llaguna Sobirana, Llaguna Jussana, or Sobils, had previously declined, possibly as a result of a population decrease, into *masos*. The food and demographic crisis of the 14th century led to the abandonment of most of them. Torrents, the centre of the parish, appears in the *capbreus* of Castellbò of 1493-1494 and 1519, as an abandoned *mas*. The two *masos* of Llaguna, that of Sobils, and that of Agarau, were also abandoned. However, other *masos*, such as those of Algons and that of Cercèdol (Mas d'en Pere) remained inhabited.²⁷ As for Sendes and Albet, although they must have lost population, they consolidated themselves as the main and most inhabited villages of the parish. Although in the surrounding area of Torrents the *masos* of Cercèdol (Mas d'en Pere) and Algons remained inhabited, its depopulation caused the parish church to lose importance in relation to the others in the parish itself, such as the church of Albet and the possible church of Sendes.

The visit of 1575 to Sant Vicenç del Torrents shows a simple, unadorned church. The visitor noted that the church was not provided with a holy sacrament, given the remoteness of the houses

²⁶ The *Consueta de Sendes*, written in 1765 by the rector of Sendes, Francisco Simon, exemplifies the continuation of the link through the tithes, which in the middle of the 18th century, the inhabitants of the parish of Sendes paid to the Seminary of Urgell, erected by a papal bull of Clement VIII and endowed with the revenues of the monastery of Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles: [...] *La vigília de Sant Joan de juny se delme los corders y cabrits de Albet. Son los delmadors lo Reverent Rector de Sendes, lo Seminari, la mitat cada qual tan dels corders, cabrits, porcells, pollastres, llana, formatge [...], [...] Y lo gasto de vi se reparteixen entre lo Rector, Seminari, y lo Rector de Santa Creu [...], [...] Y en lo Mas den Pere delmalo lo mateix dia, y la mitat del Rector, y la altra del Siminari Tridentino de Urgell [...]* (ADU, Parròquia de Sendes, *Consueta 1765*).

²⁷ BARAUT, C., *Spill...*, *op. cit.*, apèndix 1, Capbreu del Vescomtat de Castellbò. ACA, Real Patrimonio, Maestre Racional, Volumenes, Serie General, 25956. Fogatge 1552. Hearth tax roll of Catalonia commissioned by the Cortes of Monzón of 1552 corresponding to the tax collections in Balaguer, Pallars, Castellbò, Agramunt.

from the parish. In fact, the parish priest did not remember ever having seen it. The church of Albet, which was a suffragan of the parish church, was also simply ornamented. The church of Sallent is linked to the parish of Torrents and not to that of Sant Climent de la Torre.²⁸ The neighbouring parish of Sant Climent de la Torre was in a worse situation: the parish priest did not reside there and in his place was a French priest who had rented the rectory. At the time of the visit, the parish, which had lost the hamlet of Sallent, had only five houses –unspecified– all far from the church. In fact, the parish church had not been able to gather a nucleus of population around it. The decorations of the parish church, like those of the neighbouring church of Sant Vicenç, were quite simple. There is no mention of the existence of the church of Santa Eulàlia, linked in ancient times to the disappeared village of Cerqueda –later *mas* of Santa Eulàlia, and abandoned in the 15th century– and also to Mardiscla. San Climent remained as a parish practically without parishioners and without income.²⁹

In 1592, pope Clement VIII secularised the abbey of Saint Serni de Tavèrnoles and erected the seminary with its revenues. From then on, the new institution replaced Tavèrnoles in the management of a large part of the tithes of the parish of Torrents.

8. Transfer to Sendes and consolidation of the sacristies

Between the visit of 1576 and the middle of the 17th century, the parish was moved to the village of Sendes, which was consolidated by an agricultural economy based on cereals and livestock. The transfer of the parish to Sendes must have been done gradually, given that the name of Sant Vicenç dels Torrents was always mentioned. The church of Sant Sadurní de Sallent becomes linked again to that of Sant Climent de les Torres, which would cease to be a parish church to become a suffragan church of that of Sendes. The new configuration leaves Albet far away from

²⁸ [...] *Et primum fou mirat si hi havia Sant Sacrament i no se ni troba. I diu lo rector que mai ni ha vist perquè las cases de dita parròquia són lluny de la dita Iglesia i molt pocas [...], [...]* Item fonch visitat les fonts baptismals, crismares i altar maior i vestiments i altres ornaments de la dita Iglesia, fi fou trobat tots star ben degudament exceptat lo que baix se mana [...], [...] *Et primo mana a tots los parrochians que compren un calzer de argent per la parrochial con nos pot celebrar la missa ab calzer de piltra que axi ho manen los canons i dret canonich per a quen facen un de argent de assi a tot sants prop vinent sots pena de excomunió [...], [...]* Item manen que compren dues tovalles, dos crismells, i adoben lapris de les fonts que stigue be y honestament...”, “Item mana als parrochians de la suffraganea de Albet compren uns camis i tanquen lo sementiri de manera que no puguen entrar ninguna manera de bestiar en dit sementiri [...], [...] Item manen als de Sillent que adoben lo sementiri i lo cloguen de manera que ninguna bestia ni gran ni xica pugue entrar en dit sementiri [...] ADU, Llibre número 32. Visita de 1575-1576. Visita a Sant Vicenç des Torrents. 24-7-1575.

²⁹ [...] *cuius est rector venerabile Damianus Quintana presbiter qui non residet et diuen que és rector de Alp terra de Cerdanya. És vicari de dita rectoria de Sant Climent mossèn Estephanus Brull presbiter regni de Francie qui ha dixit fer habere licentiam val de arrendament dita rectoria XXV LL [...], [...]* Et primo fonch mitat si hi havia Sant Sacrament e fou trobat que non havia e dix dit vicari que may se ha acostumat de haveri perquè noy en la dita parròquia sini sinch cases y aquexas estan molt lluny de la Iglesia [...], [...] Item foren visitates les fonts baptismals e crismares, lo altar major i vestiments e tot fou trobat be i honestament [...], [...] Foren manades les coses següents: Et primo mana als sacristans de la dita Iglesia que comprin uns corporals de assi a sant Miquel de setembre prop vinent. Y també fassan un guarniment per a aportar los morts [...] ADU, Llibre número 32. Visita de 1575-1576. Visita a Sant Climent de la Torre. 24-7-1575.

the new centre of the parish. The rector, who lived in Sendes, had to walk for two hours to get to Albet and administer the sacraments. The inhabitants of Albet had to walk the same distance to get to Sendes and attend the different liturgical and sacramental events.³⁰

The parish of Sendes and Torrents had sacristans who looked after part of its economic administration. The ecclesiastical organisation in tithe districts facilitated the collection of the tithes. The parish was divided into the tithe districts of Sant Vicenç de Sendes, Sant Martí d'Albet, Sant Climent de la Torre and Santa Eulàlia, linked to Mardiscla and, probably, also to the houses situated in the Morral mountains.

New *masos* appeared. This is the case of Trillar de la Ribera, Cap del Roc, *cal* Gabriel, and *cal* Magí de la Serra. They may have been located in places previously occupied by Agarau, Solans and Cerqueda with the church of Santa Eulàlia. Torrents were never inhabited again, and the Mas d'en Pere (old Cercèdol) and the *mas* of Algons (map 7) were consolidated.

The unbalanced situation did not change until the last quarter of the 19th century when the inhabitants of Albet began to receive the sacraments in the neighbouring parish of Santa Creu. The situation was definitively consolidated in 1906 with its segregation from Sendes and its association with Santa Creu.³¹

9. Conclusions

The monastic parish of Sant Vicenç was linked to Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles and later –although indirectly– to the Conciliar Seminary of Urgell through tributes such as the tithe. Its territory included a large part of the northern area of the Valley of Castellbò, shared with the parish of Sant Climent, which ended up being a suffragan church. The transfer of the parish to Sendes dismantled the services of the parish church located in Albet, in the area around the church of Sant Martí. La situació es resolgué definitivament el 1904 amb la vinculació d'Albet a Santa Creu.

The *masos* of Agarau, Solans, and Santa Eulàlia or Cerqueda were located in some unspecified places in the Morral mountain range, possibly in the areas currently occupied by the *masos* and isolated settlements of Trillar, Cap del Roc, *cal* Gabriel, *cal* Magí and Torrota dels Moros. The identifications and subsequent developments of the locations described in this article give authenticity to the donation of 914 by bishops Nantigis of Urgell and Adolf of Ribagorça to Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles.

³⁰ “ [...] *Juan Canturri, alias Roy, labrador del lugar de Albet, obispado de Urgel, y Regidor único del mismo lugar, por sí, y en nombre de la universidad y Particulares del mismo, con la debida atención expone a usted que dicho lugar se halla ser anexa o sufraganea de la Parroquia de Sendes, pero tan distante de ella, que median, lo menos, dos horas de camino: Por cuyo motivo todas las funciones parroquiales pertenecientes a la administración de los sacramentos se han celebrado siempre en la propia Iglesia de dicho lugar, sin necesitar de conferirse aquellos Feligreses a la Parroquial. Urgel y junio a 8 de 1772 [...] ADU, Parròquia de Sendes, Llibre de Decrets.*

³¹ *Boletín Oficial Eclesiástico del Obispado de Urgel*, any 49, número 10. April 30, 1904.

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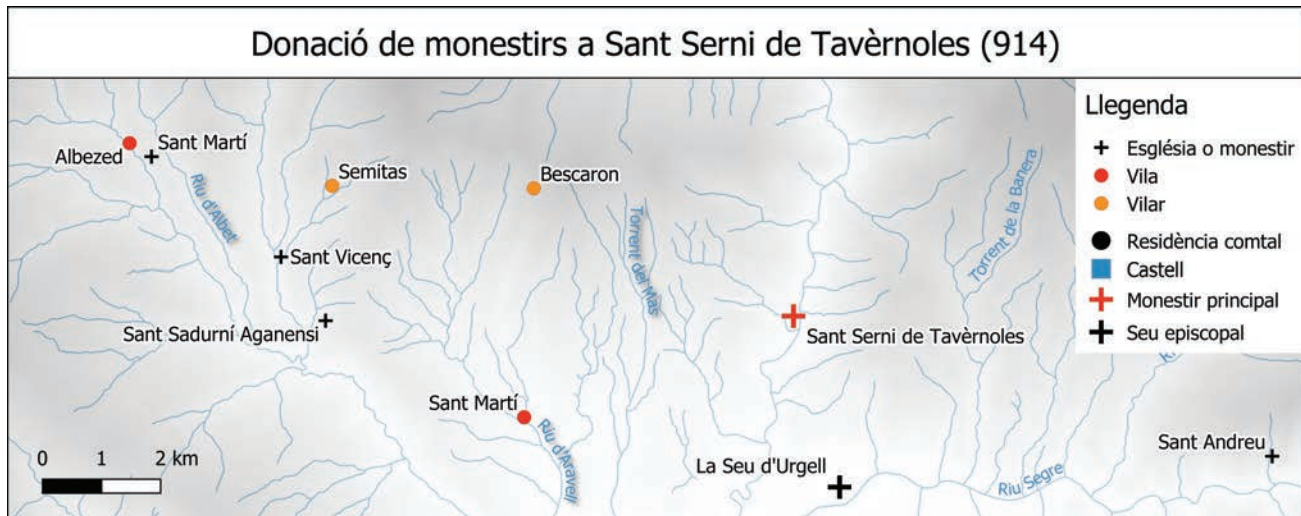
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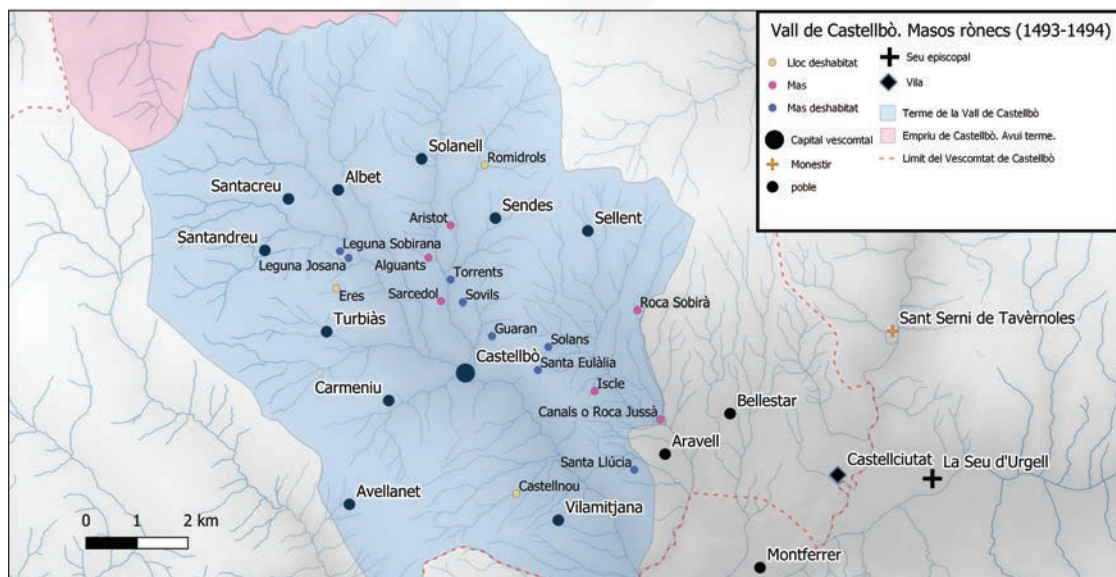
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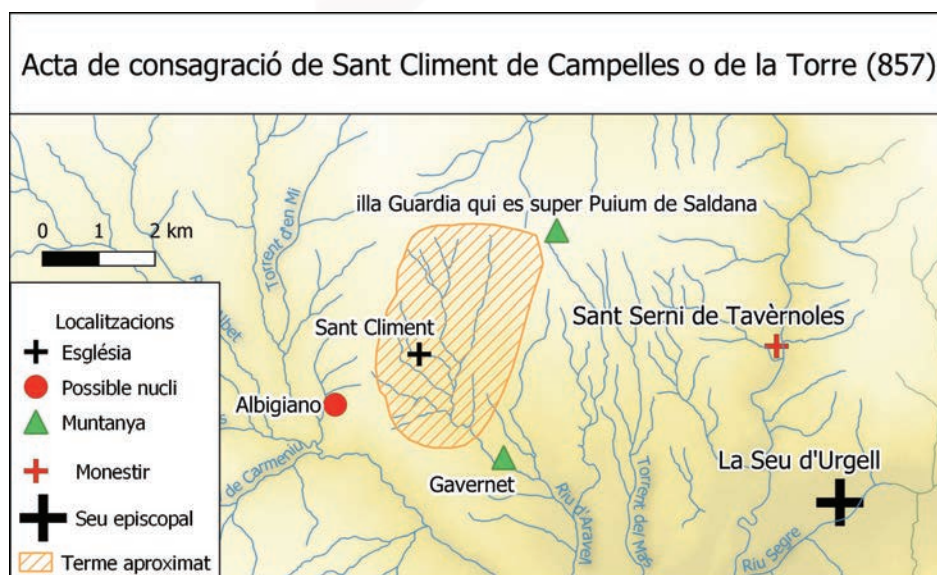
Map 1



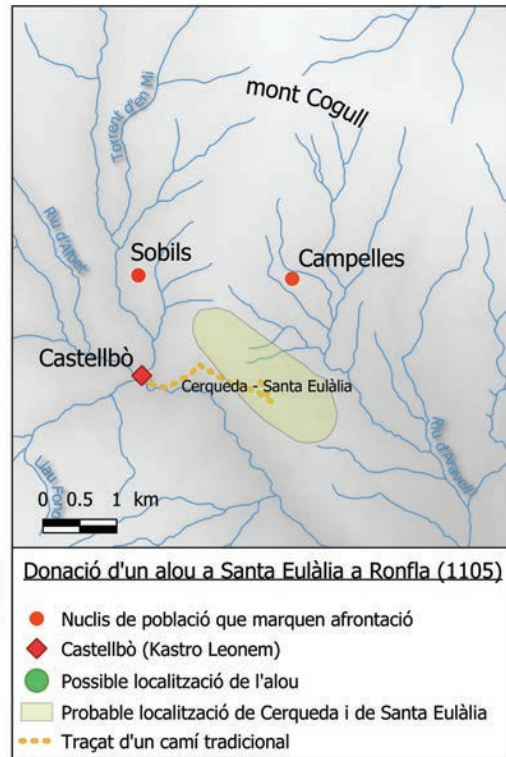
Map 2



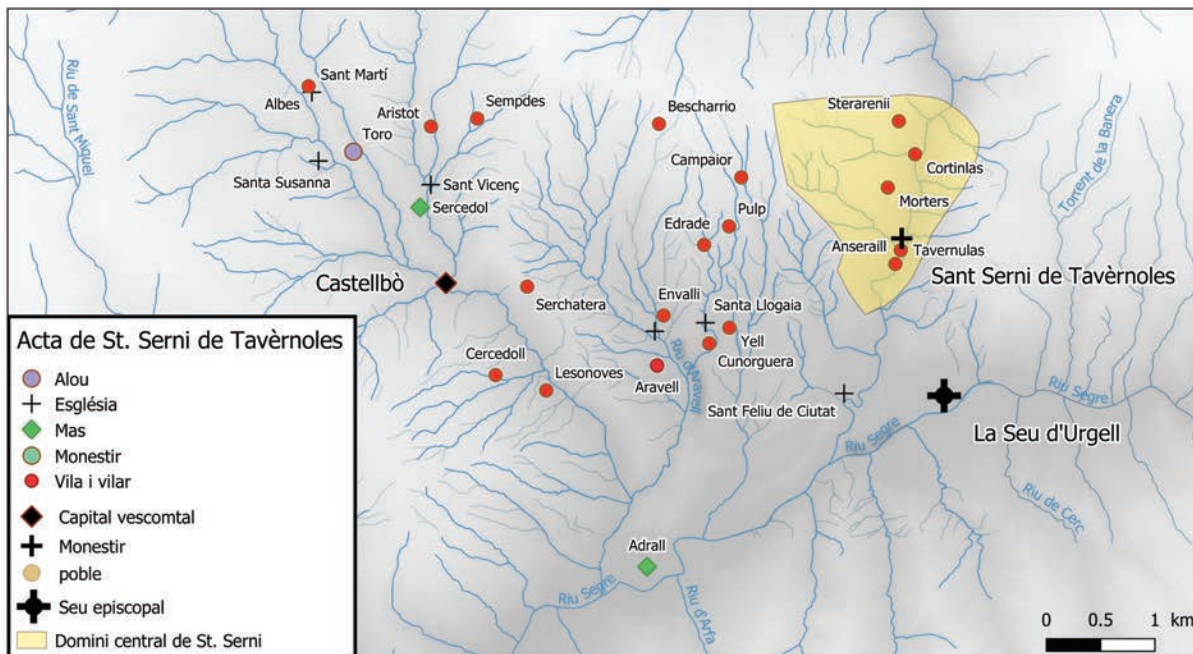
Map 3



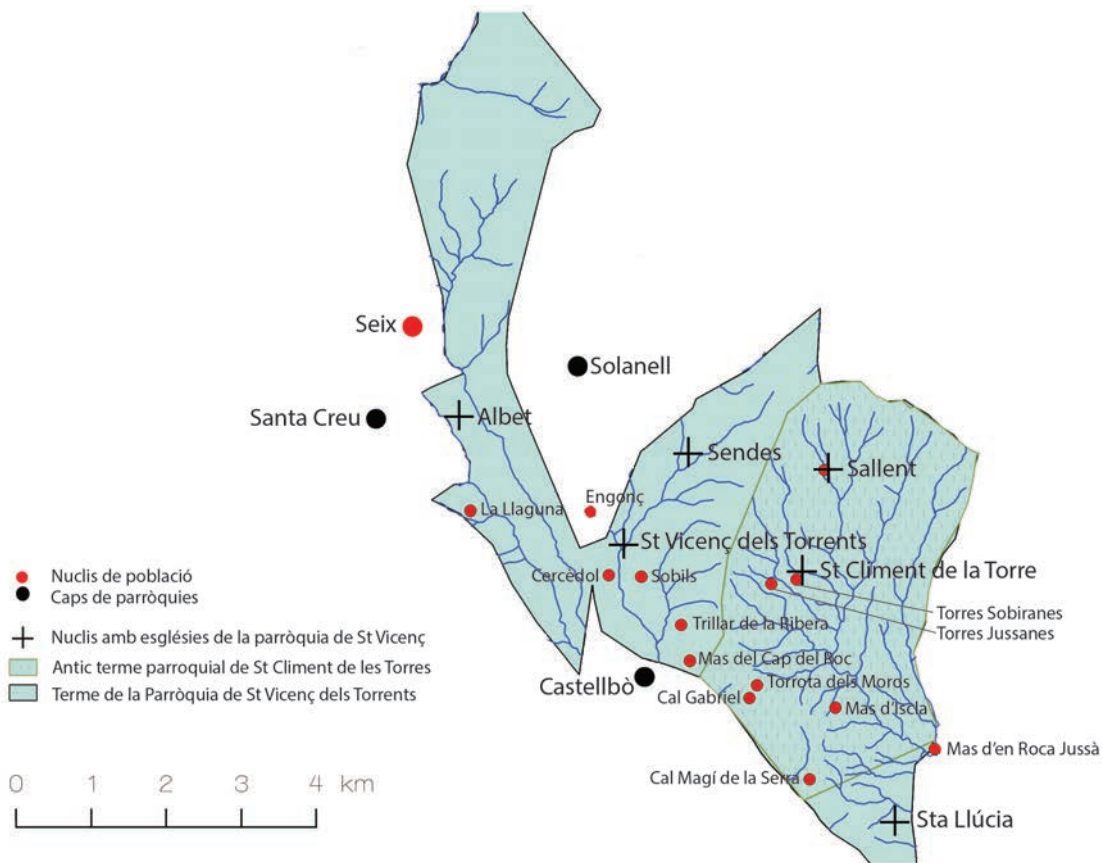
Map 4



Map 5



Map 6



Map 7