The Eerdmans Encyclopedia of Early Christian Art and Archaeology

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Slipcase illustration: Ivory panel (416 × 143 mm) with an archangel (probably Michael); right panel of a diptych (left panel lost). In his right hand the figure holds a globe surmounted by a Greek cross; in his left, a long staff, perhaps a scepter. The architectural setting consists in an arch supported by fluted columns, capped with Corinthian capitals; there are steps beneath the plinths below left and right. Beneath the arch is a wreath enclosing a Greek cross; a scalloped shell frames the wreath. Above the arch, within a long narrow rectangular tabula, is written: +ΔΕΧΟΥ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΘΩΝ ΤΗΝ ΑΙΤΙΑΝ ("Receive the suppliant, although you know his guilt"); London.BM, OA.9999. (Photo courtesy Trustees of the British Museum)

Gerona

(Lat. Gerunda). Roman city in northeastern Hispania Tarraconensis; according to Pliny (*NH* 3.23; see 4.33), an *oppidum vivium Latinorum,* subject to the judicial *conventus* (court of the provincial governor) situated at Tarraco (→ Tarragona; see map 8, B2). Ptolemy (*Γ.* 2.6.69) gives G. an ethnic identity under the Ausetani tribe. Two inscriptions — one dedicated to Sabina Tranquilia Augusta (*CIL* 2:4620), the other to Philip the Arab (*CIL* 2:4621) — mention *res publica gerundesium.* Municipal posts are mentioned in the *cursus honorum* of L. Plotius Ascenati: *aedil, duumvir, flamen, tribune* of the Legio III Gallicae (*CIL* 2:4622). The *Antonine Itinerary,* the *Ravenna Cosmography,* and the → Peutinger Map all mention G. (see O. Cuntz, *Itineraria romana,* vol. 1 [Leipzig, 1929]). The city was the site of a Visigothic mint; issues are extant for the reigns of Witteric (603-10), Sisenand (631-36), Chintila (636-42), Egica (687-701), and their successors down to the last Visigothic monarch in the area, Achila (710-13). The city was enclosed within a circuit wall laid out on a triangular plan. Muslims took the city in 714.

Prudentius (*Peris.* 4.30) attests the existence of the martyr Felix; he describes the city as *parva Gerunda.* There was a cult to St. Felix into the Visigothic period. Reccared (586-601) offered a crown to Felix (Julian, *Ep. Toletanae Sedis. Historia Wambae regis,* PL 96:26 and MGH 5:26). There is evidence of a bishopric at the end of the 4th c. (letter to Pope Innocent I in connection with the First Council of Toledo). Bishop Frontinianius convened a council at G. in 517, and Bishop Nonnitus, John of Biclarum's successor (633), is on record for his devotion to Felix (Ildephonsus, PL 2, XLVI).

The triangular circuit wall was rebuilt in the 3rd or early 4th c. Adjoining the north gate, alongside the Via Augusta, is the Romanesque church dedicated to St. Felix. This church probably was constructed on the site of an extramural cemetery, perhaps the place where, according to tradition, Felix was martyred. Inside the church, against the apse wall, are eight sarcophagi, two of them pagan (Koch/Sichtermann.1982, index: "Gerona"), six early Christian (Koch.2000, index: "Gerona"). Two of the Christian pieces are fluted, and one (ibid., fig. 18.4) of the two shows a central → orant figure framed within a → mandorla. The other four early Christian pieces are frieze sarcophagi; one of the four, the so-called → Susanna sarcophagus (Sotomayor, 1975, no. 4, or Koch.2000, fig. 74.1, pl. 181), is perhaps the product of a → workshop within Tarraconensis.

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