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Civitates Hispaniae : urbanisation on the Iberian peninsula during the High Empire

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CHAPTER I

THE ANCIENT CITY ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

1.1 Introduction

The task of defining what constitutes a city is by no means easy. A fragment from Strabo's *Geographica* shows that even as early as the Roman conquest defining what could be considered a city on the Iberian Peninsula was already rather problematic:

Those who assert that Iberia contained more than a thousand cities, seem to me to have been carried away in a similar manner [as Gracchus stating he conquered cities instead of towers], and to have denominated as cities what were merely large villages; since, from its very nature, this country is incapable of maintaining so many cities, on account of its sterility, wildness, and its out-of-the-way position. Nor, with the exception of those who dwell along the shores of the Mediterranean, is any such statement confirmed by the mode of life or actions of the inhabitants. The inhabitants of the villages, who constitute the majority of the Iberians, are quite uncivilized. Even the cities cannot very easily refine the manners [of their inhabitants], as the neighbouring woods are full of robbers, waiting only an opportunity to inflict injury on the citizens.¹

Strabo III 4.13

Even today, there is no general agreement on how to define a city, the major difficulty being the multitude of possible definitions. If we refer to the latest *UN Demographic Yearbook*, we find a range of different definitions for 'urban' as used by modern nations:

The definition of urban/rural areas is based on both qualitative and quantitative criteria that may include any combination of the following: size of population, population density, distance between built-up areas, predominant type of eco-

¹ ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ φάσκοντες πλείους ἢ χιλίας τὰς τῶν Ἰβήρων ὑπάρχει πόλεις ἐπὶ τοῦτο φέρεσθαι μοι δοκοῦσι, τὰς μεγάλας κώμας πόλεις ὀνομάζοντες. οὔτε γὰρ ἡ τῆς χώρας φύσις πόλεων ἐπιδεκτικὴ πολλῶν ἐστὶ διὰ τὴν λυπρότητα ἢ διὰ τὸν ἐκτοπισμὸν καὶ τὸ ἀνήμερον, οὔθ' οἱ βίοι καὶ πράξεις αὐτῶν (ἔξω τῶν κατὰ τὴν παραλίαν τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς) ὑπαγορεύουσι τοιοῦτον οὐδέν. ἀγριοὶ γὰρ οἱ κατὰ κώμας οἰκοῦντες· τοιοῦτοι δ' οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰβήρων· αἱ δὲ πόλεις ἡμεροῦσιν οὐδ' αὐταὶ ῥαδίως, ὅταν πλεονάζῃ τὸ τὰς ὕλας ἐπὶ κακῶ τῶν πλησίον οἰκοῦν. (Loeb translation)

conomic activity, conformity to legal or administrative status and urban characteristics such as specific services and facilities. Although statistics classified by urban/rural areas are widely available, no international standard definition appears to be possible at this time since the meaning differs from one country or area to another. The urban/rural classification of population used here is reported according to the national definition.²

Obviously, this approach to defining a city has its own problems. Looking, for example, at the two modern countries covered by this monograph gives us a good indication of the difficulty. Portugal considers a settlement to be urban if it exceeds the threshold of 2,000 inhabitants, whereas in Spain, where the lower threshold for urban is 10,000 inhabitants and for rural is below 2,000 inhabitants, these settlements are considered intermediate between rural and urban. Despite the fact that no universal agreement can be found on the parameters for the definition of a city, there are a number of key aspects that most scholars agree upon as contributing factors in determining what makes a city.

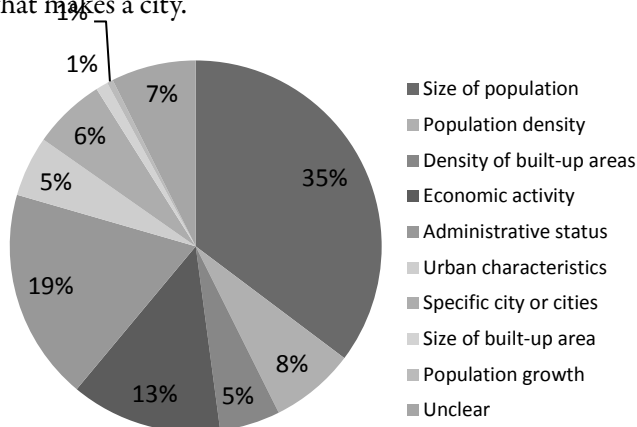


Fig. I.1 Definitions used in UN-Demographic Yearbook

First, as can be seen clearly in the pie chart showing the percentages of *definiencia*³ applied, there seems at least to be some agreement on the idea that the city is a highly and densely populated settlement (fig. I.1).⁴ Even though these are easily measurable parameters for modern settlements, there is nonetheless no agreement on the number of inhabitants and/or the density needed to be considered a city. Regarding the

² UNSD (ed.) (2013) *United Nations Demographic Yearbook 2012*: 99ff.

³ A *definiens* is an element that defines the *definiendum*. E.g. in the *UN Demographic Yearbook* size is an often used *definiens* for the *definiendum* city.

⁴ Wirth (1964) *On cities and social life: selected papers*; Cuco i Giner (2008) *Antropología Urbana*; Mersch (1997) 'Urbanization of the Attic Countryside from the late 8th century to the 6th century BC.' In: Andersen, Horsnaes and Houby-Nielsen (eds.), *Urbanization in the Mediterranean in the 9th to 6th Centuries BC*, 45-62.

complete list of definitions in the *UN Demographic Yearbook*, we find that these parameters are the major problem; the minimum population size varies from 200 to 50,000.⁵ Similar regional variations in city size may be expected in antiquity as well.

Defining the Roman city based on size is a rather difficult procedure. A Roman definition of what was considered a city based on size probably never existed. Hence, we cannot simply state what size is the minimum for a settlement to qualify as urban. Moreover, it is no easy matter to obtain the population numbers for antiquity: a city needs to be examined extensively by research, survey or excavation to determine its full extent and density. If these parameters are known, the number of inhabitants has to be calculated using a formula based on the number of buildings, the hectares covered and possibly other parameters also. The difficulty is compounded by the fact that density varies over the whole Roman Empire and within different types of cities, which gives rise to an extensive debate on the correct way to calculate the number of inhabitants for different regions and cities.⁶

A further relevant aspect of the city is its role as a centre of power, be it administrative, economic or religious.⁷ This aspect can also be found in the *UN Demographic Yearbook* definitions: 19% of the definitions are based on the administrative status of a town, and 13% are based on the economic function of a place. Interestingly, we do not find any references to religion or religious buildings in the *UN Demographic Yearbook* as a prerequisite to consider a place urban.⁸ Fustel de Coulanges and Weber have already pointed out the importance of a city as a centre for a larger area; this is also the key topic of the Central Place Theory put forward by Christaller and Lösch.⁹ The main idea is based on the city functioning as a focal point for a larger region, providing economic, political and religious services. This idea is also found in the work of Pérez Losada; he underlines the importance of the Roman city as a political power base by referring to statement by García y Bellido:

⁵ Iceland considers a settlement with 200 inhabitants urban, whereas for Japan urban is defined by 50,000 inhabitants of which 60% are engaged in the non-agricultural sector.

⁶ See for the debate: Ligt (2012) *Peasants, Citizens and Soldiers. Studies in the Demographic History of Roman Italy 225 BC-AD 100*; Ligt and Northwood (eds.) (2008) *People, Land, and Politics: Demographic Developments and the Transformation of Roman Italy 300 BC-AD 14*; Carreras Monfort (2014) 'Nuevas tendencias y datos sobre la demografía romana en la Península Ibérica.' *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* Vol. LXXX, 53-82; Carreras Monfort (1996) 'Una nueva perspectiva para el estudio demográfico de la Hispania Romana.' *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* Vol. 62, 95-122.

⁷ Cuco i Giner (2008); Weber (1922) *Grundriss der Sozialökonomik III Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*; Bendala Galán (1994b) 'La Ciudad en la Hispania Romana.' In: Dupré i Raventós (ed.), *La ciutat en el món romà: actes / XIV Congrés Internacional d' Arqueologia Clàssica = La ciudad en el mundo romano: actas / XIV Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica*, 115-23; Fustel de Coulanges (1864) *La Cité Antique*: 166.

⁸ Only in the definition of the Philippines, where at least three public buildings are needed, is "church" listed among the public buildings that could define a settlement as urban.

⁹ Christaller (1933) *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland: eine ökonomisch-geographische Untersuchung über die Gesetzmässigkeit der Verbreitung und Entwicklung der Siedlungen mit städtischen Funktionen*; Lösch (1938) 'The nature of economic regions.' *The Southern Economic Journal* Vol. 5, N° 1, 71-8.

La ciudad es hoy, como aglomeración humana, muchísimo más que antes; pero políticamente (nótese que la voz proviene de *πόλις* = ciudad estado) muchísimo menos.¹⁰

Moreover, Pérez Losada argues that a city's political power is linked to its economic power. He points out that commercially active centres without political power cannot be considered cities.¹¹

As has become clear, it is impossible to capture the definition of a city, be it modern or ancient, in a single definition. In general, Kolb has proposed that we should define an ancient urban settlement in the ancient world on the basis of six elements:

1. Topographische und administrative Geschlossenheit der Siedlung;
2. Bevölkerungszahl von mehreren tausend Einwohnern (Orte um 1000 Einwohner werden als Grenzfälle betrachtet) als Voraussetzung für;
3. Ausgeprägte Arbeitsteilung und soziale Differenzierung;
4. Mannigfaltigkeit der Bausubstanz;
5. Urbaner Lebensstil;
6. Funktion der Siedlung als Zentralort für ein Umland.¹²

Kolb states that due to loss of data over time it is no longer possible to find evidence of all six elements for the ancient cities. The scholar concerned must define for himself or herself which elements have to be present in order to define a settlement as a city.

Three of Kolb's six elements have been described previously. The juridical element is found in points 1 and 6, with size being given as the second item, and lastly we find a settlement's function as a central place spread over points 3 to 5. Simplifying the six points into a threefold approach, we will look at the settlements from three different perspectives in order to define them: whether they are self-governing communities, their function as central place and their size.

¹⁰ García y Bellido (2009 [1966]) *Urbanística de las grandes ciudades del mundo antiguo*: 84. Translation: The city today is much more of a human agglomeration than previously, however its status as a political unit (note that the word stems from *πόλις* = city-state) a lot less (own translation).

¹¹ Pérez Losada (2002): 24.

¹² Kolb (1984) *Die Stadt im Altertum*: 15.

1. Topographical and administrative unity of the settlement;
2. Population of several thousand inhabitants (places around 1000 inhabitants are regarded as borderline cases) as a prerequisite for;
3. Distinctive division of labour and social differentiation;
4. Variety of buildings;
5. Urban lifestyle;
6. Function of the settlement as a central location for a surrounding area (own translation).

1.2 Self-governing communities

The first approach used to define the cities of the Iberian Peninsula is based on the self-governing nature of the communities within the Roman Empire, namely the *civitas*, which is a town and territorial unit, presented by Pérez Losada in the simple formula *civitas* = *urbs* + *territorium*.¹³ This relationship between *urbs* and *territorium* is a rather complex construct. Fustel de Coulanges has stated that it has two components:

Cité et ville n'étaient pas des mots synonymes chez les anciens. La cité était l'association religieuse et politique des familles et des tribus; la ville était le lieu de réunion, le domicile de cette association.¹⁴

Due to this difference between the *ville* as a physical settlement and the *cité* as the political and religious association where families assemble, I will generally refer to self-governing communities rather than to self-governing cities.

Following the example of the *UN Demographic Yearbook*, where every nation's definition is accepted, we should accept the self-governing communities as the Romans defined them. As noted by Strabo, not all settlements referred to as πόλεις in the ancient sources meet the criteria. We first need to be certain that a settlement was regarded as a self-governing community. It is therefore better to start with those communities that were accepted as self-governing by the Roman state. This approach is used in many publications that focus on Roman urbanism.¹⁵ One of the first attempts

¹³ Pérez Losada (2002): 25; see also Edmondson (2006) 'Cities and Urban Life in the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire, 30 BCE-250 CE.' In: Potter (ed.), *Companion to the Roman Empire*, 250-80: 254.

¹⁴ Bendala Galán (1994b); Fustel de Coulanges (1864): 166: City and town were not synonymous words for the ancients. The city was the religious and political association of the family and tribe; the town was the meeting place, the home of this association (own translation).

¹⁵ McElderry (1918) 'Vespasian's reconstruction of Spain.' *Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 8, 53-102; Vittinghoff (1952) *Römische Kolonisation und Bürgerrechtspolitik unter Caesar und Augustus*; García y Bellido (1959) 'Las Colonias romanas de Hispania.' *Anuario de historia del derecho español* Vol. 29, 447-512; Galsterer (1971); Mackie (1983) *Local administration in Roman Spain A.D. 14-212*; Abascal Palazón and Espinosa (1989) *La ciudad hispano-romana: Privilegio y Poder*; Ortiz de Urbina (1992) *Municipalización Real, Municipalización Virtual. Funcionamiento Interno de Comunidades sin Documentación del Estatuto Municipal en Hispania, Africa y Gallia*; Bendala Galán (ed.) (1993) *La ciudad Hispanorromana*; Dupré i Raventós (1994) 'La ciutat en el món romà: actes / XIV Congrés Internacional d'Arqueologia Clàssica ; [coordinació científica, Xavier Dupré i Raventós] = La ciudad en el mundo romano : actas / XIV Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica; [coordinación científica, Xavier Dupré i Raventós]. In: Dupré i Raventós (ed.), *La ciutat en el món romà: actes / XIV Congrés Internacional d'Arqueologia Clàssica* = *La ciudad en el mundo romano: actas / XIV Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica*; Canto (1996) 'Oppida Stipendiaria: Los Municipios Flavios en la descripción de Hispania de Plinio.' *CuPAUAM* Vol. 23, 212-43; González Fernández (ed.) (1999) *Ciudades privilegiadas en el occidente romano: Actas del Congreso Internacional "Ciudades Privilegiadas en el Occidente Romano"*; Castillo et al. (2001) *De Augusto a Trajano: un siglo en la historia de Hispania*; Goffaux (2003) 'Promotions Juridiques et Monumentalisation des Cités Hispano-Romaines.' *Salvée* Vol. 3, 143-61; Andreu Pintado (2004c); Sáez Fernández (2008) 'Colonias romanas y municipalización flavia: ¿conflicto de intereses?' In: Mangas Manjarrés and Ángel Novillo (eds.), *El territorio de las ciudades romanas*, 155-76; Espinosa Espinosa (2015) 'Consideraciones sobre el papel de los "oppida veteris Latii" como focos de ignición

to collect all the data for the Iberian Peninsula, and now a reference work for Republican and Augustan privileged communities, is Hartmut Galsterer's *Untersuchungen zum Römischen Städtewesen auf der Iberischen Halbinsel*. Galsterer argues that some privileged communities were already existing cities recognized as administrative centres of territories, while others were *oppida* or tribal societies that fulfilled the position of a central place as Rome demanded.¹⁶ Galsterer bases his analysis on ancient literature, epigraphy and numismatics, mentioning the privilege granted directly or with indirect evidence, such as the presence of *duumviri*.¹⁷ Interestingly, Galsterer leaves the Flavian period out of the analysis, although it is in this period that the greatest change to the status of peregrine communities took place.

With the discovery of the *Lex Irnitana* in 1981, the debate on the Flavian promotions on the Iberian Peninsula received a new impetus.¹⁸ In the decades since then, Morales Rodríguez, Andreu Pintado and other scholars have greatly expanded the knowledge of the Flavian *municipia*. Their publications yield very useful overviews of the evidence available for asserting the Flavian promotion of communities.¹⁹ The criteria used to define a place as a possible *municipium* have been extended within these two works to the presence of the *tribus Quirina*, the presence of *flaminici* (*sacerdotes*) and the mention of a specific place in Pliny and Ptolemy. There is also a debate on the grant of *ius Latii* and the scope of this grant, which itself is extensive enough for another dissertation.²⁰

de la romanización cultural y política de las comunidades hispanas en época republicana.' *Cuadernos de arqueología de la Universidad de Navarra* Vol. 23, 225-52. For a complete overview of all work on the subject up to 1995 see Abascal Palazón (1995) 'Veinticinco años de estudios sobre la ciudad hispano-romana.' *Tempus* Vol. 10, 19-84. In addition to these works referring to the peninsula as a whole there is a multitude of studies on specific regions and cities concerning their status.

¹⁶ Galsterer (1971): 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 4.

¹⁸ Muñiz Coello (1985) 'La Política Municipal de los Flavios en Hispania. El Municipium Irnitatum.' *Studia historica. Historia antigua* Vol. 3, 151-76; González and Crawford (1986) 'The Lex Irnitana: A New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law.' *The Journal of Roman Studies* Vol. 76, 147-243; González (1989a) 'Las leyes municipales flavias.' *Aspectos de la colonización y municipalización de Hispania*, 133-52; Mangas Manjarrés (1989) 'La municipalización flavia de Hispania.' *Aspectos de la colonización y municipalización de Hispania*, 153-67; Nolla (1993) 'Les ciutats romanes del nord-est de Catalunya: els municipis flavis.' *Homenatge a Miquel Tarradell*, 659-65; Canto (1996); González (1999) 'Nuevos fragmentos de la Lex Flavia Municipalis pertenecientes a la Lex Villonensis y a otros municipios de nombre desconocido.' In: González Fernández (ed.), *Ciudades Privilegiadas en el Occidente Romano*, 239-45; Abascal Palazón and Espinosa (1989); Trillmich and Zanker (eds.) (1990) *Stadtbild und Ideologie: Die Monumentalisierung hispanischer Städte zwischen Republik und Kaiserzeit (Kolloquium in Madrid vom 19. bis 23. Oktober 1987)*; Bravo Castañeda (2007) *Hispania: La epopeya de los romanos en la Península*; Roldán Hervás (ed.) (1989b) *Aspectos de la colonización y municipalización de Hispania*.

¹⁹ Morales Rodríguez (2000) *Los Municipios Flavios de la Bética*; Andreu Pintado (2004c).

²⁰ See chapter III.

In order to find further self-governing communities, we can look at indirect evidence such as *termini* and milestones.²¹ In addition, we can turn to numismatic evidence.²² Lastly, we have to turn to archaeology to define whether the settlements found are to be considered urban based on their function or size. If places are considered only on the basis of epigraphic or numismatic evidence or a reference to their self-governing nature in classical sources, we will certainly omit urban settlements for which this specific evidence is missing. Collecting only the status and name of an urban settlement will not lead to an adequate understanding of the urban system. Collecting evidence relating to other aspects of these settlements will permit the comparison of different settlements and allow for the inclusion of settlements with urban features for which there is a lack of evidence of their self-governing nature. For these *definientia*, we have to turn to archaeology.

1.3 Settlements with urban functions

The relationship between the function of a city and its privileged status is strongly intertwined in the debate on Roman cities, as can be observed in the work by Galsterer *Wie funktioniert eine römische Stadt?*²³ The subtitle, *Die Infrastruktur römischer Municipien und Kolonien nach den Stadtgesetzen* immediately reveals that this publication still focuses on cities with these specific privileges rather than the city in general. Clearly, when looking at the Roman city only from the status perspective, we neglect the multiple functions of these places, beyond the administrative and political aspects, and lose sight of the differences between urban settlements and their functions. Regarding early forms of urbanism, several definitions have been proposed for recognising urban settlements from the functional and archaeological perspective. A large range of key features of settlements and/or societies have been pointed out as criteria for defining places or communities as urban, including identity, ideology and central place theory.²⁴

²¹ Cortés Bárcena (2013) *Epigrafía en los confines de las ciudades romanas: los termini publici en Hispania, Mauretania y Numidia*; Lostal Pros (1992) *Los miliarios de la Provincia Tarraconense: (Conventos Tarraconense, Cesaraugustano, Cluniense y Cartaginense)*; Roldán Hervás and Caballero Casado (2014) *Itinera Hispana: Estudio de las vías romanas en Hispania a partir del Itinerario de Antonino, el Anónimo de Ravena y los Vasos de Vicarello*.

²² Hollander (2007) *Money in the Late Roman Republic*: 111.

²³ Galsterer (1998) 'Wie funktioniert eine römische Stadt? Die Infrastruktur römischer Municipien und Kolonien nach den Stadtgesetzen.' In: Rodríguez Colmenero (ed.), *Los Orígenes de la Ciudad en el Noroeste Hispánico*, 19-33.

²⁴ Álvarez Sanchís and Ruiz Zapatero (2014) 'The Emergence of Urbanism in Early Iron Age Central Iberia.' In: Fernández-Götz, Wendling and Winger (eds.), *Paths to Complexity: Centralization and Urbanization in Iron Age Europe*, 204-13: 209; Childe (1950) 'The Urban Revolution.' *The Town Planning Review* Vol. 21, N° 1, 3-17: 10ff. Childes ten traits of a city:

1) Size should be larger and more densely populated than previous settlements;

6) Administration of surplus;

7) Invention of writing or scripts;

The last of these in particular, the central location for a surrounding area, is clearly linked with the territory of the self-governing urban centres. As Weber pointed out long ago, cities were not only political centres, they also served as market places for their surrounding areas.²⁵ With these functions, archaeological elements enter our inquiry. *Fora*, or more basic market places, and temples could have functioned as economic or religious foci of regions, and as such might have led to the development of a settlement with a central place function or even further into an urban centre. *Fora* and temples are taken to be among the most important elements of the city according to Laurence, Sears and Esmonde Cleary.²⁶ More generally, these authors identify a variety of buildings as well as the 'urban lifestyle' as elements that define the city in the West.²⁷ Taking a closer look at this work, we can understand the advantages and disadvantages of this functional approach.

They 'assemble the city' starting with the monumental centre of the 'Roman' city, the *forum*.²⁸ This is followed by the baths, theatres and sacred spaces, finishing with the amphitheatre. Interestingly, the circus seems to play a less prominent role in the book as it is not mentioned in the chapter titles. This focus on function derived from monumentality is very interesting; it has also been proposed by other scholars, such as Alföldy, who stated that the architectural development of a Roman city would include a forum, basilica, curia, theatre, amphitheatre, circus, etc.²⁹

The idea of a list of buildings or monuments as indications of the urban nature of a settlement can already be found in antiquity. The most famous example is Pausanias' reference to Panopeus:

Panopeus, a city of the Phocians, if one can give the name of city to those who possess no government offices, no gymnasium, no theatre, no market-place, no water descending to a fountain, but live in bare shelters just like mountain cabins,

2) Social differentiation of urban population;

3) Surplus was taxed;

4) Monumental building;

5) Non-agricultural producers supported by taxed surplus;

²⁵ Weber (1922): 514.

²⁶ Laurence *et al.* (2011) *The City in the Roman West*: 75 & 135.

²⁷ Kolb (1984): 15; Fear (1996) *Rome and Baetica: urbanization in Southern Spain c. 50 BC- 150 AD*: 15; Laurence *et al.* (2011): 203; Arribas Domínguez (1999) 'Los balnea privados en el ámbito rural lusitano.' In: Gorges and Rodríguez Martín (eds.), *Économie et territoire en Lusitanie romaine*, 427-51: 427; Edmondson (2006): 250.

²⁸ Laurence *et al.* (2011): 170. The book titles indicate that the idea is to recreate the city by assembling it from the monumental buildings: Assembling the city 1: forum and basilica; Assembling the city 2: baths and urban life; Assembling the city 3: theatres and sacred space; Assembling the city 4: amphitheatres.

²⁹ Alföldy (1987) *Römischen Städtewesen auf der neukastilischen Hochebene: Ein Testfall für die Romanisierung*: 120.

8) Artistic expression;

9) Importation of raw materials, paid for by taxed surplus;

10) State organization based on residence rather than kinship.

right on a ravine. Nevertheless, they have boundaries with their neighbours, and even send delegates to the Phocian assembly.³⁰

In addition, we find that Vitruvius' idea of the Augustan city and many other ancient sources mention different buildings as being part of civilised living, from which we can define a list of buildings, or even a foundation kit³¹, that might be expected in a Roman city, containing: *forum*, *capitolium*, *basilica*, theatre, baths and a *macellum*.³²

The approach of identifying urban settlements by their monumentality has obvious advantages: the actual archaeological record can be used in tandem with the epigraphic evidence. Due to their monumental character, these buildings have drawn the focus of archaeological research for decades, if not centuries, and as a result they are often well investigated. Nonetheless, this approach creates new challenges.

First, we encounter the problem of still missing data; since many Roman cities are buried beneath modern successors, archaeological data is often missing or incomplete, while other cities have not been excavated or have not even been found yet.³³ Thus, defining the city solely by its located public buildings would mean that many cities would be neglected, simply because we have no data for their monumentality.

Secondly, the focus on monumentality raises the question of which buildings were 'public'. Those buildings with a clear public character, such as the spectacle buildings, are found on the Iberian Peninsula only within the urban context. However, thermal complexes and temples might be public or private, and these are also found in non-urban contexts.³⁴

In order to overcome this problem we must look beyond the presence or absence of these types of buildings and try to identify the function of such buildings within a wider region. In other words, we have to ascertain whether certain monumental buildings provided services for the *civitas*. Another limitation of an approach focusing on monumentality is the possibility of there being central places with urban functions, economic or religious, but without obvious monumental buildings. In order to overcome a focus on monumentality alone we have to go one step further and take the functions of a settlement into account.

³⁰ Paus. 10.4.1.

³¹ Salmon (1969) *Roman Colonization under the Republic*: 27.

³² Tert. *Apol.* 42.2; Tac. *Agricola* 21; Digest, 50. I. 27. I (Ulpian); 50. I. 35 (Modestinus); Lomas (1997) 'The idea of a city: élite ideology and the evolution of urban form in Italy, 200 BC–AD 100.' In: Parkins (ed.), *Roman Urbanism: Beyond the Consumer City*, 21–40: 23; Fear (1996): 7; Laurence *et al.* (2011): 30.

³³ The modern cities: *Lucus Augusti* (modern Lugo); *Tarraco* (Tarragona); *Caesaraugusta* (Zaragoza); *Corduba* (Córdoba); *Gades* (Cádiz) are the famous ones amongst many less known. Unexcavated or incompletely excavated cities are quite common: *Urso* an unexcavated or badly reported city and *Clunia* a partially excavated city are the rather important ones.

³⁴ García Entero 'Öffentliche Thermen un private Bäder in Hispanien.' In: Teichner (ed.), *Aktuelle Forschungen zur Provinzialrömischen Archäologie in Hispanien*, 63–9: 67; Mangas Manjarrés and Novillo López (eds.) *Santuarios suburbanos y del territorio de las ciudades romanas*.

Within the category of less monumental settlements performing urban functions we encounter some self-governing cities, but the majority of these settlements fall within what are often called the 'small towns' or secondary agglomerations.³⁵ Secondary agglomerations may be defined as those settlements that have taken up central place functions in regions with low urbanization. Unfortunately the subject has rarely been studied in the case of the Iberian Peninsula³⁶, and when it is studied it is often related to the idea of the status of a settlement as *vicus* or *pagus*.³⁷ In order to gain an understanding of the role these secondary agglomerations can play as central places we have to turn to the Anglophone and French debates on this subject.³⁸

Furthermore, to understand the central place functions of the secondary agglomerations we can turn to the work by Clark on the so-called 'small towns' in the period between 400 and 2000.³⁹ The settlements investigated by Clark are characterised by five key features: an unusual concentration of population, a specialist economic function, a complex social structure, a sophisticated political order, and a distinctive influence beyond their immediate boundaries.⁴⁰ These characteristics recall those already mentioned among the definitions by Childe and Kolb.

The specialist economic function is also found as part of the definition in the debate on secondary agglomerations. Here we find functions such as: specialised crafts, road stations, thermal complexes or spas, religious centres and garrison settlements.⁴¹

A further aspect closely connected with urban lifestyle and status is social differentiation. The presence of an élite group governing a settlement is the third aspect of an ancient city proposed by Kolb and is also found in Clark's key features. An important indicator here is *euergetism*, private expenditure on public buildings as a way of demonstrating economic wealth and increasing the legitimacy of oligarchic rule. This can be a good indicator of the economic position and wealth of a settlement,

³⁵ See infra Chapter IV Secondary Agglomerations for a complete treatment of the literature.

³⁶ Alarcão (1996); Pérez Losada (2002); Fernández Ochoa and Morillo Cerdán (2003) 'Ciudades y aglomeraciones secundarias en el norte y noroeste de Hispania en época julio-claudia.' In: AAVV (ed.) *Colloquio Aquitania*, supp. 13 Federación Aquitania, 157-67; Morillo Cerdán *et al.* (2014) 'Aglomeraciones secundarias de carácter militar en Hispania.' *Anejos a CuPAUAM* Vol. 1, 117-31.

³⁷ Curchin (1985) 'Vici and Pagi in Roman Spain.' *Revue des Etudes Anciennes* Vol. 87, N° 3-4, 327-43; Le Roux (1992-1993) 'Vicis et Castellum en Lusitanie sous l'empire.' *Studia historica. Historia antiqua* Vol. 10-11, 151-60; Moreno Martín (1997) 'Ocupación territorial hispano-romana. Los Vici: poblaciones rurales.' *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie II, Historia Antigua* Vol. 10, 295-306; Fernández Ochoa *et al.* (2014) 'Las formas de ocupación rural en Hispania. Entre la terminología y la praxis arqueológica.' *CuPAUAM* Vol. 40, 111-36.

³⁸ For an overview of these debates, see Rust (2006). and Baret (2013) 'Les agglomérations antiques du Massif Central.' In: Trément (ed.), *Les Arvernes et leurs voisins du Massif Central à l'époque romaine. Une archéologie du développement des territoires*, 31-70.

³⁹ Clark and Slack (1976) *English Towns in Transition 1500-1700*; Clark (ed.) (1995) *Small towns in Early Modern Europe*; Clark (2009) *European Cities and Towns 400-2000*.

⁴⁰ Clark and Slack (1976): 5; Clark (ed.) (1995): 11.

⁴¹ Mangin and Tassaux (1992); Burnham (1993) 'The "Small Towns" of Roman Britain - The Last Fifty Years.' In: Greep (ed.), *Roman Towns: The Wheeler Inheritance: A Review of 50 Years' Research*, 99-110.

although the funds for monumentalisation do not necessarily originate from the city's own economy.⁴²

1.4 Demographic Definition

Kolb had already given a definition based on the demographic size of a settlement, which he linked with the division of labour and social differentiation. Since it has been argued that size is important in the case of cities and it is the most frequently used discriminant in the *UN Demographic Yearbook*, we have to investigate large settlements in order to determine whether or not these qualify as cities. In the case of the *UN Demographic Yearbook*, we have already seen that 41% of the definitions are based at least partially on total population or population density. In antiquity, population size was taken as an important characteristic of the city; Aristotle, for example, stated that in order to be considered a city, a settlement needed to have a population size that would allow for specialisation.⁴³ This observation connects the size of a settlement to its function within a settlement system. Only those places that have increased their population beyond a certain number of inhabitants have the labour force to allow for specialisation of the population, and as such the ability to provide services beyond the agricultural.⁴⁴ Despite its apparent importance for the development and definition of a city, this is the most difficult definition. As early as 1938, Wirth stated that defining a city by its size is arbitrary and that classifying a settlement as a city on the basis of population should therefore be a last resort.⁴⁵

Interestingly, scholars have not used size as such to define the city on the Iberian Peninsula. Nonetheless, some works in the historiography of urban centres on the Iberian Peninsula in antiquity have focused on demography or more precisely on the size of settlements.⁴⁶ Opting to look at the physical size in hectares rather than the actual demography is a result of the difficulties of calculating the actual numbers of

⁴² Laurence *et al.* (2011): 46.

⁴³ Aristotle *Pol.* VII 1325b ff.

⁴⁴ Bintliff (2000) 'Settlement and Territory: a socio-ecological approach to the evolution of settlement systems.' In: Bailey, Charles and Winder (eds.), *Human Ecodynamics*, 21-30: 27; Bintliff (2010) 'Classical Greek Urbanism: a social Darwinian view.' In: Rosen and Sluiter (eds.), *Valuing Others in Classical Antiquity*, 15-41: 31.

⁴⁵ Wirth (1938) 'Urbanism as a Way of Life.' *The American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 44, N° 1, 1-24: 5.

⁴⁶ Taracena (2007 [1949]) 'Las Fortificaciones y la población de la España Romana.' In: Abascal Palazón, Noguera Celdrán and Navarro Suárez (eds.), *IV Congreso Arqueológico del Sudeste Español: Edición Facsimilar*, 421-42; Almagro-Gorbea (1987) 'El área superficial de las poblaciones ibéricas.' In: AAVV (ed.) *Los asentamientos Ibéricos ante la Romanización*, Casa de Velazquez; Almagro-Gorbea and Dávila (1995) 'El área superficial de los oppida en la Hispania céltica.' *Complutum* Vol. 4 Extra, 209-34; Carreras Monfort (1996); Keay (1998b) 'The Development of Towns in Early Roman Baetica.' In: Keay (ed.), *The Archaeology of Early Roman Baetica*, 55-86; Keay and Earl (2011) 'Towns and Territories in Roman Baetica.' In: Bowman and Wilson (eds.), *Settlement, Urbanization, and Population*, 276-316; Marzano (2011); Carreras Monfort (2014).

inhabitants.⁴⁷ This absence of interest in size as a *definiens* in antiquity, in contrast to modern definitions, may be the result of the problems in determining the data. There are two aspects to this problem. First and foremost, and this ties in with the point made by Wirth, the attribute 'large' should be seen within its context: cities that are regarded as the largest in Hispania are regarded as only mediocre in size in Asia Minor and the Near East. Therefore, the definition of the cut-off point, or the minimum size for a settlement to be considered a city, can only be determined after a sufficient number of settlements have been collected and they have been classified as cities on the basis of other characteristics. Even then, one has to take into account that some obviously urban communities will be smaller. Similarly, Almagro-Gorbea has problems defining the cut-off point for the definition of *oppida*: he argues that an *oppidum* is in general a large settlement, although some are smaller than 10 hectares.⁴⁸

In order to define the city based on size, one has to determine the smallest settlements that can be considered with certainty as cities. However, at the lower end it is unclear where the line should be drawn. As has already been stated, this is by any means an arbitrary decision. For example, if we take 10 hectares as a cut-off point, perhaps corresponding to a population of between 1,370 and 2,500 people,⁴⁹ we would certainly exclude some clearly urban sites. This is based on the fact that among the juridical and monumentalised cities we find places smaller than this possible cut-off point.⁵⁰

In addition, it is often unclear how large a city is.⁵¹ First, the archaeology to determine the exact size of a settlement is often lacking. Obviously, on greenfield sites and cities with standing Roman walls the size of the walled area of a city can be determined with a high degree of certainty. However, beyond this, one needs to differentiate between the walled area and the built-up area. Unfortunately, there is no clear relationship between built-up area and walled area. A city can have a larger built-up area if it has developed beyond the walled area, or it may be the case that only the acropolis has been walled. Cities with a larger walled area can also found. This can be the result of a regional custom of enclosing larger areas or complete hilltops within

⁴⁷ Carreras Monfort (1996): 102. These numbers appear to me as too high as these have been based on large cities such as Ostia, Alexandria and Pompeii. Keay and Earl (2011): 304. Cf. Hassan (1981) *Demographic Archaeology*; Bintliff and Sbonias (eds.) (1999) *Reconstructing Past Population Trends in Mediterranean Europe*; Marzano (2011): 204.

⁴⁸ Almagro-Gorbea (1994) 'El Urbanismo en la Hispania <<Céltica>>: Castros y Oppida.' *Complutum* Vol. 4 Extra, 13-76: 26. See de Ligt for some of the problems in defining the size of a city in Ligt (2016) 'Urban Systems and the Political and Economic Structures of Early-Imperial Italy.' *Rivista di storia economica* Vol. XXXII, N° 1, 17-76.

⁴⁹ Marzano (2011): 206; Keay and Earl (2011): 304; Carreras Monfort (2014): 56.

⁵⁰ E.g.: *Contributa Iulia* with its 7 hectares and amphitheatre; *Munigua* 4.5 hectares, with the monumental forum temple complex and baths.

⁵¹ Almagro-Gorbea (1987): 28.

walls. Moreover, planned growth of a place can lead to a larger walled area. In settlements with large walled areas the buildings might have been built in a more dispersed rather than nucleated manner, giving the appearance of a large built-up area.

As a result, size is a difficult measure to use – and is consequently seldom used – to define a city. Nonetheless it is a valuable attribute to investigate the city and the hierarchy of cities. Different scholars have relied on size to obtain an idea of settlement hierarchy for the Iberian Peninsula as a whole or its sub-regions.⁵² The first work using settlement size as an attribute to define a settlement hierarchy on the Iberian Peninsula was carried out by Almagro-Gorbea in 1987 for the ‘Iberian’ sphere, the area along the Mediterranean coast.⁵³ In a later publication co-written with Dávila, a similar settlement hierarchy was created for the ‘Celtic’ sphere of the Iberian Peninsula, the inland region.⁵⁴ The authors used the collection of the 98 sizes of the ‘Celtic’ *oppida* between 110 and 5 hectares for a comparative analysis of the size distribution based on a rank-size analysis using a logarithmic scale.⁵⁵ Both articles compare the sizes of settlements in sub-regions to gain a better understanding of urbanisation within these regions and how these differ on the Iberian Peninsula. One of the main conclusions of both articles is that the urban centres closer to the Mediterranean are relatively larger.⁵⁶

Keay wrote two articles, the first in 1998 and the second in 2011, on the size distribution of towns in *Baetica*.⁵⁷ In his earlier article Keay mentions 38 sizes for cities in the province, although this is obviously just a small selection of the cities in this densely urbanised region. These sizes are then used for a simple rank-size analysis, without the logarithmic scale. Keay argues that the sizes of settlements cannot be explained simply by the position of a city in the Imperial system, assuming that *coloniae*, *municipia*, provincial capitals and *conventus* capitals were larger as they were privileged settlements.⁵⁸ He observes that some places are larger as they were of importance in the pre-Roman period and continued to be important subsequently. The 2011 article is confined to a much smaller scale, looking only at the *conventus Astigitanus*, and analyses the sizes of 15 *civitas* ‘capitals’. However, these sizes are used to calculate the population rather than to reconstruct a hierarchy based on the size of the settlement. Nonetheless, a short explanation is given for the size hierarchy, which, surprisingly, is partially explained by the colonial status of the largest settlements,

⁵² Carreras Monfort (1996); Marzano (2011); Carreras Monfort (2014); Keay (1998b); Keay and Earl (2011); Almagro-Gorbea and Dávila (1995).

⁵³ Almagro-Gorbea (1987).

⁵⁴ Almagro-Gorbea and Dávila (1995).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 224.

⁵⁶ Almagro-Gorbea (1987): 31; Almagro-Gorbea and Dávila (1995): 225ff.

⁵⁷ Keay (1998b); Keay and Earl (2011).

⁵⁸ Keay (1998b): 61.

contradicting his earlier thesis.⁵⁹ However, Keay bases the hierarchy on several parameters, of which size makes up only a small part.

In articles in 1996 and 2014 Carreras used the sizes of respectively 107 and 241 Roman settlements to calculate the total population of and density concentrations on the Iberian Peninsula in the Roman period.⁶⁰ He bases his range of sizes mostly on the works by Almagro-Gorbea and Keay. In both articles Carreras points out the difficulties in collecting settlement sizes as well as the problematic nature of size as a parameter to investigate the nature of urbanism. Aware of the challenges, he arrives at an estimation of 4,298,062 inhabitants for the whole peninsula, of which 27.11% would have been urban.⁶¹

Even though size is the most frequently used *definiens* for urban centres, with regard to the *UN Demographic Yearbook*, it is a very difficult proxy for the Iberian Peninsula in Antiquity. First, the self-governing cities on the Iberian Peninsula are rather small. Even the largest settlements, *Tarraco*, *Corduba*, *Augusta Emerita* and *Gades*, are dwarfed when compared with the settlements of other provinces. Trying to determine a cut-off point for the smallest size of an urban settlement would embroil us in a discussion for which there is no definitive answer. If we consider 5 hectares as a possible cut-off point, we would still exclude some central places of self-governing communities. However, a lower cut-off point would certainly include a multitude of non-urban centres. Secondly, the sizes collected in secondary literature are of very different quality and periods. As we can observe in Carreras 1996 and 2014, in order to collect a large set of sizes he had to use a broad-ranging period from the Republic to the start of Late Antiquity. It therefore seems preferable to avoid using size as the defining criterion to categorise a settlement as a possible urban centre, but rather to consider size as an attribute of the urban settlement to differentiate and create an urban hierarchy.

1.5 Defining the city

Pausanias was clearly of the opinion that *Panopeus* can barely be regarded a city as it lacked a gymnasium, theatre, market place and even a fountain. Nonetheless, it is still considered a *polis*, or self-governing community, as it did despatch embassies. From a juridical point of view, *Panopeus* was a city since it had at one time received permission to send embassies, but it did not look like a city in terms of monumentality. We also find large settlements that, as far as can be determined, were never promoted. We cannot but accept these as possible urban centres or at least central places within the urban network.

⁵⁹ Keay and Earl (2011): 305.

⁶⁰ Carreras Monfort (1996); Carreras Monfort (2014).

⁶¹ Carreras Monfort (2014): 70.

Ancient sources and epigraphy will be used to establish the self-governing nature of communities. In addition to the known juridical status of a settlement, there is other evidence that can indicate the self-governing nature of a community, namely magistrates, voting tribes, *termini augustales* and the right to mint coins on behalf of the emperors. Most self-governing communities are mentioned by Pliny by name and are included among the *coloniae* or among the independent *oppida* or *populi*. In addition, the epigraphic record has been searched for inscriptions that can serve as clues pointing to self-governing status. The magistracies that qualify a settlement as self-governing are: *aedilis*; *duumvir* (*duovir*); *praefectus caesaris*; *praefectus iure dicundo*; *quaestor*; *quattuorvir*; *quinquennalis* and *omnibus honoribus functus*. These magistracies are related directly to the Roman civic organization.⁶² Communities are also considered self-governing if *termini augustales* or municipal coins mentioning the name of the city or community are found. This is because the erection of *termini augustales*⁶³ and the minting of municipal coins⁶⁴ were only allowed under the auspices of the emperor.

The nature of the settlements also has to be defined. As discussed, urban centres performed certain functions. We will look primarily at the monumental centres as these might have functioned as central places for a region. We will also consider the functions of settlements; based on central place theory, we can establish that some non-self-governing settlements performed 'urban' functions where the network and density of urban centres remained underdeveloped.⁶⁵ This is one of the most difficult processes of the analysis. The functions in question are those often related to the secondary agglomerations: port, garrison, mining, the spas and thermal complexes and, lastly, the *mutationes* and *mansiones*. Unfortunately, the scope of this research does not allow for a complete inventory to be made of all these possible urban centres. Therefore, some case studies will be taken into account to understand the position these secondary agglomerations have adopted within the urban network of the Iberian Peninsula in the High Empire.

⁶² Curchin (1990) *The local magistrates of Roman Spain*; Melchor Gil (2011) 'Sobre los Magistrados de las Comunidades Hispanas no Privilegiadas (s. III A.C. - s. I D.C.)', *Epigrafia e Antichità* Vol. 29, 151-71: 151ff; Curchin (2015) *A Supplement to the Local Magistrates of Roman Spain*: 5-14.

⁶³ Gómez-Pantoja (2011) 'Un nuevo terminus augustalis de la Lusitania.' In: Sartori and Valvo (eds.), *Identità e autonomia nel mondo romano occidentale*, 291-318: 296; Le Roux (2014a) 'Cités et territoires en Hispanie: l'épigraphie des limites.' In: Le Roux (ed.), *Espagne romaines: L'empire dans ses provinces* 131-44: 133; Cortés Bárcena (2013): 266.

⁶⁴ Burnett et al. (1992b) *Roman Provincial Coinage: From the death of Caesar to the death of Vitellius (44 BC-AD 69)* 2.

⁶⁵ Bekker-Nielsen (1989) *The Geography of Power: Studies in the Urbanization of Roman North-West Europe*: 47.

