The city as a structural element in Turdetanian identity in the work of Strabo*

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To speak of the city as a structural element in Turdetanian identity in the work of Strabo, might at first seem obvious. However a closer look at the topic reveals a multifaceted phenomenon, which is in no way easy to explain. Firstly, Strabo is a complex author. Having already written a historical work,[1] Strabo feels the need to be linked somehow to the previous tradition, in order to be considered a geographer.[2] Hence, in his *Prolegomena,* he exposes a whole theoretical framework on the purpose of geography as a discipline: its nature, finality, aims and target. Similarly, he also discusses and critiques a genealogy of authors,[3] among them, Homer, Eratosthenes, Polybius and Posidonius, who were mainly interested in other fields, yet grouped by Strabo under the common denominator 'philosophers' (Strab. 1.1.1), in an attempt to set the bases for a literary genre, which united history, on one side, and physical, mathematical and astronomical sciences on the other.[4] In this way, Strabo demonstrates he respects and knows his predecessors, while, through his commentaries, drawing his own concept of geography, which he defines as a philosophy, an interdisciplinary field of knowledge of use to the educated and men of government (Strab. 1.1.1; 21).

The seventeen books of his *Geography*[5] are unique in the Graeco-Roman literary tradition. Together they constitute a complex geographical project, full of nuances,

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All translations from Book 3 in this paper are the author's, based on the Greek text established by Radt (2002).

[1] The *Historikà hypomnémata* were composed by 47 books, which have reached us in an extremely fragmented state. The well-known edition of the *FGrHist*, IIA has been recently revised and updated by D.W. Roller (2008) in a work, which presents the two *testimonia* and the 19 preserved Greek fragments, their respective English translations and a brief commentary to each one. As for a historiographical analysis, see Ridgeway 1888, 84; Pédech 1972, 395–408; Lasserre 1982, 867–96; Prandi 1988, 50–60; Ambaglio 1990, 377–425.

[2] Prontera 1984, 189–256.

[3] The complete list presented by Strabo in the opening paragraph of *Geography* is composed by the following authors: Homer, Anaximander, Hecataeus, Democritus, Eudoxus, Dicearchus, Ephorus, Eratosthenes, Polybius and Posidonius, followed, a few lines ahead, by Hipparchus (Strab. 1.1.2).

[4] Prontera 1983, XVII.

[5] The structure of *Geography* is well known. It is divided in two, clearly differentiated parts. The two first books, also known as the *Prolegomena,* are comprised by: an ideological and theoretical reflection on the purpose of geography as a discipline; an inflamed defence of Homer's authority; and a critique to a carefully selected set of authors, represented mainly by Eratosthenes. A chorography follows, describing the oecumene in a clockwise direction. Book 3 is dedicated to Iberia; Book 4 to Gaul, Britannia and Cisalpine Gaul; Books 5 and 6 to Italy; Book 7 to Central Europe, Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace; Books 8-10 to Greece and the Greek islands; Books 11-14 to Asia Minor; Book 15 to India and Parthia; Book 16 to the Near East; and Book 17 closes with Egypt, Ethiopia and North Africa.

which seen from a holistic perspective – as recommended by the author – [6] enclose the key to ancient geographical thought. Strabo innovates by capturing a latent idea in geographical tradition since Hecataeus:[7] geographical space only acquires its nature when described as a historical landscape,[8] which results from human action, i.e., political action over a determined territory.

There are various direct consequences to be extracted from this statement, some of which are fundamental for understanding Strabo. Firstly, landscape is geographical, since it is created through collective action. Geography is therefore viewed in a new way, as a discourse in which the historical dimension of space becomes of an essence.[9] On the other hand, the geohistorical focus Strabo imposes on his narrative conditions the sources he uses and forces the author to apply his own intellect to give the sources a new meaning and adapt them to his new perspective. Lastly, the weight of the historical dimension in the narration does not allow for Strabo to be read or interpreted as a fixed image of several contemporary realities, but as a description resulting from an accumulative process. From this perspective, cartography is viewed as an instrument, which provides a spatial frame for historical processes; however this instrument must be managed with extreme precaution due to the diachronic nature of determined information, which may present terms, such as 'limit' or 'frontier', in ways that cannot be perceived by us in the same way.[10]

Book 3 of *Geography* is the beginning of a chorographic description of the oecumene, constituting a paradigmatic example of everything exposed above. When attempting to gauge the reality of Iberia's geography in times of Augustus and its reflection on a map, the reader is left with the impression of a work full of inconsistencies, caused by the compiler's neglect to select and compare sources, which provide overlapping and many times contradictory information.[11] On the other hand, if a processual approach is applied to Strabo's *Geography,* these perceived inconsistencies actually become different stages in a historical process under construction.[12] There are at least two different, yet complementary, narrative planes inside the structural framework of the Book. The first and most evident is the descriptive discourse, which follows the general principles in the geographic and cartographic tradition. Geographical data are generally presented from west to east and from the coast to the interior, using mountain ranges and main rivers as the dividers and articulators of the great regions in Iberia: Turdetania, Lusitania, coastline from Calp to the foothills of the Pyrenees, and lastly, the islands.[13]

Each of these areas is introduced by a report on the characteristics of the territory: climate, terrain, navigability of the rivers, habitation conditions, communications and

[6] Let us remember that Strabo insists in defining his historical and geographical production as a *kolossourgia*, a colossal work based on the principle of functionality, but also on the need to compile what is worthy of memory, defending a holistic vision over scrupulous description (Strab. 1.1.23).
[7] Van Paassen 1957, 61–4, 70; Pédech 1976, 46–8.
[8] Prontera 1988, 201–22.
[9] Cruz Andreotti 2015[2]a, 59–68.
[10] In general: Prontera 1988, 201–22; Cruz Andreotti and Ciprés Torres 2011, 199–213.
[11] The sources used by Strabo in Book 3 were analysed in a monographic study by Morr 1926.
[12] Cruz Andreotti 2009a, 131–44; 2014, 143–52.
[13] Counillon 2007, 65–80.

resources available for exploitation (Strab. 3.1.6; 3.2.3–8; 3.3.1; 3.3.3–5; 3.3.8; 3.4.8, 11 and 16; 3.4.12–13; 3.4.15). At this point, Strabo establishes a clear core-periphery division between the south and the north of the Peninsula. Turdetania is presented almost as an idyllic territory, at the height of prosperity, thanks to all kinds of natural riches and a favourable environment for its exploitation, due to its benign weather and the ease of communication. The Mediterranean coast is also described in favourable lines, although with much less detail and information. It is presented as a fertile land of habitable valleys, as well as the Balearic Islands, which were freed of piracy by the providential intervention of Rome. On the other side of the coin, in descending order, fall Lusitania, crossed by large, navigable rivers with fertile territories, which are nonetheless under-developed, due to isolation, and, finally, the arid, isolated and mountainous Celtiberia, which is only inhabited by wild animals.

All these data are connected to the capacity and predisposition of the communities of each of these regions to exploit their natural environment in a beneficial manner. Through a subtle and very toned down subordination of the human character of each region to climatic and geographical determinism[14], Strabo exposes a second narrative plane, the rhetoric discourse. It is as a descriptive framework enclosing a conceptual outline, which gradually descends from civilization to barbarism, organized around temporal guidelines divided between the 'present' and the 'past'[15] and dominated by the dialectic between village and city.[16]

Strabo, being Greek, recognizes in Turdetania cultural and identity models comparable to his own, which were not given or imposed by Rome, but inherited from a previous trajectory. Hence, the Turdetanians are described as "the wisest of the Iberians" (Strab. 3.1.6) and the geographer points out, amidst surprise and admiration, how they have reached an intellectual state capable of producing literature, both in verse and prose, of immemorial tradition (Strab. 3.1.6)[17]. On the opposite side lie the Lusitanians, who although practice some customs, which are similar to the Greek and hold knowledge on art and agriculture, decide to live on war and banditry instead (Strab. 3.3.7); and the Celtiberians, whose indolent and savage character conditions their way of life and prevents development (Strab. 3.4.16–17).

The differentiating element in Strabo's Turdetania, in contrast to the other regions of Iberia, is the memory of their long history, in which the city[18] plays a central role. The term 'Turdetanian' is a functional and unifying ethnonym, which works as an aggregate[19], covering diverse communities with no evident spatial divisions.[20] Differing elements and realities, which ranged between native continuity and gradually introduced innovations, coexisted in complex, urban frameworks.[21]

[14] Montero Barrientos 1995–96, 311–30.
[15] Clavel-Lévêque 1974, 75–93; Thompson 1979, 213–30; Thollard 1987.
[16] García Quintela 2015[2]a, 75–124.
[17] Almagro-Gorbea 2005, 39–80; Castro Páez and Cruz Andreotti (forthcoming).
[18] Castro Páez 2004, 169–99; García Vargas, Ferrer Albelda and García Fernández 2008, 247–70.
[19] García Fernández 2004, 76–7; Cruz Andreotti 2007, 259.
[20] Ferrer Albelda and Prados Pérez 2001–2, 273–82; Moret 2011, 235–48.
[21] Bendala Galán 2005, 25–6.

In the edition of Book 3, published by Stephan Radt, [22] seventy-nine cities are mentioned,[23] of which twenty-eight may be ascribed to this southern region.[24] However Strabo is not interested in the number of cities populating the Peninsula, in fact, he freezes the number two-hundred, which some sources quote for Turdetania (Strab. 3.2.1). He is not even interested, as would be expected from a work of the same nature, in the physical, geographical or urban characteristics of the cities; many are simply mentioned with not additional data. What he really wants to draw attention on is the role played by the city in a historical process, which is recognized as such by a Greek reader. Cities are presented to the reader, as rightly defined by Patrick Counillon,[25] following models of epainetic rhetoric, which he uses, once again, to create core-periphery relationships between areas at two levels: inside a same region, dedicating particular attention to determined urban centres; and between different regions, showing how urbanism gradually disperses into village life as the distance from southern Iberia increases.

[22] 2002.

[23] The total number of cities cited in Book 3 may vary according to the edition. For example, Jones (1923) in the Loeb Classical Collection Library and Lasserre (1966) for Les Belles Lettres, include an additional Salacia and Olysipo, as Lusitanian cities (3.3.1). On the other hand, Radt (2002), in the same paragraph possibly referring to Salacia, simply points out the textual restitutions proposed by different authors, without incorporating any place-name of his own. Radt does the same with Olysipo, marking the lines, where scholars have interpreted the name of this city as a *locus conclamatus.* The most recent complete English translation of *Geography,* signed by Roller (2014), accepts the term Olysipo without question, ignoring the textual difficulties identified by Radt; Roller does not mention Salacia.
The distribution proposal presented here is exposed in Table 1. The column 'islands' only refers to data on the Balearic Islands; although Gades, following formal and geographical criteria used by Greek geography, largely occupies the final paragraphs of Book 3, it is classified under 'Turdetania', following a structural point of view. On the other hand, Cotinae should be added to the seventy-eight listed cities; it is mentioned in 3.2.3 and was possibly linked to the area of Sierra Morena, and therefore to the neighbouring territories of Turdetania/Oretania.

[24] It is difficult, if not completely impossible, to assign precise geographical limits to territories, which are defined on the base of dynamic ethnic groups; they changed denomination, spatial extension and location, depending on the historical-cultural tract used by Strabo or his sources at each moment. Hence, quantitative data must be considered with caution, and should not be used for any analysis on their own. On the place-names/ethnonyms subdividing and organizing the list of cities in Table 1 and the territories occupied by each one at different historical stages: Cruz Andreotti 2015[2]b, 519–24; 2015[2]c, 351–54; 2015[2]d, 471–72; 2015[2]e, 482–83; 2015[2]f, 418; 2015[2]g, 396–97; García Quintela 2015[2]b, 524–25; 2015[2]c, 380–86; 2015[2]d, 472; 2015[2]e, 527; 2015[2]f, 528; 2015[2]g, 345–46; 2015[2]h, 364–66; 2015[2]i, 366–67; 2015[2]j, 354–55; García Quintela and Cruz Andreotti 2015[2]a, 436–37; 2015[2]b, 441–45.

[25] 2007, 76.

Turdetania: 28	**Lusitania: 2**	**Mediterranean coast and its interior: 19**	**Celtiberia: 7**	**Islands: 3**
Ategua Asta Astigis Ategua Baetis Belon (Bastetanians?) Calpe=Heracleia (Bastetanians=Bastulians) Carmo Carteia (Bastetanians?) Corduba Ebura Gades Hispalis Ilipa Italica Julia Ioza (Bastetanians?) Maenoba Menlaria (Bastetanians?) Munda Nabrissa Obulco Onoba Ossonoba Port of Menestheus Tartessos (Turdulians) Tuccis Ulia Urso	Augusta Emerita (Turdulians; Lusitanians) Moron (?) **Celtici (south-west Iberia): 2** Conistorgis Pax Augusta **Oretanians: 3** Castalo Oria Sisapo **Vaccaeans: 4** Acutia Intercatia Segesama Serguntia **Callaicans: 2** Amphilochi Hellenes **Asturians-Cantabrians: 2** Noega (Asturians-Cantabrians frontiers) Opsicella (Cantabrians)	Abdera Cartalias Cherronesus Dertossa Egelasta Emporium Exitanians (city of) Hemeroscopeium Maenaca Malaca New Carthage Odysseia Oleastrum Rhodus Saguntum Setabis Sucro Tarraco Veteres(?)	Bilbilis Caesar-Augusta Celsa Numantia (Arvacans) Pallantia (Arvacans)[26] Segeda (Arvacans)[27] Segobriga **Ilergetans: 2** Ilerda Osca **Vasconians: 3** Calagurris Oeaso Pompelo **Veronians: 1** Varia	Pityussae: Ebusus Gymnesiae: Palma Polentia

Table 2. Cities mentioned in Book 3 of Strabo's *Geography* (after the edition by Radt 2002) (*Vid.* Figure 3.1)

In this way, although all the cities founded along the banks of the Baetis were powerful *póleis* (Strab. 3.2.5), the author presents some as particularly prestigious and exemplary, and not only basing himself on geographical criteria.

In Strabo's own words, "those to have increased most in fame and power are Corduba (founded by Marcellus) and the city of the Gaditanians" (Strab. 3.2.1). In the first, "there inhabited from the beginning chosen individuals by the Romans and the natives" (Strab. 3.2.1), so the foundation by Marcellus culminated a long process of coexistence,

[26] Strabo erroneously ascribes it to the Arevaci (3.4.13), when it is actually a Vaccaean city.
[27] Strabo erroneously ascribes it to the Arevaci (3.4.13), when it is actually a city of the Belli, an ethnic group not mentioned by Strabo.

which is also detected in ancillary centres, such as Hispalis or Baetis. Gades is an even more paradigmatic case. Founded by the Tyrians, its geopolitical influence in the region is confirmed by the alliance signed with Rome (Strab. 3.1.8 and 2.1), its census of five-hundred *equites* (Strab. 3.5.3), and by the central role played by the temple of the Gaditanian Hercules (Strab. 3.5.3–9). In times of Caesar, Balbus the Younger established an antipolis, creating a joint settlement known as Didyme (Strab. 3.5.3). Other cities, on the estuaries of the Baetis River mouth, fell under its sphere of influence (Strab. 3.2.2), such as, Nabrissa or Asta –chosen by the Gaditanians to celebrate their assemblies (Strab. 3.2.2)– and mixed foundations dotting the coastline between the Strait and its archipelago (Strab. 3.5.4). Jointly with Corduba, the central node in the mid Baetis Valley, and Gades, a strategic point on the Strait, Strabo also signals out Munda, which he describes as the metropolis articulating other urban centres, such as Ategua, Urso or Tuccis, scenarios of the Civil War (Strab. 3.2.2).

On the other side of the Strait, the main cities are New Carthage and Tarraco. The foundation of Hasdrubal is described as "the most powerful, by far, of the cities there" (Strab. 3.4.6), and Strabo highlights its strategic location and its infrastructure. Tarraco, on the other hand, acts "as the metropolis, not only on this side of the Iber, but also in a large part of the other" (Strab. 3.4.7). The pre-eminence of both urban centres is evidenced when they become the wintering quarters for the Roman governor (Strab. 3.4.20). Other cities play a secondary role, as points of reference along the coast, such as Saguntum, founded by the Zacynthians, the destruction of which ignited the Second Punic War (Strab. 3.4.6); and Emporium, a dipolis, where, according to Strabo, its inhabitants "in time, arrived jointly to a same form of government, a mixture between Barbarian and Greek laws" (Strab. 3.4.8).

However, despite the weight and entity of these cities, the urban phenomenon is restricted, according to the map drawn by Strabo, to the Mediterranean coast. There is hardly any mention of cities in the interior, which are placed on the map after conquest. From a geocartographic perspective, territorial vacuums in the Central Plateau and northern Iberia are explained by the lack of information available for the periphery of those times or by the importance of periplus for the structure of the description[28]. From a historical-cultural point of view, these vacuums may be explained differently. The well-known controversy between Polybius and Posidonius on the number of cities in Celtiberia (Strab. 3.4.13) and Rome's attitude towards the tribes distributed between the Artabrians and the Tagus River (Strab. 3.3.5) hold the key to this question.

Although the epainetic rhetoric is still in play, when speaking of Celtiberia – Numantia is "its most renowned city" (Strab. 3.4.13) –, Strabo is adamant in affirming "the nature of the territory is not capable of holding many cities due to its extreme poverty, its remoteness and its wild character, neither are the ways of life or actions, excepting those on the coast of Our Sea, implying anything similar: for those who inhabit villages are savages and such are most of the Iberians; not even the cities facilitate civilization when so many inhabit the forests bringing great harm to their neighbours" (Strab. 3.4.13).

[28] Cruz Andreotti 2007, 254, n. 10.

As for the description of Lusitania, the geographer does not hide that "the Artabrians have many cities coexisting on the Gulf, known by the navigators who frequent these places as the Port of the Artabrians" (Strab. 3.3.5). Interestingly, he does not mention the names of these cities, while instead, he informs on the hostility and warfare of the tribes populating the area, until the Romans "reduced to villages most of their cities", re-founding some of them with colonists (Strab. 3.3.5).

Figure 3.1.

Clearly, in Strabo's eyes, the mere existence of cities did not guarantee a civilized life, for in certain areas of the Iberian Peninsula, people lacked any political sense, and it was only through Rome that the city acquired this role.

A well-known and cited paragraph, describing Turdetania, sums up everything exposed above (Strab. 3.2.15):

> "For the Turdetanians civilization and citizenship were the consequences of the fertility of the territory; and also for the Celts in their vicinity –as Polybius has said, due to their kinship –although to a lesser degree (because the majority live in villages). On the other hand, Turdetanians, particularly those who live along the Baetis, have converted completely to the Roman way of life and do not remember their own language. The majority are now Latins and have received Romans as colonists, so there is not much left for all to be Roman. There are cities where they are now made to live together: Pax Augusta of the Celts, Augusta Emerita of the Turduli and Caesar Augusta in the region of the Celtiberians, and many other colonial establishments manifest the change of such *politeías.*[29] And indeed those Iberians that have that form are called *togati* (among these are also the Celtiberians who before were deemed the most savage of all). And these are the things on them (*sc.* Turdetanians)."

Despite the conceptual complexity of the passage and the controversies surrounding the different corrections proposed by diverse editions,[30] the text sheds considerable light on the topic being dealt with.[31]

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[29] The original Greek word, *politeía,* is maintained here, due to the extraordinary complexity of the term, therefore it is preferable to leave it as a transliteration. Bailly delimits two spheres for its possible translation. The first refers to the private citizen, and could be defined as: the quality and rights of a citizen or right to citizenship; the life of a citizen or the kind of life of a citizen; or more generally, citizens as a whole. The second sphere would comprise the political sense of the term: in the first instance it would refer to the life and administration of a man of government or to participation in public affairs; in the collective sense, it would refer to the measures taken by government or the constitution of a state, form of government or political regime (*s. v.* πολιτεία, 1587). Liddell-Scott-Jones presents three different meanings: firstly, the "condition and rights of a citizen, citizenship"; secondly, "government, administration"; and lastly, the "civil polity, constitution of a state" (*LSJ Online* http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj/#eid=87041&context=lsj&action=from-search).

[30] Canto 2001, 425–76.

[31] A general analysis on ancient Greek colonization vocabulary was published, years ago, by Casevitz (1985). As for the specific vocabulary to be found in Strabo, Pédech (1971) partially broached the subject, taking an interest in the semantic field concerning urbanism in *Geography*. However the nominal and

In the periphery, Rome imposes this 'political capacity' on the population, controlling urban development through the *synokisménai póleis*, forcing the coexistence (*synoikízo*[32]) between Romans and natives. It is not by chance that Strabo chooses to mention Pax Augusta, Augusta Emerita and Caesar Augusta, as urban centres, which acted as a base to orchestrate the consolidation of Rome's expansion.

In southern Iberia, the civilized and political character of its inhabitants was considered innate, although equally favoured by exceptional geographical conditions; therefore, their historical process was the desired one: "Turdetanians, particularly those who live along the Baetis, have converted completely to the Roman way of life and do not remember their own language" (Strab. 3.2.15).

From Strabo's processual perspective, Turdetania appears as a territory, where imperial policy was only the last link in a long transformation, which was completed, not without difficulties[33] –although these were skilfully concealed by the geographer. Ultimately, the process culminated successfully, for "the majority are now Latins and have received Romans as colonists, so there is not much left for all to be Roman" (Strab. 3.2.15).

verbal terminology used in Book 3 when describing and defining the city still remains to be studied; such a project could lead to interesting conclusions (*contra* in regards to verbs Lévêque 1974, 472–474).

[32] The translation of the verb *synoikizo*, as mentioned *supra,* may change the meaning of this text. It could simply mean "to unite in one building" or "make to live with". However it could also mean to "combine or join in one city" and as part of this same definition 'a city having been regularly formed", in contrast to *kata kómas oikizethai*, which means to live in separate villages. It can also be interpreted as "join in peopling" or "colonizing a country" and more generally even, as "unite", "associate" (Bailly *s.v.* συνοικίζω, 1864–5; *LSJ Online* http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj/#eid=103657&context=lsj&action=from-search).

[33] Cruz Andreotti 2011, 209–25; Álvarez Martí–Aguilar 2012a, 771–805.