

URBANIZATION IN IBERIA AND MEDITERRANEAN GAUL IN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM BC

Scientific Editors:

Maria Carme Belarte (ICREA and ICAC)

Jaume Noguera (UB)

Rosa Plana-Mallart (UPVM3)

Joan Sanmartí (UB and IEC)

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ICREA: Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats
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IEC: Institut d'Estudis Catalans

UB: Universitat de Barcelona
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  d'aquesta edici , Institut Catal  d'Arqueologia Cl ssica (ICAC)

Pla a d'en Rovellat, s/n, 43003 Tarragona

Tel fon 977 24 91 33 - fax 977 22 44 01

info@icac.cat - www.icac.cat

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XV • CONCLUSIONS. THE PRE-ROMAN INDIGENOUS CITIES OF THE FAR WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN: STATE OF THE QUESTION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

MARIA CARME BELARTE¹, JAUME NOGUERA², ROSA PLANA-MALLART³, JOAN SANMARTÍ⁴

Our knowledge of the large indigenous settlements in the far western Mediterranean in the second half of the first millennium BC has developed remarkably in recent decades. On the one hand, this has been the result of the macro-spatial surveys undertaken, which have led to a recognition of the nature of the settlement patterns and an acknowledgement –in some cases perhaps and understanding– of their structural complexity. This has led to the suggestion that the larger settlements exercised urban functions. On the other hand, it is also a consequence, on a micro-scale, of the development of geophysical prospection methods and open-area excavations, which have made it possible to progressively recognize very significant aspects of the different types of settlement. These include the structure of the urban layout, the nature and size of the fortifications, the characteristics of sacred spaces and those devoted to specialised production, and the diversity of house types and sizes.

This data has made it possible to appreciate, at a certain number of sites, the characteristics typical of cities as defined above (Chapter I). This can initially be seen from a functional perspective, given that the centrality of certain large nuclei within hierarchical settlement systems, which cover territories of a certain territorial importance, seems to involve these sites exercising economic and political functions of an urban nature. This appears to be confirmed by the size and complexity of the fortifications that often enclose these first-order nuclei, as well as by the fact that, at least in some cases, they are important centres for community religion and specialised secondary

production. Ullastret, Castellet de Banyoles and Segeda, all included in this volume, are good examples of large settlements that exercised these typically urban functions. Moreover, the diversity of size and structural complexity of the dwellings, which clearly contrasts with that documented in the study area during the Early Iron Age, undeniably shows the social diversity of the population, which, as we have said, is also a characteristic of cities. This diversity has been verified at different sites spread across the whole study area; Lattara, Ensérune, Ullastret, Masies de Sant Miquel and Edeta are clear examples.

It would be excessive to affirm that the new data that have gradually accrued now allow us to give a precise definition (or definitions) of the autochthonous pre-Roman city of the westernmost part of the Mediterranean, although some of its characteristics can already be clearly distinguished. One of them has to do with the size of the settlements, their variability and the conclusions that can be reached regarding the forms of socio-political organisation. In the Iberian and Celtiberian areas, the most important cities cover an area of between 10 and 18 ha, as can be seen in Valencia (Arse, Edeta, Kelin, Saitabi, Castellar de Meca) and on the Catalan coast (Tarragona, Burriac, Ullastret). It must be said, however, that the most common figure within this range is around 10 ha, as only Ullastret, Castellar de Meca and perhaps Tarragona are clearly larger. In addition to these first-order nuclei, there are smaller ones of a size generally between 2 and 5 ha, including Kili, El Rabat and El Morquí in Valencia and, in the case of the Catalan coast, Castellet de Banyoles,

1. ICREA Research Professor, Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats and ICAC, Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica - cbelarte@icac.cat.

2. Associate Professor of Archaeology (tenured), University of Barcelona, Department of History and Archaeology.

3. Professor of Archaeology at the University Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3. ASM-UMR 5140 / Labex Archimede.

4. Professor of Archaeology at the University of Barcelona, Department of History and Archaeology. Member of Institute for Catalan Studies (IEC - International Academic Union).

Masies de Sant Miquel and Sant Julià de Ramis, among others. This is also the maximum size of the Iberian sites in inland Catalonia, such as Coll del Moro de Gandesa. The situation is a little different in Gaul; in that area there is also a considerable diversity of sizes, with a significant number of settlements of similar dimensions to the second order nuclei of coastal Catalonia, including Cayla de Mailhac (5 ha), Les Castels de Nages (about 4 ha), Lattara (3.5 ha), Entremont (3.5 ha) and Saint-Blaise (5 ha), among others. However, there are also sites with much larger areas, such as Béziers (20 ha), Nîmes (between 10 and 25 ha), Arles (approximately 30 ha) and Ensérune (35 ha in the 2nd-1st centuries BC). These are even bigger than the large sites south of the Pyrenees.

On the other hand, the settlements with areas of between 10 and 15 ha (or a little more) that are relatively frequent on the Iberian Peninsula, seem poorly represented north of the Pyrenees (with the exception of Les Castels de Nages, which reached 10 ha, but at a very advanced moment at the end of the 2nd century BC). A particular case is that of Toulouse, which may have grown to as much as 200 ha, but is composed of two distinct areas about four kilometres apart of around 86 ha and somewhat over 90 ha. It is, therefore, similar to the characteristic *oppida* of central-western Europe in this final phase of the Iron Age (Fernández-Götz and Krausse 2013; Fernández-Götz 2018; Moore 2017, among many others). The diversity of settlement sizes is therefore present, with different nuances, throughout the area analysed in this volume, although the interpretation of this variability is not unequivocal.

The data available for the Iberian Peninsula have led to diverse interpretations of quite similar archaeological situations (at least in appearance). On the Catalan coast, three large sites –Ullastret, Burriac and Tarragona– appear to have presided over more or less equivalent territories (2,775, 2,000 and 2,800 km² respectively). These territories coincide with those the ancient texts and coin inscriptions allow us to attribute, respectively, to the Indiketes, Laetani and Cessetani. This has led Sanmartí *et al.* (Chapter VI) to assume the existence of three polities or, more specifically, three ethnically-based city-states with a strongly hierarchical and centralized settlement structure. In these three areas, the second order nuclei (2 to 6 ha) and the territory they controlled would have depended directly on the capital city. This interpretation would also seem to be confirmed by the particular distribution in these territories of funerary remains, which (between the 5th and 3rd centuries BC) are concentrated in the vicinity of the large first order nuclei (specifically Ullastret

and Burriac) (Sanmartí, Plana-Mallart and Martín 2015, 123). The centralized and state-like nature of these polities has been supported, on the one hand, by the existence of a hierarchical settlement structure in at least three degrees of size, which could have corresponded to three administrative levels, a feature that has often been considered characteristic of states (Wright and Johnson 1975, 267; Marcus and Feinman 1998, 8-9; Flannery 1998, 17, 55). The other justification is the evidence of control over agricultural production, specifically the large silo fields found in the three territories, as well as the presence from the end of the 5th century BC of a widely used writing system (including documents of a possibly administrative nature).

As has already been stated, the Valencia area also had large nuclei comparable in size to those on the Catalan coast, particularly to the north of the Baetic System. These are Arse/Sagunt, Edeta/Sant Miquel de Lliria, Kelin/Los Villares, Saitabi/Xàtiva and Castellar de Meca. It should be noted that, unlike what can be observed on the Catalan coast, these large settlements are located within the territory that the written sources attribute to a single ethnic group, e.g. Kelin, Arse and Edeta in Edetanian territory (between the Rivers Júcar and Mijares), and Castellar de Meca and Saiti in Contestanian territory, south of the River Júcar. There were also habitation sites of smaller dimensions, although still quite large (around 5 ha), in addition to a considerable rural occupation and a system of small fortified settlements that, judging by their locations, appear to have been designed for the surveillance and defence of the territory, although they also had productive functions (Bonet 1995; Mata 2001; Bonet, Mata and Moreno 2008). All these elements may indicate the existence of centralized forms of organization. Despite this, I. Grau (Chapter XIII), following an interpretative line he had previously initiated with H. Bonet and J. Vives-Ferrándiz (Bonet, Grau and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015, 260), defends here that the size differences between the first and second order sites did not reflect in this area the existence of political territories controlled by the first order nuclei under a hierarchical and centralized system. Instead he believes that both categories would have had comparable political power. They would have formed a horizontal network of a heterarchical nature, characterised by competition. However, depending on the circumstances, there could also have been cooperation and even coalition between the different groups that controlled the settlements of concentrated population and their respective territories, the sizes of which varied from 700 to 1,100 km². This type of heterarchical

organisation seems indisputable further south, in the southernmost end of Valencia (particularly if, as Grau indicates, Iberian Ilici was not a settlement of an importance comparable to that of its Roman successor), as well as in central and western Catalonia.

In summary, when the area studied in this volume is considered as a whole, it is easy to observe the existence of several regions that are more or less clearly differentiated in terms of the intensity and specific forms of their urbanisation process. Although it has not been included in this book, we should also recall the case of Upper Andalusia, in the area inhabited by the Bastetans and Oretans, according to the ancient sources. The surveys and excavations carried out since the nineteen-seventies by researchers from the University of Jaén (Ruiz and Molinos 2007) have documented a system of large settlements (generally referred to as *oppida* in the scientific literature) that controlled territories of about 100 km² on average. They varied in size, but were often very large, for example, Plaza de Armas de Puente Tablas (5-6 ha), Giribaile (18 ha) and Cástulo, which was probably even larger. From the 5th century BC, the entire population of the territory seems to have been concentrated in these large nuclei that, at least according to the definition proposed by the editors of this book, must be considered as cities, both in terms of their dimensions and the clear evidence that they included diverse sectors of the population. This model, aptly described as polynuclear by researchers at the University of Jaén, is typical of this area, and is clearly the result of a particular evolution in specific historical –and perhaps also geographical and ecological– conditions. The degree of autonomy of these cities is difficult to recognize, but it can be assumed that there were diverse political entities that grouped a certain number of such settlements, as indicated by what the literary sources tell us about the warlord Cúlchas. According to T. Livius, this personage, who some authors place in the area of the Upper Guadalquivir, controlled 28 cities in the year 206 BC, but only 17 a short time later, in 197 BC, at the time of the Iberian rebellion against Rome. The total territory under his control could therefore have ranged between 1,700 and 2,800 km², similar to that we can assume for other political entities on the Iberian coast, specifically in Catalonia.

When compared to other areas of the central-western Mediterranean, the size of the cities studied in this volume is certainly small. Some

Greek cities in the central-western Mediterranean were ten or more times larger than the first-order nuclei of Iberia. Selinus, for example, covered some 120 ha and Metapontium 145 ha. Others, despite being smaller, are still much larger than those of Iberia. They include Megara Hyblaea, which occupied some 60 ha from the time of its foundation (Gras 2015, 40) and Massalia, which grew to around 50 ha (but only covered a dozen hectares at the time of its foundation). However, some of the Greek colonial nuclei were of a comparable size to those of the first-order Iberian cities. In addition to the aforementioned case of Massalia, we can cite Naxos, which never exceeded 10 ha, and, obviously, the small Phocaeen cities in the westernmost Mediterranean, such as Emporion (some 6-7 ha) (Santos 2008, 52 and 64), Rhode (1.6 in the initial nucleus, but a little larger from the 3rd century BC onwards) (Puig 2006, 57 and 142), Agathe (4.25 ha) (Nickels 1981, 45) and Olbia (2.5 ha) (Bats 2004, 53).

The same can be said, with certain nuances, about the Phoenician-Punic cities, among which Carthage obviously stands out. In its final period it covered some 60 inhabited hectares, and 90 more if we add the space occupied by industrial areas and the necropolis (Fumadó 2010, 18-19). At the other extreme, in African territory, it is worth mentioning the small city of Kerkouane at the northern end of Cape Bon, with an area of some 7 to 9 ha (Fantar 1984, 121; Fantar 2005, 18); Motye (Ciasca *et al.* 1989, 7) was about 45 ha, and Panormos also occupied a considerable but clearly smaller area of about 13 ha.⁵ However, many of the Phoenician-Punic cities in the central-western Mediterranean were comparable in size to those of the Iberian world, except for Cartagena, which in many ways is a separate case, with about 40 ha (Ramallo and Martín Camino, 2015, 140). One of the largest, Ebusus, covered some 20 ha or possibly more (Ramon 2005, 130); Gadir, if the necropolis area is excluded, was traditionally said to have occupied about 10 ha, but recent research tends to diminish this calculation (Niveau de Villedary Mariñas 2018, 94 and notes 24-25). Lixus perhaps reached about 12 ha (Aranequi 2008, 4); Malaka was even smaller at about 7 ha (Mora and Arancibia 2018, 123); Castillo de Doña Blanca covered about 6 ha (Ruiz, Pérez and Gómez 2014, 84) and Baria between 3 and 6 ha (López Castro 2009, 471; Martínez Hahn Müller 2012, 21). These dimensions are also those of some Phoenician-Punic settlements in Sardinia,

5. After David Montanero, to whom we owe this information. His help was crucial in the retrieval of updated information about the Punic cities.

although these are still poorly known in general. Othoca, for example, covered some 7.5 ha in the archaic period (Nieddu and Zucca 1991, 107), but Olbia probably exceeded 30 ha in the 4th-3rd centuries BC (D'Oriano 2009, 377). Other places, such as most of the archaic settlements on the Iberian Peninsula, were even smaller, with areas similar to those of the second-order Iberian nuclei. Monte Siriai, in Sardinia, covered only 1.7 ha⁶.

As for the indigenous settlements, the Lybic cities of North Africa are still too poorly known. Some must have been very important, especially the capitals of the three kingdoms that existed in the 3rd century BC. However, the only figure we have, and it is still approximate, is that of Althiburos, which may have covered about 7 ha (Kallala *et al.* 2008, 98 and Fig. 24), although it is a nucleus of secondary importance. We also know that in 247 BC the city of Theveste gave 3,000 hostages to the Carthaginians in order to avoid being destroyed (Diodorus, xxiv, 10, 2), which suggests it had a population far greater than 10,000 inhabitants.

In Sicily, the indigenous settlements, also poorly known, varied between 10 and 80 ha, although it seems evident that the largest, such as Mendolito, were not densely occupied and not structured around streets, but made up of several different areas separated by empty spaces. Among the Etruscan cities, the best known is Marzabotto, southwest of Bologna, with a size of about 20 ha. Recent research in this area has documented the existence of profoundly hierarchical settlement patterns, with first-order nuclei of about 100 to 150 ha, second-order settlements of about 30 ha, a third level consisting of sites of about 2-3 ha, and finally, dispersed rural habitats of about 0.5 ha or less (Cambi 2012). The obvious conclusion from all the above is that, despite their modesty, the order of size of the pre-Roman autochthonous cities of the far western Mediterranean is perfectly comparable with that of other cultural and geographical areas of the same period, both colonial and strictly indigenous.

Turning now to micro-scale analysis, one of the aspects in which research has made most progress relates to the spatial distribution of houses of different types and sizes. This research may provide a social reading of the interior space of the city, as well as confirming the unequivocally urban nature of these settlements. Excavations at sites such as Plaza de Armas de Puente Tablas and Castellet de Banyoles, geophysical surveys at Ullastret and Masies de Sant Miquel, and the combined use

of the two methods in the case of Lattara have effectively confirmed the existence in urban sites of houses of very different sizes and structures. To date, the most complete information is probably that provided by Castellet de Banyoles and Plaza de Armas de Puente Tablas. In the former, it has been possible to propose the existence of an urban structure made up of neighbourhoods occupied by internally hierarchical gentilician groups, each of which would also have had its own sanctuary (although only one has been identified so far) (Álvarez *et al.* 2008; Asensio *et al.* 2012; Sanmartí *et al.* 2012); a similar structure appears to be discerned at Masies de Sant Miquel. In the case of Plaza de Armas, the different clientele groups were distributed in regular blocks of houses, one of which is larger and has been interpreted as the residence of the chief. A large house, well segregated from the rest and situated in a higher position, is interpreted as the residence of the prince who ruled the *oppidum* and its territory (Ruiz and Molinos 2007, 146-148). As a counterpoint, it is worth mentioning the small *oppidum* of Bastida de les Alcusses, where the social diversity revealed by the size and the structural diversity of the houses (as well as by their contents) does not translate into a clearly hierarchical organisation of the space (Bonet, Grau and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015, 258, fig. 6). This fact, as well as the presence of armaments in every house, has led to the interpretation that the whole settlement was occupied by families of high –although not entirely equivalent– status, who cooperated on providing for their needs. This is certainly a very different image from that revealed by the settlements with a dense occupation of the space that were structured according to deeper social differences, as we will see below. Despite its considerable size (4 ha according to Bonet, Grau and Vives Ferrándiz 2015, 256), Bastida de les Alcusses cannot, in our view, be considered in any way to be an urban settlement, either because of its occupation density or, very particularly, the social composition of its inhabitants, seemingly limited to the highest level.

As for the planimetric structure of the settlements, diversity is the norm. Orthogonal layouts are very rare on the Iberian Peninsula; the only obvious cases are those of Kelin and Plaza de Armas (Ruiz and Molinos 2007, 146-148), to which can be added the small settlement of La Picola on the Alicante coast (Moret *et al.* 2000, p. 141, Fig. 32). In southern Gaul we can mention the well-known case of Les Castels de Nages, which presents, in the 3rd century BC, an urban plan based on long

6. Personal calculation by David Montanero, who we thank for allowing us to use it in this paper.

blocks of houses delimited by straight and strictly parallel streets (Py 2015, 131-146). Another example is Arles, the large city on the banks of the Rhône that had a strictly orthogonal layout from the beginning of the 5th century BC (Arcelin 1995, 329-331) and is said to have been inhabited by a mixed Gallo-Greek population (*Ibidem*, 335-336).

In the rest of the territory analysed in this volume, the urban layouts are directly related to the topography of the site. Where this is basically flat, the layouts are quite regular, tending towards orthogonality, but never with the geometric rigour of the cases mentioned in the previous paragraph, nor, of course, of the Punic, Greek and Etruscan cities (e.g. Marzabotto). This is evident in settlements such as Lattara (Py 2008), Illa d'en Reixac (Martin *et al.* 1999) and Masies de Sant Miquel, which have many issues in common. Where the topography was more rugged, the settlements tended to be organised in terraces separated by streets running perpendicularly to the slope and connected by transversal streets. This arrangement can be seen at Puig de Sant Andreu, Sant Julià de Ramis, Burriac and Sant Miquel de Lliria. In general terms, it can be described as an organic urban planning, very different to that developed in the Greek and Punic worlds, at least in newly founded cities.

Another issue that may be of a certain interest is the polycentrism of some cities such as Ullastret, Ensérune or Sagunt, especially since it is not the result of the growth of an original nucleus. This has been clearly proven in the case of Ullastret, where the two constitutive parts of the city are equally ancient and developed in parallel. Nor is it, in principle, due to space limitations, as Puig de Sant Andreu was initially only partially occupied. Therefore, it is probable that the explanation is related in this case either to the different origins of the inhabitants of the two nuclei or to the social structure of the whole Iberian town. Indeed, although there are aristocratic dwellings in both habitat sectors, the presence of small houses, probably belonging to the subordinate class, has only been confirmed in Illa d'en Reixac. This could suggest that there were more important lineages in Puig de Sant Andreu. A second indication in this respect, as it is pointed out in Chapter IX, is the presence in Puig de Sant Andreu of a sacred area on the highest part of the settlement, clearly segregated from the housing areas. We can assume this was for the use of the community as a whole. This differs from Castellet de Banyoles, where the location of the worship building documented to date seems to link it to a specific gentilial group. At Ensérune this aspect is poorly known. On the highest part of the site the corner of a possible

monument built of large, "Hellenistic-type" ash-lars is documented. The discovery of fragments of capitals and other elements of architectural decoration suggest that it could be a temple, although the current excavators (see Boissinot and Izac, Chapter IV) do not rule out that this building was a granary related to the large silos and cisterns also present in this area.

Among the public constructions, we have to mention the defensive walls, which systematically appear in the settlements of the study area. Their size and complexity are variable, depending, as Cuscó indicates in Chapter VII, on the importance of the settlement they defended. In some cases these are very notable works, in which it is possible to note a certain influence of Punic military architecture. A number of temples or sanctuaries is also known, such as those already mentioned in Ullastret, and they appear to be of a communal, supra-family nature. An evident case is that of La Serreta d'Alcoi, located at the top of the city (Juan i Moltó 1987-88), and perhaps also that of Ede-ta, although its location within the urban layout makes its communal nature less evident (Bonet 1995). We have even less data regarding the buildings devoted to the administration and political leadership. Once again, the best information, although it is not easily interpretable, comes from Ullastret, specifically from Puig de Sant Andreu. Here there are some large buildings that cannot be interpreted as houses and that, due to their location on the upper part of the northern flank of the hill where the temples are situated (and close to them), appear to have had a communal use. Another solid indication of the existence of important public buildings in Ullastret are the remains of monumental Iberian epigraphy, although unfortunately they were found out of context.

Finally, among the recent research, it is worth highlighting the estimates of peri-urban occupation, understanding this as areas built around the city at a certain distance from its boundary, without being a purely extra-urban settlement. The most frequent model of city in the study area (and in general in the ancient Mediterranean) consists of an urban nucleus surrounded by a wall. However, the immediate extramural space could also be occupied, sometimes densely. These peri-urban or suburban areas have been well studied in the Greek world and have been discussed in studies of city formation processes (Étienne 2010). However, research into this subject is quite recent in the case of pre-Roman western indigenous cities (Plana-Mallart 2013). As for the territories considered in this volume, we are beginning to get to know these extramural occupations thanks to several case studies, although it is not always possible

to ascertain whether or not the fortified habitat preceded the peripheral occupation. In the case of the Iberian world, the occupation of the surroundings of the fortified cities has been documented in several cases, including Ullastret (Plana-Mallart and Martin 2012; Codina, Plana-Mallart and Prado, Chapter IX in this volume), Burriac (Zamora 2012), Molí d'Espígol de Tornabous (Sala *et al.* 2013; Principal *et al.*, Chapter XII in this volume) and Kelin (Mata, Moreno and Quixal 2012). The structures identified in these outdoor spaces adopt very diverse modalities. They are mainly linked to economic activities, such as crafts or agriculture, but may also be of a cultural or funerary nature, particularly in the south of the Iberian Peninsula, where the peri-urban space is delimited by necropolises or sanctuaries (Ruiz, Molinos and Serrano 2012; Adroher and Caballero 2012). As for southern Gaul, more specifically Languedoc, a peri-urban occupation has been proposed for the areas located at the foot of the *oppida* (Bagan 2012), as shown by the case of Ensérune (Chapter IV in this volume). In summary, the inclusion of suburban space in the study of the city has made it possible to qualify the traditional opposition between the countryside and the city and, at the same time, to understand the complexity of the structure and diversity of urban agglomerations (Plana-Mallart 2013).

The documentation compiled in this volume allows us to affirm that, although the existing information is still partial in some sites or regions, we now have a sufficiently solid understanding of the characteristics of the pre-Roman indigenous cities in the study area, as well as their size and the role they played in the different socio-political systems. However, in other parts of the westernmost Mediterranean, the protohistoric cities remain little known. With some important exceptions, this includes the southern Iberian Peninsula and, above all, the Maghreb, where the available information is still very sparse, despite the research carried out at sites such as Lixus (Aranegui 2009), Rirha (Callegarin *et al.* 2016), Banasa (Euzennat 1991), Tamuda (Tarradell 1956; Sáez *et al.* 2013) and Volubilis (Panetier and Limane 2002). The intensification of the research in the latter huge geographical area should be a priority.

In the Iberian zone and Mediterranean Gaul, the available data are much more abundant. They reveal a relative coherence in a series of points that, as a whole, endorse the urban nature of the largest settlements, i.e. relatively large but with variable surface areas and some larger nuclei of more than 20 ha in the northern Pyrenees; a considerable occupation density with contiguous dwellings

forming well-defined housing blocks; the rare presence of public constructions, except for the fortifications that in some cases were of considerable complexity; a diversified domestic architecture, both in size and structure, revealing the coexistence of different social groups; specialised economic activities; and occupation of the space immediately outside the walls. Within this relative homogeneity, it is possible that, as the research progresses, some specific models characteristic of different territories will come to be defined, in the same way as distinctive forms of settlement organization are currently distinguished on a macro-scale, within which cities assumed –or so researchers believe– roles of a different nature. On the one hand, on the Catalan coast we have the capitals of highly centralized city-states, between 2,000 and 3,000 km² in area, with hierarchical population structures; these would appear to correspond to the main Iberian ethnic groups in the area. On the other hand, in Valencia (despite notable similarities with the Catalan coast) and also in the inland areas of Catalonia (where the differences are much more pronounced), the existence of heterarchic socio-political systems is proposed. In the latter, the largest cities would not have occupied a pre-eminent position similar to that of the large nuclei of the Catalan coast, but would have controlled smaller areas, forming a horizontal network of nuclei of more or less equivalent sizes, within much larger ethnic territories. In Mediterranean Gaul, this type of analysis is still underdeveloped, despite the fact that the available data would allow interesting hypotheses to be put forward. All these questions are subject to further discussion as new data accumulate, but above all in the light of theoretically informed reflection and, even more so, open discussion, beyond our own traditions and research approaches and between specialists from the different areas involved. We hope that this meeting held in the framework of the EAA in Barcelona and the resulting volume will make a significant contribution in that respect.

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