Zeitschrift: Museum Helveticum : schweizerische Zeitschrift für klassische Altertumswissenschaft = Revue suisse pour l'étude de l'antiquité classique = Rivista svizzera di filologia classica

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Vereinigung für Altertumswissenschaft

Band: 78 (2021)

Heft: 1

Artikel: Et divites et omnibus bonis ornati sunt : the depiction of Roman civitates in the Expositio totius mundi et gentium in the middle of the 4th century CE

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-919662

Et divites et omnibus bonis ornati sunt

The Depiction of Roman *civitates* in the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* in the Middle of the 4th Century CE

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Abstract: This paper examines the characterisation of Roman cities (*civitates*) as formative elements of the Roman Empire as depicted in the so-called *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (*Expos. mundi*), written by an anonymous author between 346–361. It aims to analyse the perceived connections between cities and their surrounding territories as well as the depiction of *civitates* as economic hubs, as administrative and defensive centres and as formative nodes of Roman culture. In doing so, this contribution will illustrate how the author renders the picture of a thriving urban network, which forms and constitutes the Roman Empire on a mercantile, political and cultural level.
Keywords: Expositio totius mundi et gentium, Roman cities (*civitates*), geographical treatise, Late Roman Ecumene, economic networks.

1 Introduction

When analysing the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (*Expos. mundi*) many scholars so far have looked for its original sources and its use of language,[1] examined the social position, the profession and the religious faith of its author,[2] or focused on its conception and division of space as well as its representation of commerce within the Roman Empire around 350 CE.[3] In order to highlight a new facet of this singular document, this paper studies the writer's characterisation of Roman cities (*civitates*) as formative elements of the Roman ecumene. Such an approach allows for informative insights into the author's perception of the composition, function

* I would very much like to thank Nicholas Purcell (Oxford), Beat Näf (Zurich), Benjamin Hartmann (St. Gallen) as well as the editors of the journal *Museum Helveticum* for their guidance and helpful remarks on this paper.

The depiction of the landscapes of the Roman ecumene by the author of the *Expos. mundi* will be explored in-depth in another paper titled *Post hos nostra terra est.* Mapping the Late Roman Ecumene with the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, which forms part of the conference proceedings "The Impact of Empire on Roman Landscapes (12th–15th June 2019, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)". Parts of the present findings – especially with regard to the editions and nature of the source text as well as some considerations about its author – will be treated there as well.

1 Gardthausen (1873); Hahn (1898); Lumbroso (1903); Romano (1904); Sinko (1904); Wölfflin (1904); Klotz (1906); Vasiliev (1936); Rougé (1966a) 70–82; Pigulewskaja (1969) 46–50; Várady (1972) 264–270; Mittag (2006); Grüll (2014) 629–634.

2 Rougé (1966a) 34; 48–55; Drexhage (1983) 4f.; Molè (1985) 705; Marasco (1996).

3 Rougé (1966a) 83–88; Drexhage (1983); Molè (1985) 703–736; Mittag (2006) 351; Grüll (2014) 634–637.

and condition of the Roman Empire in the middle of the 4th century CE. To reach this goal, it is necessary to ask about the literary traditions of the source text and to contextualise the author and his work. In a second part, this paper examines the perceived connections between cities and their surrounding territories, the depiction of *civitates* as economic nodes, as administrative and defensive centres and as hubs of Roman culture. Finally, this contribution will assess how the *Expos. mundi* evaluates the character and nature of various inhabitants of the *Imperium Romanum*.

2 Textual traditions, authorship and purpose

2.1 Editions of the source text

Two Latin versions of a lost Greek original are known,[4] namely the more detailed account *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (A), first published in 1628 by Jacobus Gothofredus,[5] and an abridged version with the title *Descriptio totius mundi* (B), first brought to public attention by Angelo Mai in 1831, based on a then newly found manuscript from the 12th century,[6] and issued again in the *Geographi Graeci Minores* by Karl Müller in 1861 together with an improved issue of (A).[7] (A) and (B) together have then been printed by Alexander Riese in the *Geographi Latini Minores* in 1878.[8] Subsequently, Giacomo Lumbroso released two additional editions of the *Expos. mundi* in 1898 and 1903, followed by Thaddaeus Sinko's editorial endeavour in 1904. The last complete issue of the text has been presented by Jean Rougé in 1966 under the title *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*[9] together with a

4 Compare Sinko (1904) and Wölfflin (1904), who initially suggest that the *Expositio* might originally have been composed in Latin. Early on, however, Hahn (1898) and Klotz (1906) propagated the idea of a Greek original. Their thesis tends to be confirmed by recent scholarship, see Grüll (2014) 630. Hahn (1898) 82 emphasises that the text might have been rendered into Latin in Gaul, probably during the 7th century at the latest.

5 After Gothofredus' edition, (A) has subsequently been republished by Jacob Gronov in his *Geographica antiqua* in 1697 and by John Hudson in his *Geographiae veteris scriptores graeci minores* in 1712.

6 The first edition of this manuscript, found in the Benedictine monastery "Cava de' Tirreni", has been edited by Angelo Mai under the title *Classici auctores e Vaticanis codicibus editi.* It has then been released once more by Georg Heinrich Bode in the *Scriptores rerum mythicarum latini tres Romae nuper reperti* in 1834 before the publication of Karl Müller's critical edition.

Today, three other copies of the *Descriptio* (B) are known, namely a text composed in the 14th century and preserved in the "Bibliothèque Nationale de France" in Paris (BN Latin 7418,36), another from the 12th/13th century, treasured in the "Biblioteca Nacional de España" in Madrid (BN Lat. 19 [16]), and finally a version from the 15th century, now accessible in the "Bibliothèque nationale de Luxembourg" (BN 236).

7 *GGM*, 513–528.

8 *GLM*, 104–126.

9 It is worth pointing out that Rougé (1973) 308–316 added a small supplement to his publication from 1966, describing the contents of the aforementioned manuscript from Luxembourg (BN 236)

French translation.[10] Because there is not a singular critical edition of the source text and in order to quote correctly from the preserved materials, excerpts from both textual traditions (A) and (B) will be displayed simultaneously in this paper following Rougé's publication.[11]

If the two versions of the *Expos. mundi* are compared with regard to content and form, it becomes clear that the *Expositio* (A) features on the one hand more text in general compared to the *Descriptio* (B). Note, however, that the beginning (*Incipit liber Iunioris philosophi in quo continetur totius mundi descriptio*) as well as the introductory paragraphs (§§1–4) and the ending (§68: *Explicit Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium*) are only preserved in the *Descriptio* (B). On the other hand, the Latin text of the *Descriptio* (B) appears to have a genuinely higher standard regarding grammar and orthography. As Rougé demonstrated, the *Descriptio* (B) should, however, not be dismissed as just an abridged copy of the *Expositio* (A) against this background. Instead, both texts are probably based on the same Latin translation of the original Greek text.[12] In view of content, both versions share numerous similarities be it in terms of the general composition of the treatise or the detailed depictions of landscapes, cities and their inhabitans. However, the *Descriptio* (B) features hardly any signs of paganism at all, while we find many depictions of non-Christian cults in the *Expositio* (A), which led some scholars to believe that the author was in fact a pagan.

2.2 Date of composition, authorship and language

The *Expos. mundi* has surely been written between 346–361 CE.[13] Philological analysis additionally shows that the text contains linguistic Semitisms. This observation led some scholars to the assumption that its author primarily used a Semitic language, possibly Syriac.[14] He presents a comparatively detailed account of

containing again the text of the *Descriptio* (B) with some variances regarding orthography and grammar.

10 Further transmissions have been presented by Vassiliev (1936) 8–28 [English], by Poliakova/Felenkovskaja (1956) 277–288; 288–305 [Russian], and Drexhage (1983) [German].

11 At the beginning of each quote, an [E] standing for *Expositio* or a [D] standing for *Descriptio* will indicate the origin of the relevant passages. A schematic stemma of the text editions mentioned here as well as comprehensive depictions of the textual transmissions that were deemed necessary for the critical assessment of the *Expos. mundi* will be presented again in the author's contribution referred to at the beginning of this paper.

12 See Rougé (1966a) 110–118, who is opposing the results of Klotz (1906) 101 in particular.

13 The reason for this dating lies in the fact that the texts mentions the *dominus orbis terrarum* Constantius II, who died on November 3 361, and his impressive building activities in Seleuceia 346 (§28), see also Iul., *or.* 1,33, Lib., *or.* 11,263 and Hier., *chron. a. Abr.* 346. For a different dating see Lumbroso (1903) 5 (metà del secolo); Vasiliev (1936) 35f. (350); Rougé (1966a) 19 (359/360); Pigulewskaja (1969) 48 (350); Várady (1972) 268f. (between 350–353?); Drexhage (1983) 4 (350 or 359/360); Mittag (2006) 339f. (between 350–360); Grüll (2014) 630 (350–362).

14 Rougé (1966a) 98–100 (with further references).

Tyrus, one of the most densly populated cities of the eastern regions according to §24, and seems rather informed about its surrounding territories as well. Because of these observations, some scholars proposed that he might have been an inhabitant of the named city or at least a resident of a Syrian province.[15]

Further examination of the text leads to the impression that the author primarily dealt with trade-related issues for a living or was at least well aware of commercial activities in the Roman world, especially with regard to the situation of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire.[16] Although quite certainly part of a (regional) socio-economic elite, he should, however, not be seen as an intellectual well-versed in classical literature in the first place, as indicated by his use of language. The *Expos. mundi* itself is characterised by a number of rather functional and paratactic sentences, shaped by the use of the present indicative and *participia* as well as a certain brevity in style. Quite often, it resembles a descriptive recital of regions and cities linked by the connectives *et, deinde, inde* or *post.* Its vocabulary strikes the reader as rather focused: Municipal entities and societies often "have" certain properties (*habere, possidere*), various locations are frequently described by the expression "there is" (*est, sunt*). Cities appear remarkable (*excellentes, splendidae, eminentes, bonae, optimae*), wealthy (*sibi sufficientes, abundantes*) or as great, mighty, and influential (*maximae, potentes*). The contents described are often "seen as" such and such (*videtur, videntur*) or are based on oral reports or rumours alone, indicated by the use of *dicitur/dicuntur.* The application of rhetorical devices is uncommon and appears to be limited on the use of superlatives in order to describe various regions and individual cities; now and again, the reader finds rhetorical questions.[17] Rarely, we are presented with a more detailed account of individual cities; famous exemptions can be found in the representation of Alexandria (§§35–37) and Rome (§55). Despite the often descriptive nature of the text, the author successfully manages to express his original wonder and amazement at the marvelous geographical features, cities and peoples of the world.

15 Vasiliev (1936) 33; Rougé (1966a) 27–38; Pigulewskaja (1969) 47; 49f.; Várady (1972) 269f.; Drexhage (1983) 4; Grüll (2014) 633. Compare, however, Wölfflin (1904) 578; Klotz (1906) 112, who suspect that the author resided in Egyptian Alexandria, since he presents the most detailed account of this city in the *Expos. mundi.*

16 Compare Rougé (1966a) 34; Drexhage (1983) 4–6; Molè (1985) 705 who propose that the author possibly worked as a rhetor, sophist, merchant, entrepreneur or as a *vir rusticus.* Grüll (2014) 634–637 persuasively suggests that he might have dealt in the textile market, since he is rather versed in different textile products within the *Imperium Romanum.*

17 §32: [E] *Omnia autem quare?*; §36: [E] *Et quid est quod sic a nobis laudatur?*; §59 [E] *Sed quid ibi esse potest?*; §62: [D] *Unde autem eis hoc bonum?*; §55: [D] *Quis enim Antonini dinumeret opera? Quis Traiani vel ceterorum explicet in operibus publicis ornamenta?.*

2.3 Structure, sources and purpose

The 68 sections of the *Expos. mundi* are divided into three parts. Following a brief introduction (§§1–3), the author presents a description of the world beyond the eastern frontiers of the Roman Empire together with its fantastic inhabitants (§§4–21).[18] In the following segment, he focuses on different locations within the *Imperium Romanum* (§§22–68);[19] to understand his perception and depiction of Roman *civitates*, it is this second part, which plays an important role in the present analysis. In §§63–67 the geographer focuses on different Mediterranean islands (*i. e.* Cyprus, Crete, Siciliy, possibly Corsica, Sardinia and the Britannia), while §68 concludes the text.

Following §1, the author apparently employed three types of sources for the composition of his text, namely his own experiences (*i. e.* for the depiction of Syria and possibly Egyptian Alexandria), what learned people (*eruditi*) told him about their travels (*i. e.* with regard to the depiction of Asia Minor), and relevant writings he read by himself (as mentioned in §§3, 42, 52 and 61).[20] Mittag argues that for the portrayal of Roman provinces from Cilicia to Italy (§§44–55) the author might have had access to a now lost *periplus*.[21] For the rest of the Roman Empire, he might have reverted to common but not necessarily precise geographical knowledge. This would explain why the representation of these areas appears comparatively poor in detail and contains some mistakes, in particular in §§ 38, 45, 55 and 57.[22]

18 §§4–20 of [D] and [E] share many similarities regarding form and content with a Greek text titled "Ὁδοιπορίαι ἀπὸ Ἐδὲμ τοῦ παραδείσου ἄχρι τῶν Ῥωμαίων". This Christian itinerary states distances between countries, cities and peoples while depicting the way from Eden far in the east to the centre of the Roman Empire in the west. Apparently, the author of the *Expos. mundi* adapts certain names for places and people, the distances mentioned within the Christian itinerary as well as the sequence of listed locations while portraying different communities in the eastern part of the world. However, he presents his very own description of the Roman Empire just after the portrayal of the Saracens (§20), while the *itinerarium* continues with a depiction of Eilath, Elam, Antiochia, Constantinople and Rome. For further references see Klotz (1910); Vasiliev (1936) 29; 350–355; Pigulewskaja (1969) 48; Rougé (1966a) 56–69; 346–357.

19 See Roueé (1960a), 381–383; Mittag (2006) 344, Harper (2017) 181 for maps and cartographical representations.

20 In addition, Grüll (2014) 638 f. highlights the possible influence of Flavius Josephus' works, since the "wise teacher of the Jews" (§3) too mentions Berossus, Manetho, Apollonius, Menander of Ephesus, Herodotus and Thucydides in his *Contra Apionem* as important sources.

Against the assumption of Gardthausen (1873); Romano (1904) 8–14 concerning the use of a now lost systematic geographical description of the Roman Empire by the author of the *Expos. mundi* as well as by Ammianus Marcellinus see Hahn (1898) 8–10; Rougé (1966a) 73; Mittag (2006) 341 f.

Hahn (1898) 8–10; Rougé (1966a) 82 suppose that the author might have had access to maps of the Roman Empire. Compare, however, Mittag (2006) 341–343; 350; Grüll (2014) 639.

21 Mittag (2006) 346 f. Compare Grüll (2014) 639.

22 Mittag (2006) 349. See Klein (2006) 146–148; Krumeich (2006) 111–113; Dueck (2013) 134–138 concerning general geographical knowledge in Antiquity.

It is indeed striking that the author puts great emphasis on the description of places of trade and merchandise – an exception among ancient geographical treatises. Note, however, that he does not state exact distances between *emporia* or the value of traded goods in general. He subsequently neither declares how long it takes to get to certain places nor does he disclose further conditions of possible itineraries. As a result, the text would actually hardly have been of great value for (travelling) merchants. The *Expos. mundi* is therefore not composed as a practical manual for trading activities in the Mediterranean world.[23]

Against this background, I would like to argue that the document primarily attempts to depict the author as a wise and experienceed man by presenting his own personal education (§1). As is known, the acquisition and the display of education (παιδεία) could contribute to a privileged position in Roman society. It might be safe to suggest, therefore, that the composition of the *Expos. mundi* primarily demonstrates the unnamed writer's efforts to establish his own social position among leading members of his own home community by imitating former geographical tracts and thereby exhibiting his own expertise in a renowned field of intellectual prowess, *i. e.* the writing of geographical treatises. The text may thus be one of few surviving documents, indicating a perhaps far more common intellectual phenomenon among aspiring members of the *viri humiliores* in Roman cities in the middle of the 4th century CE. Additionally, it possibly allows further conclusions about the conditions of literary production in Late Antiquity.[24]

3 Portrayal of *civitates* in the Roman Empire

Many sections of the second part of the *Expos. mundi* (§§21–62) are structured in a similar manner. The author starts with a brief depiction of the territory and landscape of a province, describes its resources and fertility for certain crops and (sometimes) continues to illustrate the life style of its inhabitants as well as their economic and diplomatic relationships with surrounding people. Following his own outline at the beginning of the text,[25] he then usually proceeds to characterise important cities – these were quite often provincial capitals or other distinguished regional centres –, although it is worth to note that not every province features prominent towns within the *Expos. mundi.* Subsequently, he focuses on the character of city-dwellers, renowned commercial goods in general, impressive buildings or cults and the political or administrative function of individual *civitates.* The text

23 Grüll (2014) 629. Compare as well Podossinov (2003) 90 f.; Dueck (2013) 29–80; Engels (2007) 542–546.

24 This deliberation will be further explored in the upcoming publication by the author, mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

25 §2: [E] *[...], deinde omnem Romanorum terram, quot sint in omni mundo provinciae, vel quales in substantia ac potestate; quae civitates in singulis provinciis habeant et quid in unaquaque provincia aut civitate possit esse praecipuum.*

mentions 63 urban structures altogether.[26] Albeit not stated explicitly, it follows from the narration that cities form an important structural element for the constitution of the Roman ecumene, especially in connection with references to the emperors and their political or military strategies. The writer thereby creates a clear distinction between Rome and surrounding barbarians.[27]

3.1 The relation between cities and their surrounding landscape

Cities are not depicted as singular and isolated entities by the author of the *Expos. mundi.* Instead, they are always embedded within a dense social, political and economic framework. They share important connections with their surrounding territories in particular. A fertile land naturally sustains powerful and wealthy cities, since it provides optimal conditions for agriculture and subsequently different forms of craftmanships. Without such positive climatic or geographical conditions, some inhabitants of the Roman Empire had to learn to use their environment's ressources in adaptive and sometimes ingenious ways. In case of Cappadocia, for instance, the population had to come up with new techniques (*artificium*) in order to survive the difficult and cold weather conditions (*frigora maxima*).[28] As a consequence, the denizens of Caesarea specialised in trading with different types of fur and coats (§40). Note that according to §§41–42 the province of Galatia and Phrygian Laodicia as well produce and exporte various pieces of clothing (*vestis plurima,* resp. *vestis sola, i. e. laodicena nominata*). Some cities, however, are not held in high esteem because of their economic prowess in the first place but rather due to their rich history and cultural significance for the self-understanding of the Roman Empire. This becomes clear when assessing the author's depictions of Achaia, Graecia and Laconia together with their most important urban centres (§52):[29]

> [E] *Post Thessaliam Achaiae, Graeciae et Laconicae terra, quae in se ‹studia› habens non sic ‹in› aliis sufficere sibi potest; nam et ipsa provincia brevis est et montuosa, et non tan-*
>
> [D] *Post Thessaliam Achaiae et Graeciae et Laconicae terram, quae sola in se studia habens sufficere sibi tantum potest. Est enim provincia brevis et montensis, quae fruges gignit, oleum*

26 See the corresponding table at the end of this contribution. 23 of these towns belong to Syrian provinces, only Bostra is mentioned as an important city in Arabia. 20 *civitates* are located in Asia Minor and in Greece. For Italy and the Danube region the author mentions seven towns. Only two cities are named in Gaul. Five urban settlements belong to North Africa, five are finally set on different islands in the Mediterranean Sea. Note that Palermum on Sicily is only mentioned in [D].

27 §62: [E] *Et haec quidem orbis terrae, Romanorum quoque et barbarorum terram, quod ex parte dicere potuimus.* // [D] *Haec est autem totius orbis terrae descriptio quam ex parte potuimus enarrare.*

28 §40: [E] *Frigora autem maxima habere dicitur, ut non posse hominem imperitum locorum sine aliquot artificio habitare.* // [D] *[...], quae frigora magna habere dicitur.* For further literary reference concerning the cold climate of Cappadocia see Rougé (1966a) 271. Compare this depiction as well with the characterisations of the landscapes of the Roman Empire analysed by the author in the paper mentioned at the beginning of this contribution.

29 For the political and geographical division of these regions see Rougé (1966a) 290.

tum frugifera potest esse: oleum vero ex pauco generat, et mel atticum et magis fama doctrinarum et orationum glorificari potest; in aliis enim quamplurime non sic.

perraro paucum et mel atticum, et magis fama doctrinae et oratorum gloria decoratur.

Because of the small size of these regions as well as their mountainous character, there are apparently hardly enough opportunities for agriculture besides the production of oil and honey. As mentioned, however, their true value for the Roman ecumene is not based on their commercial activities but primarily on their famous past and their distinguished schools, specialised in the rhetoric arts (*fama doctrinarum et orationum*), which is apparently true for Athens in particular. Finally, there are regions that do not appear to be significant in an economic or cultural way from the perspective of the *Expos. mundi* due primarily to harsh climatic and environamental conditions. The author makes a corresponding statement about Libya.[30] In contrast to Egypt, where the Nile brings agricultural abundance and economic growth for Alexandria and its surroundings (§36),[31] it rains only on rare occasions in the Libyan desert.[32] As a consequence, there are only few people whose lives are sustained by the scarce fertility of the land. Unsurprisingly, the author does not name any famous cities in the region.

Albeit not explicitly stated within the *Expos. mundi*, it follows necessarily from its numerous assertions that the production and trading of different goods is only possible if the resources of the land are accessed and transformed by traditional agricultural practices. Roman *civitates* thereby ideally coexist within an industrious symbiosis with their surrounding territories. In order to contrast and at the same time to reinforce such conceptions, it is useful to examine the author's depiction of fantastic communities in utopian environments in the eastern parts of the world (§§4–20).[33] Since the land there apparently provides its inhabitants with an abundance of edible goods, there is no need for sophisticated cultivation or

30 §62: [E] *Post quam altera provincia Libyae nomine, propinquans et ipsa ab occasu Alexandriae, quae non accipit aquam de caelo, non pluente ei per singulos annos. Viros quidem habet paucos, tamen bonos et pios et prudentes: [...].* // [D] *Post quam altera provincia, quae Libya dicitur, ab occasu Alexandriae proxima. Quae non accipiens aquam e caelo inops est valde et viros paucissimos habet, sed bonos, prudentes et pios.*

31 See Haas (1997) 33f. for further studies of the economic connections between Alexandria and its hinterland.

32 See Rougé (1966a) 327. Compare Amm. 22,16,5 for another reference about the harsh weather conditions in the Libyan desert.

33 According to Hunger (1978) 515 such a depiction of Oriental people is based on the classical concept of the four ages of men, starting in a harmonious Golden Age near Eden and gradually declining from there as one moves towards the western parts of the world. Molè (1985) 723–737 detects in this section of the *Expos. mundi* utopian portrayals of Oriental societies, contrasting and complementing the perceived factual reality of the Roman Empire. The representation and depiction of utoptian communities in the eastern parts of the world according to the *Expos. mundi* will be part of an in-depth analysis in the author's contribution mentioned at the beginning of this paper.

manual craftsmanship. The writer even assures us that in certain areas fresh bread falls from the sky – a reference to Biblical manna –, rendering further labouring activities pointless.[34] As a consequence, these peoples neither start building vast cities nor do they engage in trade. According to §4, they furthermore possess innate forms of moral integrity and do therefore not require fully developed forms of governmental leadership. Instead, they lead an autonomous and independent life within their community.[35]

Since the general conditions for living gradually get harsher in the western parts of the world, it appears to become a necessity to administer communities according to rational rulesets.[36] In conjunction with the need for social organisation, the author notes in this context that people had to invent agricultural techniques in order to exploit the gradually more barren landscapes.[37] The creation of complex and interconnected forms of habitation together with differentiations of labour is a further sign of a successful civilisation since it allows for people to lead prosperous lives in sometimes rough environments. This process ultimately leads to a re-established and reformed symbiosis between mankind and nature in form of industrious relationships between cities and their surrounding territories.

The organisation of the Roman Empire consequentially marks the culmination of these developments because it allows its inhabitants to live a prosperous, self-sustained and well-structured life, especially in stark contrast to the wealthy but depraved Persian kingdom, whose members are depicted in a rather topical manner as deviant members of humanity, only capable of warfare and plundering (§19).[38] The particular Roman *modus vivendi* is therefore also expressed in the fact that the inhabitants of the Roman ecumene can be found living in well-organised *civitates*. The author mentions some barbaric peoples as well, such as the Goths (§58), the *Sarmates* (§57), the *Mazices* or the *Aethiopii* (§62), who are dwelling at the borders of the *Imperium Romanum*. These *gentes* apparently do not live in cities in their homelands, but engage in violent raids, rendering them a constant threat to Rome. Since they are not able to earn their living by agricultural means or trade – lacking the necessary skills, technologies and forms of social organisation –, they are forced to rob their neighbours in order to guarantee their survival.

34 §4: [E] *Gentem aiunt esse Camarinorum in partibus orientis, [...]. Si autem vis aliquid certius discere, dicunt eos quod neque pane hoc nostro communi utantur, nec aliquot simili cibo, nec igne quo nos utimur; sed panem quidem eis plui per singulos dies asserunt, et bibere de agresti melle et pipere; [...].* See also §12.

35 See Martelli (1982) 37–56; Molè (1985) 731–733.

36 According to §11, the first people to be governed by some sort of supreme council are the inhabitants of fictitious Nebus near *India maior: Post hos regio quae appellatur Nebus, a qua invenitur tyrannorum initium; et regitur a maioribus.*

37 §12: [E] *Hinc seminatio et messio.* // [D] *Isti et seminant et metunt: [...].*

38 Compare however §§22; 38, where the author explicitly describes trading connections between some Syrian and Arabian cities and the Persians.

3.2 Centres of commercial activities

One of the most prominent features of the *Expos. mundi* remains its focus on trading activities. *Civitates* play an important role in this regard, since different articles of trade were manufactured within them. In certain cases, some towns even specialised in fabricating unique goods, based on a town's natural resources and artisanal traditions. A famous example for such a local speciality would be the creation of paper (*charta*) in Egyptian Alexandria (§36). *Civitates* then provide essential infrastructure for the commercial business in general. Their position on important trading routes allows for an efficient exchange of goods; many of the urban dwellings mentioned in the geographical treatise either had access to the sea or a river.[39] Cities then feature trading facilities and storage rooms such as harbours or markets. In this context, it is worth listing which goods were produced and traded in which city according to the *Expos. mundi:*

Paragraph	City	Goods traded[40]
29	Ascalon Gaza	Wine (*vinum optimum*)
31	Tyrus Berytus Scythopolis Laodicia Byblus	Linen cloth (*linteamen*), grain (*frumentum*), wine (*vinum*), oil (*oleum*)
	Sarepta Caesaraea Neapolis Lydda	Purple (*alithina purpura*), grain (*frumentum*), wine (*vinum*), oil (*oleum*)
	Jericho	Dates of Nicholas (*palmula Nicholaus*)[41]
36	Alexandria	Paper (*charta*)
40	Caesaraea in Cappadocia	Fur of rabbits (*vestis leporina*), pelles babylonicarum, fur of Cappadocian horses (*pelles illorum divinorum animalium*)

39 See §47 for the position of cities in Asia Minor along the coastline: [E] *Post Lyciam Caria. Et sic est maxima Asia quae eminet in omnem provinciam, et habet civitates innumerabiles; maximas vero et ad mare multas quidem habet; [...].* // [D] *Post Lyciam maxima Asia, quae omnibus provinciis eminet, et habet innumerabiles civitates, maximas vero et circa mare multas quidem habet: [...].*

40 Note that some urban communities such as Syrian Laodicia (§27), Bostra (§38) or Corinth (§52) are praised because of their great success as commercial centres in general. However, the author does not tell us anything tangible about specific goods traded in these locations.

41 This well-known dates are named after the historian Nicolaus of Damascus and were famous for their size, see Rougé (1966a) 253 for a further commentary.

Paragraph	City	Goods traded
42	Laodicia in Phrygia	Famous clothing (*vestis vocatur laodicena*)
57	Noricum (*sic!*)	Famous clothing (*vestis norica*)
61	Carthago	Silver jewellery (?)[42]

Following this register, the writer appears especially well-informed about commodities of wealthy Syrian cities.[43] In contrast, he does apparently show a lot less knowledge about the western regions of the Roman Empire. It is then interesting to note that all products mentioned in the text – perhaps with the exception of Carthaginian silver jewellery (?) and Alexandrian paper – belong either to textile or agricultural branches of production. We may conclude that the writer was on the one hand not very interested in the makings of the crafting business – maybe because of his own profession. Drexhage proposes on the other hand that trading with crafted goods might have been less important within Roman society in general.[44]

Civitates are not just depicted as singular and unconnected entities where crafting or commercial activities were performed. Instead, they form a mercantile network within the Roman state and additionally provide the opportunity for establishing trading connections with foreign peoples and realms. In this context. the author explicitly states that the denizens of the Orient possess many fascinating and valuable goods (§§6–7; 16–17) which often appear as sought after luxuries by the inhabitants of Roman cities.[45] Although he does by no means describe exact routes for mercantile activities with different peoples in the east, he emphasises the importance of Egyptian Alexandria regarding this kind of long-ranged exchange (§35).[46] The Persian Empire plays a significant role in these transactions as well and maintains economic and political affiliations with *India minor* in particular (§18–19).[47] Furthermore, we may turn our attention to the Mesopotamian cities of Nisibis and Edessa as interesting case examples, which both border on the

42 Note that the *Expos. mundi* mentions a *vicus argentariorum* within Carthage, but no specific products of *argentarii.*

43 Compare Amm. 14,8,11 for further information about the economic potential of *Palaestina* in the 4th century.

44 Drexhage (1983) 9.

45 For Roman trade with people in the far east see Ball (2007) 123–139; Dignas/Winter (2012) 197–199.

46 For further references concerning the importance of Alexandria as a Mediterranean trading post – which was widely acknowledged by many ancient authors – see Drexhage (1983) 6f.; Haas (1997) 22–25; 33–44; Ball (2001) 131.

47 See also Raschke (1978) 677–679.

Persian Empire. Apart from bronze (*aeramen*) and iron (*ferrum*),[48] the inhabitants of the mentioned cities apparently exchanged all kind of products with their neighbours, which is obviously an important reason for their great wealth (§22). A similar situation presents itself for Arabian Bostra as a commercial centre (*negotia maxima*) at the Empire's borders (§38).[49]

3.3 Centres of military defence and political administration

Although the *Expos. mundi* presents by no means a detailed account of armed campaigns, it reflects – at least to a certain extent – political and military realities of the Roman Empire. Especially the violent conflicts with the Persian Empire under Constantius II feature sometimes quite prominently in its accounts, since the heated battles for strategically and economically important urban centres such as Nisibis affect in consequence trading activities in the eastern part of the *Imperium Romanum*.[50]

Certain towns, which are exposed at the eastern frontiers of the Roman Empire, are characterised as quite capable of self-defence. The impressive form, function and importance of city walls are highlighted in particular, as may be observed in the case of Mesopotamian Nisibis and Edessa (§22):

[E] *Istae autem civitates semper stantes deorum et imperatoris sapientia, habentes moenia inclita, bello semper virtutem Persarum dissolvunt; [...].*

[D] *Istae autem praedictae civitates gubernaculo dei stare videntur et imperatoris prudentia. Habentes autem muros inclitos virtutem Persarum semper in bello dissolvunt; [...].*[51]

Protected by the favor of the gods and the wise providence of the emperors, these well-fortified urban centres are apparently able to hold their own against external aggressors.[52] It appears quite striking that conflicts between Romans and Persians certainly influence, but do not destabilise the trading activities of the Roman Empire as a whole. On the contrary, even the most fierce disputes are perceived as quite marginal as opposed to the exceptional stable condition of the Roman state, which is able to transfer and distribute its resources in a very effective manner in

48 See Rougé (1966a) 238; Ball (2007) 23–26; Dignas/Winter (2012) 32–34 for regulations concerning trading activities between Romans and Persians also in the context of military tensions in the 4th century.

49 See Rougé (1966a) 270. Compare Amm. 14,8,13.

50 See Fowden (2006) 392f.; Dignas/Winter (2012) 88–94.

51 Perhaps a reference to the Persian's attacks on Nisibis in 337/338, 346 or 350, see Blockley (1992) 12–24; Potter (2004) 467–471; Fowden (2006) 392; Dignas/Winter (2012) 90.

52 For Nisibis see Drijvers (1994) 573–574. Edessa remained an important seat for the provincial governor, had a mint and was involved in the caravan trade with India. After the emperor Zeno (474–491) closed its famous school in 489, its teachers went to Nisibis, which at that time was under Persian control, see Vööbus (1965); Fiey (1977); Reinink (1995) 77–98.

order to defend itself. The Roman armies fighting against the Persians are, for example, provided with grain from Alexandria (§36).[53]

Despite the fact that some towns play an eminent role in military affairs, the depiction of *civitates* as political and administrative centres appears far more frequent within the *Expos. mundi.* Antiochia is portrayed as an outstanding imperial domicile in particular, where people from everywhere meet (§32).[54] Berytus features quite prominently, too, since it houses long-standing and influential schools of jurisprudence. Many graduates of these institutions fulfil the emperor's orders in Rome's various provinces.[55] Pannonia and Gallia as well play an important role in imperial politics.[56] Treveris in particular is presented as an oustanding imperial residence in the west, thereby serving as a central hub for the defence of the borders at the Rhine. The *Expos. mundi* furthermore highlights Thracian Heraclea (former Perinthus) as an imperial city,[57] but nearly omits Constantinople (§50), possibly because the city seemed to be of comparatively little importance since its foundation by Constantine I in 330.[58] One might conclude that the former Byzantium does not appear to have obtained an outstanding position as yet within the

53 See also Haas (1997) 41–44. According to the *Expos. mundi*, capable soldiers came from all over the empire, especially from Galatia (§41), Armenia minor (§44), Thracia (§50) and Britannia (§67).

54 §23: [E] *Est ergo Antiochia prima, civitas regalis et bona in omnibus, ubi et dominus orbis terrarum sedet; civitas splendida et operibus publicis eminens, et multitudinem populorum ‹undique› accipiens, omnes sustinet; abundans omnibus bonis.* // [D] *Habentes civitates varias, excellentes et magnas, quarum prima Antiochia, civitas regalis in omnibus, ubi et dominus orbis terrarum sedet: civitas splendida et operibus publicis eminens et multitudine populorum ornate; undique accipiens omnes sustinet, abundans omnibus bonis.* Compare Amm. 14,8,8. See also Rougé (1966a) 241f.; Rougé (1966b) 128; Liebeschuetz (1972) 256; Ball (2007) 156.

55 §25: [E] *‹Post iam› Berytus, civitas valde deliciosa et auditoria legum habens per quam omnia iudicia Romanorum ‹stare videntur›. Inde enim viri docti in omnem orbem terrarum adsident iudicibus et scientes leges custodiunt provincias, quibus mittuntur legum ordinationes.* // [D] *Post ipsam Berytus, civitas valde deliciosa et auditoria legum habens, per quam omnia romanorum iudicia stare videntur.* Regarding the famous schools of Berytus in Late Antiquity see Collinet (1925); Jones Hall (2004).

56 §57: [E] *Deinde Pannonia regio, terra dives in omnibus, fructibus quoque et iumentis et negotiis, ex parte et mancipiis. Et semper habitatio imperatorum est.* // [D] *Deinde Pannoniae regio, terra dives in omnibus, non solum fructibus et iumentis, sed et negotiis et mancipiis, in qua semper imperatorum est habitatio delectabilis.*

§58: [E] *Post Pannoniam Gallia provincia, quae, cum maxima sit et imperatorem semper egeat, hunc ex se habet. [...]. Civitatem autem maximam dicunt habere quae vocatur Triveris, ubi et habitare dominus dicitur, [...].* // [D] *Post Pannoniam Galliarum provincia, quae maxima est et propter imperatorem, quo semper eget, in multitudine omnibus bonis abundat, sed plurimi pretii; cuius maxima civitas Triveris dicitur, in qua dominus gentis inhabitat; [...].*

57 §50: [E] *Heraclea vero excellens opus habet et theatrum et regale palatium.* // [D] *Heraclia vero excellentissimum opus habet in theatro et regale palatium; [...].*

58 Note, however, that the author is informed about the constant food supply of the city by Egypt (§36): [E] *Constantinopolis enim Thraciae ab ea quam plurime pascitur.* // [D] *Unde Constantinopolis Thraciae et omnis Oriens pascuntur.* In the case of Rome, Italian Campania is presented as its granary (§54).

hierarchy of imperial towns around 350 CE.[59] The author is also aware about the state of the Roman senate (§55):

[E] *Habet autem et senatum maximum virorum divitum: Quos si per singulos probare volueris, invenies omnes iudices aut factos aut futuros esse aut potentes quidem, nolentes autem propter suorum frui cum securitate velle.*

[D] *Habet et Senatum maximum virorum divitum et eloquentium, quos, si per singulos probare volueris, invenies omnes iudices et potentes.*

As a long-standing institution of the *res publica populi Romani*, the council of the *patres conscripti* lost a large part of its political influence during the crisis of the 3rd century. Although they still belong to the wealthiest and most distinguished inhabitants of the empire, many senators seem to have withdrawn from political affairs as a consequence around 350 CE. According to the geographical treatise, they would rather indulge in the enjoyment of their wealth than engage in imperial politics, though they apparently still had the means to do so.[60]

Despite the fact, that it does not contribute many facts about the political and military situation of the Roman Empire in the middle of the 4th century CE, the *Expos. mundi* characterises the *Imperium Romanum* as a stable political entity with many important urban centres. Even if the author registers some military confrontations at the borders of the state, he deems them not to be an essential threat for its general prosperity. There is therefore apparently no sign of a political or military crisis.[61] The author was apparently aware that at his time several political and military hubs had developed within the Roman Empire. Instead of making a strict distinction between centres and peripheries, however, he emphasises the ties between different urban places and geographical regions resulting in the efficient distribution of various goods and services throughout the Roman state. This gives the impression of a rather interconnected *Imperium Romanum* under considerable control of the emperors based on a dense network of *civitates*.

3.4 Hubs of Roman culture and leisure

The architecture and formal composition of a Roman city provides different possibilities for specific cultural activities and becomes thus an important indicator for the opportunity to particiapte in offers of Roman culture. Although the author's interest is often focused on the description of impressive monuments, he does,

59 Drexhage (1983) 7.

60 Heil (2008) 735 f. This negative depiction of the senatorial elite is also found in Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 33,31; 35,5–6, who criticises members of the *ordo senatorius* primarily because they did not actively participate in military activities during the second half of the 3rd century CE.

61 Compare Martelli (1982) 122.

however, not present these buildings in greater detail and quite often only mentions them briefly while portraying further urban features. His selection of monuments altogether is also quite eclectic but offers nonetheless valuable insights into the perceptiopn of the typical urban image of late Roman *civitates.*

The text mentions two *tetrapyla* in the provincial capitals Caesaraea and Bostra (§§26; 38)[62] and highlights the *museion* and the temple of Serapis in Alexandria. (§§34–35).[63] In Nicomedia, whose importance increased steadily with the growth of Constantinople, there is an impressive *basilica* (§49), while Heraclea features a marvellous theatre as well as an imperial palace (§50). In Rhodes, the traveller might spot the remains of the famous colossus, which has been destroyed during an earthquake already in 226 BCE (§63). In Bithynia, the author is very impressed by the harmonious composition of Nicaea (§49).[64] He perceives the urban design of Carthage as particularly successful, and he is very enthusiastic about its regular and often flawless design (§61). Finally, numerous monuments adorn the great capital of Rome (§55), where Antoninus Pius and Trajan named as famous builders in particular. Note that the author is especially impressed by the Circus Maximus with its bronze statues. In addition, he seems to be a great supporter of circus games in general, since he mentions the *ludi* quite often. Consequently, references of amphitheatres feature very prominently in the *Expos. mundi* as well.[65] This should not come as a surprise, especially since it is well known that the aforementioned buildings were not only places of public entertainment, but were also used as political stages. Thus, they were an important focal point of the socio-political constitution in the late antique Mediterranean world and rightly occupy a cen-

62 The architectural structure of a *tetrapylon/quadrifons*, a monument of cubic shape with gates on every side, often built on crossroads, is rather well-known in the Roman Empire, see Rougé (1966a) 246; Ball (2007) 198–204; 273–284. According to Mühlenbrock (2003), there are no known *tetrapyla* from Arabia. In the case of the *tetrapylon* of Bostra, Rougé (1966a) 270 suggests that the author might confuse the monument with a triumphal arch, which was constructed under the reign of Philip the Arab. For the monument in Caesarea see Mühlebrock (2003) 227–229. Note that he does not mention the famous library of the city, used, for instance, by Eusebius and Procopius.

63 After 270 the *museion* and its library might actually have become part of Alexandria's Serapeum, see Rougé (1966a) 263; Haas (1997) 146–148; Bagnall (2002) 257–262; Nesselrath (2013) 65–90.

64 Compare Str. 12,4,7. See also Rougé (1966a) 285.

65 He mentions them in Antiochia, Laodicia, Tyrus, Berytus, Caesaraea, Nicomedia, Gortyna and Syracusa. Constantinople too had *ludi circenses*, as stated in §50: [E] *Quae Constantinopolis, cum esset aliquando Byzantium, Constantinus conditae suum cognomen civitati imposuit. [...] Constantinopolis autem omnia praecipua habere potest propter Constantinum. Nec non vero etiam circensium spectaculum saevissime spectatur.* // [D] *Quam Constantinopolim, cum esset aliquando Byzantium, Constantinus imperator condidit, et suum cognomen civitati imposuit. [...]; nam in Constantinopoli circense opus et perniciosa et saevissima contentione spectatur.* In this context, the circus games in Nicomedia and Constantinople are singled out for particular praise (§49–50). Further references are to be found in the description of Corinthus with its amphitheatre (§52) and Carthage with an *odeon* as well as an *amphitheatrum* (§61). For a compilation of various performers from individual cities see the appendix of this paper.

tral position in the geographical treatise. However, despite his enthusiasm for circus games, the author does not mention the role of the circus factions.[66]

3.5 Description of urban inhabitants and their (moral) behaviour

Again and again, the *Expos. mundi* addresses the demeanour of various cities' residents and assesses their virtues. Its *prima facie* most striking feature is the fact that many inhabitants within the Roman world are portrayed in a rather homogenous manner as virtuous, well-educated and economically successful. Inhabitants of Syrian *civitates* in particular are depicted in a favourable light.[67] Denizens of Nisibis and Edessa as well as Tyrus belong to prosperous and powerful societies. Cappadocians appear as noble men (*viri nobiles*), Galatians as self-sufficient (*sibi sufficiens*) and – following in their wake – Paphlagonians and Pontians are characterised as erudite and mild-mannered by nature, thus often acting as trustworthy counsellors and diplomats.[68] A special position is occupied by the inhabitants of Isauria, who are presented as good citizens of the Roman Empire. At the same time have, however, they have a rather rebellious history because of failed insurrection attempts against the *Imperium Romanum* (§45).[69] Further south, the Alexandrians are depicted as very wise and pious people, bringing forth great philosophers and physicians.[70] According to the *Expos. mundi*, the residents of Crete are wise and quite sophisticated as well.[71] At the other end of the Roman Empire, we have Spain, an excellent province in its own right (§59):

> [E] *[...] terra lata et maxima et dives, viris doctis ‹in omnibus bonis ornata et› in omnibus negotiis ‹pollens›, [...]. [...], videtur quidem necessaria apud multis, quoniam omne navium genus salvat et per ipsum quamplurime omne negotium videtur.*
>
> [D] *[...] terra lata, dives et maxima, viris doctis et omnibus bonis ornata, quae omnibus negotiis pollet, [...]. [...] non solum omnia bona sed et praecipua habet.*

66 Cameron (1976) 181; 208; 212; 228.

67 §33: [E] *Omnes autem per negotia stant et viros habent divites in omnibus et oratione et opera et virtute.*

68 §44: [E] *[...] sunt enim valde fideles, divitia naturae bonum in se habentes; sic maioribus et melioribus proficere urgentur.* // [D] *[...] et viros et valde fideles, naturae in se bonum habentes.*

69 See Amm. 14,2–8 who describes uprisings of the inhabitants of Isauria during the 350s, leading to destruction in the surrounding areas of Seleucia.

70 §37: [E] *Et totius orbis terrae paene de veritate philosophiae ipsa sola abundat, in qua invenitur plurima genera philosophorum. Itaque et Aesculapius dare ei voluit medicinae peritiam ‹et› ut habeat: in toto mundo medicos optimos praestare dignatus est, et quam plurime initium salutis omnibus hominibus illa civitas constat.* // [D] *Est ergo in omnibus et civitas et regio inreprehensibilis; philosophis et medicis abundans.* The wisdom of the Egyptians shows itself according to §34 also in the fact that they are considered together with the Chaldeans, Phoenicians and even the deity Mercury as possible inventors of the alphabet.

71 The author repeats a trope well-known in ancient literature, see, for instance, Str. 10,4,21–26 and his depiction of Minos as a wise and just ruler.

But what exactly is the basis for the author's evaluative framework? We may identify one root of his ethos based on his opinion of individual cities' contributions to the rationaly organised and therefore successful *modus operandi* of the *Imperium Romanum.* The worth of a *civitas* and its inhabitants thus primarily results from the author's assessment, if they are self-sufficient (*sibi sufficiens*) or if they even export goods into other parts of the empire (*abundans*).[72] Merit and wealth are thus consequences of prudent and skilled dealings in commerce, agricultural production and intellectual pursuits within the political, social, cultural and economic structures of the Roman Empire.[73] One could even conclude that the prosperous existence of the Roman ecumene becomes the foundation for as well as the goal of the reasonable demeanour of its denizens. In this context, only the inhabitants of Alexandria seem exceptional. Primarily because of their high level of education and of their respect for justice (*iustitia*), they are always ready to rise up against their governors (*iudices*) if they behave incorrectly (*peccantes*) by laying fire and throwing stones if necessary.[74]

This unique condition of the Roman Empire is highlighted again, when the writer contrasts its achievements with forms of barbarism. Inhabitants of the Persian kingdom in particular face dire situations. Contrasting the prosperous regime of Rome, they appear to completely neglect all forms of morality. The rapacious *gens Sarracenorum*, not clearly distinguishable from the *Persae* according to the *Expos. mundi*, even seems to be governed by women, thus completely inverting the socio-political order of the *Imperium Romanum.*[75]

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72 Outstanding examples are the cities of Scythopolis, Laodicia, Byblos, Tyros, Berytus, Sarepta, Caesarea and Neapolis according to §31.

73 Note, however, that the inhabitants of the very dry region of *Lydia* do live a rather happy and virtuous life although they do not possess very many goods (§62). Certain inhabitants of North Africa are then depicted as vicious and untrustworthy people altogether, which is not an uncommon practice in ancient literature (*i. e. fides Punica*), despite their economic prowess. The inhabitants of Mauritania in particular appear to act not unlike barbarians despite their affiliation with the Roman Empire. (§§60–61).

Finally, purely malicious conduct might lead to common demise. From the point of view of the *Expos. mundi* it is therefore unsurprising that the city of Dyrrachium has been destroyed because of the wicked deeds of its inhabitants (§60). The city was ruined because of an earthquake in 346; its denizens were apparently quite infamous in the Mediterranean world, see Rougé (1966a) 294–296.

74 §37 [E] *Iam et civitatem iudicibus bene regentem invenies; in contemptum se ‹facile movet› solus populus Alexandriae: iudices enim in illa civitate cum timore et tremore intrant, populi iustitiam timentes; ad eos enim ignis et lapidum emission ad peccantes iudices non tardat.* // [D] *Nam in illa civitate propter populi libertatem cum timore et tremore iudices res publica amministrant: quisquis enim iudicum ibidem a iustitia declinaverit, commitione populi facta , aut ignis aut lapidibus occiditur.* The willingness of the inhabitants of Alexandria to revolt is also mentioned in Proc., *Aed.* 6,1.

75 §20: [E]: *Horum autem prope Sarracenorum gens degit, ‹arcu et› rapina sperantium suam vitam transigere. ‹Sunt similes Persis impii ac periuri et sponsiones non custodientes neque belli neque alterius negotii›. Et mulieres aiunt in eos regnare.* // [E] *Hic sociantur Saracenorum gens et arcu et rapinis vitam suam transigens; qui similes Persis impii et peiores sunt, sponsiones non custodientes, neque belli neque alterius negotii; quibus mulieres imperare dicuntur.* One should point out that the author

4 Concluding remarks

With regard to the mostly unknown background of its author, the composition of the *Expos. mundi* should be seen as an admirable intellectual feat of a probably self-taught writer, thereby perhaps reflecting an originally far more common literary phenomenon within the Later Roman Empire than we are aware today, *i. e.* the literary activities of aspiring *viri humiliores.* Contradicting his rather bold assertions, the author of the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* does, however, not provide a complete portrayal of the Roman Empire and its numerous *civitates.*[76] Instead, he presents his readers with an intriguing personal selection of urban centres within the *Imperium Romanum* in the middle of the 4th century CE. He thereby renders the picture of an urban network, which forms and constitutes the Roman Empire on a mercantile, cultural and political level. Quite often, accounts of singular cities appear abbreviated, resulting not in an exact depiction of individual towns, but in collection of urban traits *per se.*

First and foremost, cities are thereby seen as important economic centres, operating as interconnected hubs for trade in general and at the same time often generating new commodities themselves. They are naturally connected to their surrounding territories as well, profiting from agricultural activities and thus contributing to the prosperous existence of the whole Roman ecumene. Certain towns, which served as imperial residences at the borders of the Roman Empire, are furthermore depicted as important focal points for the administration and defence of the state. Regarding cultural attractions of Roman *civitates*, the author appears to be a great proponent of circus games in particular, which contributed greatly to a specific Roman *modus vivendi.* All in all, he displays an optimistic (albeit simplified) perception of the political, economic and cultural stability of the *Imperium Romanum* in the middle of the 4th century CE, which is substantially based on its interconnected urban networks.

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mentions women *in alio loco* exclusively when he describes their extraordinary beauty (see especially §§30; 44; 48).

76 See the title and introduction of the text as well as §§62–63; 68.

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Appendix: Table of Roman cities portrayed within the *Expos. mundi* (§§22–67)[77]

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
22	Mesopotamia Osrhoene	Nisibis Edesa	Mighty city walls, inhabitants fight against Persians	Very prudent	Cities trade with everything, except iron or bronze with Persians
23	Syria	Antiochia	Chief city Residence of the emperor Many public buildings Circus games (§32)	Very populous	Abundance of all goods
24	Syria	Tyrus	Very rich Circus games (§32) Actors (*mimarii*) (§32)	Very populous	Abundance of all goods Exports cloth (§31)
25	Syria	Berytus	Important schools of law and jurisprudence Centre of Roman administration Circus games (§32)		Exports cloth (§31)

77 The names of provinces and cities are those that are also mentioned in the Latin versions of the *Expos. mundi.*

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
			Actors (*mimarii*) (§32)		
26	Syria	Caesarea	Many public buildings (*Tetrapylon*) Circus games (§32) Pantomimes (*pantomimi*) (§32)		Abundance of all goods
27	Syria	Laodicia	Supports Antiochia and the Roman army via the delivery of trading goods Circus games (§32) Best charioteers (*agitatores*) in the world (§32)		Abundance of all goods
28	Syria	Seleucia	Supports Antiochia Important harbour		
29	Syria	Ascalon	Victorious wrestlers (*athletas luctatores*) (§32)		Abundance of all goods Trading especially with Egypt Wine
		Gaza	Good rhetors (*auditores* [E], *pammacarii* [D]) (§32) Victorious fighters in pankration-contests (§32)		
30	Syria	Neapolis			Exports purple (§31)

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
		Tripolis Scythopolis Byblus			Exports cloth (§31)
		Heliopolis	Worship of Venus in particular Flautists (*choraulae*) (§32)		
30–31	Syria	Sidon Sarepta Ptolemais Eleutheropolis Damascus Lydda (Jericho)			Sarepta, Caesaraea and Lydda export purple (§31) All cities export grain, oil and whine as well as fruit (dates) and nuts (pistachios) (§31)
32	Syria	Castabala	Famous trapezists (*calopectas* [E], *pyctas* [D]) (§32)	§33: The people of Syria are in general eloquent, rich, hardworking and virtuous	
34–37, 62	Aegyptus	Alexandria	Land and city of wise men and philosophers *Museion* Temple of Serapis Powerful and influential governor of the province (§37)	Very populous Industrious Conflicts with Persians (§36) Great physicians Important trading-connections with Constantinople	Abundance of all goods because of the Nile Fruit Vegetables Oil Wheat Barley Wine Papyrus
38	Arabia	Bostra	Many public buildings (*Tetrapylon* in particular)		Trading with Persians and Saracens

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
39	Cilicia	Tarsos			Wine
40	Cappadocia	Caesarea		Very virtuous and educated people (§44) Men of this province are often in imperial services (§44)	Clothes made from the pelts of hares Very fine leather Good horses
41	Galatia	Ancyra	Excellent bread	Brave soldiers Virtuous and educated people (§44) Men of this province are often in imperial services (§44)	Clothing in general
42	Phrygia	Laodicia		Brave men and soldiers	Clothing in general
43	Armenia minor			Great horsemen and bowmen	
44	Paphlagonia et Pontos			Rich and influential men Virtuous and very educated Men of this province are often in imperial services	
45	Isauria			In earlier times, the province was a lair for pirates, but now it is conquered by the Romans	
	Pamphylia	Perge			Oil

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
		Side			
46	Lycia		Highest mountain chain in the world (Caucasus)		
47	Caria Asia	Ephesus	Important harbour		Oil Rice Purple Spelt
		Smyrna			
48	Hellespontus	Troia and Ilion[78]			Grain Wine Oil
		Cyzicus			
49	Bithynia	Nicaea Nicomedia	Ancient *basilica* Circus games		Exports different sorts of fruit
50	Thracia	Constantinopolis Heraclea	Theatre Imperial palace, residence of the emperor Circus games	Brave warriors	Exports different sorts of fruit
51	Macedonia	Thessalonice			Iron Down Salt meat
52	Thessalia Achaia Graecia *(sic!)* Laconia	Corinth Athenas	Amphitheatre in Corinth Many Schools Triumphal arch in Athens (mentioned only in [E])		Poor provinces, need to import different goods Great history Many important scholars and rhetors in particular Vegetables *lapis Crocinus / lapis Lacedaemonium*

78 See Rougé (1966a) 283: "Les deux villes ne se confondent pas; il s'agit sans doute d'Ilion, héritière de la Troie homérique et de la ville hellénistique d'Alexandria Troias."

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
53	Epirus/ Aetolia Dalmatia Calabria Bruttium Lucania	Ephyra Nicopolis Salona Dyrrachium			Cheese Timber Iron Grain Clothing Wine Salt meat Fish
54	Campania				Grain (only in [E])
55	Italia	Roma	Many wonderful buildings depicting the power and history of Rome and its emperors Senate		Wine
55 [D]–56	Tuscia	Aquileia Mediolanum	Famous for its oracles		
57	Moesia et Dacia Pannonia	Naissus			
		Sirmium Noricum *(sic!)*	Residence of the emperor		Clothing
58	Gallia	Treveris Arelatum	Residence of the emperor		
59	Hispania			Wise and influential men	Oil *Liquamen* Clothing Salt meat Horses
60	Mauretania Numidia	Caesarea			Clothing Slaves Grain Fruit Horses
61	Africa	Carthago	Important harbour Odeon	Tricky people to deal with	Oil

Paragraph	*Provincia*	*Civitates*	Descriptions of Cities	Depiction of People	Trading Goods
			Famous silversmiths Amphitheatre		
62	Aethiopia Pentapolitana Libya	Ptolemais Cyrene		Pious people	Not enough water
63	Cyprus Euboia Cyclades, *i. e.* Rhodus, Delus, Tenedus, Imbrus, Lemnus	Rhodus	Colossus of Rhodes		Cupper Iron Timber Pitch Linen Rigging Clothing Wine
64	Creta Cythera Zacynthos Cephallenia	Gortyna	Circus games	Very educated and rich men	
65	Sicilia	Syracus Catina	Circus games Mount Etna	Very educated and rich men	Wool Wine Grain Horses
66	†Cossura † [E][79] Stoechades [D][80]				
	Sardinia				Fruit Horses
67	Britannia			Brave warriors	General abundance of all goods

79 Perhaps a misspelling of "Corsica", see Rougé (1966a) 210.

80 The Stoechades can be identified with the French Îles d'Hyères near today's Côte d'Azur.