CARVING A PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY.

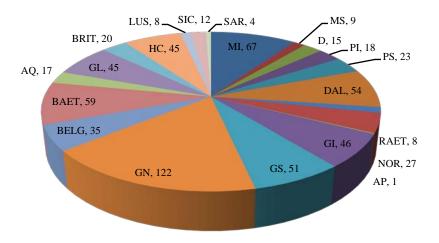
THE OCCUPATIONAL EPIGRAPHY OF THE ROMAN LATIN WEST

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The project Carving a professional identity. The occupational epigraphy of the Roman Latin west focused on collecting, cataloguing and interpreting all the occupational inscriptions from the European Latin-language provinces of the Roman Empire, during the Principate period.

We have registered 729 people whose occupation is registered on a stone inscription, in the investigated area and time span. They come from 722 inscriptions, which register a total of 952 persons - so we have a fairly good and diverse "pool" of relationships to analyze. Interesting enough as well, we believe, only about 200 inscriptions were dedicated by the professionals themselves, the others (with an approximate 10% where we do not have this information) were erected for them, in different contexts – so the association of the man/woman and profession as an identity defining and constructing element came from the exterior.



Graph 1. The provincial distribution of the occupational inscriptions

On the analytical side, we have managed to extract a list of all professions attested epigraphically and their variations. While still in work, the lexicon will look more or less like:

Occupation	Occupation code	Attestations
actor	2 2520	00006D Votive
servus actor (00010NOR)		00013D Votive
		00014D Votive
		00023MI Funerary
		00010PS Funerary
		00010NOR Votive
capsarius	0 6101	00008GS Votive
		00016PI Votive
		00017PI Funerary
		00023PS Funerary
negotiator	4 3200/4 5130	00001D Funerary
negotias (00001PI)		00002D Votive
negotians (000005PS, 00015PS,		00002D Votive
00014DAL)		00004D Votive
negotians vinarius (00013NOR,		00005D Votive
00001MI)		00005D Votive
negotiator artis cretariae et		00002PI Votive
flaturariae (00005RAET)		00002PS Funerary
negotiator cretarius (00008DAL)		00003PS Votive
negotiator lanarius (00006DAL)		00016DAL Funerary
negotiator oleario (00029DAL)		00023DAL Funerary
negotiator vestarius (00003RAET)		00037DAL Funerary
		00041DAL Funerary
		00006NOR Funerary
		00006RAET Construction
		00008RAET Votive
		00008RAET Votive
		00001MI Funerary
		00005RAET Funerary
		00008DAL
		00006DAL
		00029DAL Funerary
		00003RAET Funerary

In order to efficiently quantify and analyze the professions, we have resorted to the only historical occupational classification system available so far: HISCO. HISCO means the *Historical International Classification of Occupations* and represents a uniform classified list of the professions attested from the 16th century up to the present time in the western world; it was created and is being developed by the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam). Implicitly, the system had to be adapted to the Roman realities: we had to give up or ignore some of the very specialized branches and for integrating some professions in an occupational group or another, we had to accept a *mutatis mutandis* process.

¹http://historyofwork.iisg.nl/.

Basically, the HISCO classification has nine major groups, each divided in a number of sub-groups, divided further on, until we get to five-figures numbers. The HISCO charts obtained for the modern periods are quite complex, with a clear male-female distinction in various occupational fields. Ours won't be so, as the Roman epigraphic realities are not so minute. Getting to our database, we have tried to make it as efficient as possible and finally, the major categories in which our professionals were integrated are:

Major groups 0-1: Professionals trained in "hard" sciences and related fields & Professionals trained in arts and sports-related fields

Major group 2: Administrative personnel

Major group 3: Clerical workers (private)

Major group 4: Sales workers

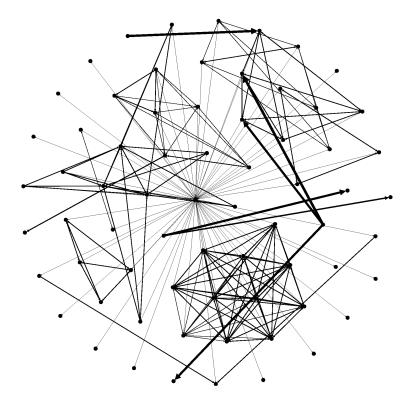
Major group 5: Service workers

Major group 6: Agricultural, animal husbandry and forestry workers, fishermen and hunters

Major group 7-8-9: Processors of natural raw materials & Craftsmen

More details on this classification and encoding system, as well as the first case-studies results obtained by working on the professions from certain provinces, are available in the article *The occupational epigraphy of provinces Moesia and Dacia*. While this case-study had a geographical focus, we have also worked on specific professional groups: the medical personnel and the merchants/traders attested in Moesia, Dacia and Pannonia. Both types of analyses were very convincing and for the planned book we intend to follow both directions and to undertake research focusing on certain areas, as well as transversally, focusing on professions or professional groups.

The groups' studies led us, inevitably, to SNA – social network analyses. For this, we are currently employing Gephi and the results look quite promising. We will thus present one example of a resulted graph, the first one presenting the network of professional relations from Moesia Inferior. While the graph might look rather "primitive", as we have just begun to learn how to employ the SNA tools, we can clearly see the crystallization of the large professional groups: Groups 0/1 and 4 (according to HISCO), in the right-lower part of the image and respectively right-upper part. While in this stage the network visualizations only



Graph 2. The professionals' network from Moesia Inferior

underline the information we already hold, we are sure that deeper and more complex analyses can bring forth important and relevant data on the professionals of the Roman Empire and their relationships.

The last strictly scientific side of our work which we want to touch is connected to prosopographic reconstruction. Of course, one of the most appealing parts in working with people, regardless the historical period, is the possibility to reconstruct micro-historical images, regarding the lives of given individuals. A very interesting case of this sort is that of Aurelius Aquila, a *negotiator* who moved from Dacia to Salona and which we were able to identify, along with family members and business associates, on different inscriptions.