The Roman world of work : social structures and the urban labour market of Roman Italy in the first three centuries AD

Groen, M.J.

Chapter 5

Non-familial labour collectives

INTRODUCTION

The Roman family was only one, informal, structuring factor shaping the Roman labour market. The influence of the family needs to be offset against other, non-familial, labour collectives.[1] The social structure outside of the household is made up of associations, more generally referred to as *collegia*. *Collegia* were not the only form of non-familial labour relations, but they were the most important ones. This chapter deals with Roman labour associations or, to be more precise, with the economic features of associations in general. It can only do so by taking into account the more general social and cultural integration of associations within Roman society. My aim here is to outline the way in which the so-called 'professional' associations acted as a labour collective and influenced the labour market, and to indicate how the relationship between *collegiati* tied in with family bonds.

The integration of *collegia* into the debate on the Roman economy raises the question whether they were more economic than social, or whether they were more social than economic collectives (or whether they were chiefly funerary clubs, or religious, and so on).[2] Scholarly consensus is now shifting towards the point of view that the question whether the *collegia* were a predominantly social, or mostly economic phenomenon is irrelevant. It is clear that the *collegia* did function as an economic institution, and they should therefore be taken into account in a New Institutional Economics account of the Roman economy.[3] Even social gatherings may well be used for economic benefit, and any kind of network is likely to be economically useful, at least potentially so. *Collegia* were part of the urban social structure that helped define individual labour opportunities.

The balance between the social function of *collegia* on the one hand, and family on the other, was a decisive structural influence on individual participation in the economy. Economic associations are a distinctly urban phenomenon, whereas family ties tend to lose some of their influence in the city as was pointed out in chapter 3.[4] Family and association function as both complementary and overlapping informal networks, within "precisely that space between the individual and society which voluntary associations are commonly thought to inhabit".[5]

---

1 Cf Garnsey and Saller (1987) 148, "The place of a Roman in society was a function of his position in the social hierarchy, membership of a family, and involvement in a web of personal relationships extending out from the household".

2 The collection of papers in *Ancient society* 41, 2011 for example, poses the question explicitly: "guilds or social clubs?".

3 Verboven (2011).

4 Lucassen, De Moor, Van Zanden (2008) 15.

5 Wilson (1996) 5.

Chapter outline

The first section of this chapter deals with the place of associations in the urban community more generally. *Collegia* as a collective were a distinct part of the civic order. Paradoxically they also provided a separate, symbolic order for those excluded from the civic order. Although the essential goals of forming an association appear to remain the same everywhere in Roman Italy, it will become clear that there was a difference in structure of the associative network of Rome and that of smaller urban centres. Who were part of the *collegia*, and what can the distribution pattern of the *collegia* tell us about their nature? Membership was open to virtually any Roman of some means, although options for women were severely limited. This theoretical openness of *collegia* then leads me to question the common presumption that associations were mostly populated by freedmen.

The functional analysis of the *collegia* sets out with their perceived social meaning and the way they structured the lives of individual Romans. Just as in the case of the Roman family and the elite household, the form and function of the social networks that associations helped to create and maintain had a bearing on the shape of the labour market. It will be considered to what extent they can usefully be seen as substitute families, as many scholars have hinted at in the past, when familial and collegial networks overlap and interact.

The next section looks into the economics of association: the choice to associate with others in itself quickly becomes an economic act. But is there any direct evidence to show the involvement of the Roman *collegia* with economic life? The occupational *collegia* have often been likened to medieval and early modern guilds. It will be argued here that the comparison remains a promising one. Roman *collegia* were not monopolists of the arts and crafts sector, but as it turns out the medieval guilds did not have such a monopoly either. The significant *comparandum* is that both guilds and *collegia* functioned as trust networks with so-called multiplex relationships, not merely social, but religious, familial, and economic.

In the last part of this chapter, the lines will be drawn together to form a coherent story of the part *collegia* may have played in structuring the Roman urban labour market. *Collegia* and the family form two intersecting axes of reference.

FORMAL ORGANIZATION AND VARIATION

The impact of the expanding empire, notably a growing population and increasing urbanization rates, led to a proliferation of *collegia* and an improvement in their social standing over the second and third centuries AD. This development was outlined most

extensively by John Patterson, and his views may be briefly summarized here.[6] Public benefactions and euergetism from the resident elite must have formed a substantial part of the city budget in the early Roman empire.[7] With the coming of the empire, local autonomy and political lost much of their significance. The traditional elite of senators and knights tended to move away from their home towns towards the seats of power, Rome in particular, where they hoped to find political advancement. Although instances are known of those who, when in Rome, still maintained a level of euergetism in their native towns (such as Pliny the Younger and his native Comum), it is likely that most would take their resources with them, to the detriment of that town.[8] Small settlements would have been particularly vulnerable to this drain of resources and only those with a benevolent and sufficiently wealthy patron could survive. In larger cities, however, it is likely that enough people remained to step in. The gap was filled by members of associations (*collegiati*), local council members (*decuriones*), or wealthy freedmen. They were able to do so because on the one hand, patterns of benefaction changed towards a preference for more affordable forms (banquets rather than buildings) and, on the other hand, the members of a *collegium* taken together were wealthy beyond their individual capacity. Their contribution to the civic community in turn led to a rise in social status and prestige. This, in a nutshell, is the background to the growing cachet and numbers of associations in the first centuries AD. By the second century, the associations are so well-attested in public inscriptions that "their presence in a town can reasonably be assumed even if it happens not to be directly proven".[9] The *collegia* had become a set and valued element of the civic order.[10]

The prior history of the *collegia* during the republic and the early empire, however, is one of unrest and political interference. It is telling that the *collegia* are included amongst MacMullen's *Enemies of the Roman order*.[11] His narrative of the tensions between the *collegia* and the ruling powers emphasizes a history of politics, riots and upheaval, versus anxious senators and emperors: a history that is well known from ancient literary ac-

6 Patterson (2006), especially chapter three. Cf Patterson (1994).

7 Cf Brown (2012) 58 ff: "an empire of gifts".

8 Pliny: *CIL* 5. 5262 lists many of his benefactions in Comum. Pliny also mentions his gifts in his letters, e.g. Plin. *Ep.* 1.8 (donation of the library). Cf. Eck (2017).

9 MacMullen (1974) 73; Cf Liu (2013) 364; this chronological development is largely confirmed by the archaeological evidence for collegium buildings in Bollmann (1998) who on page 169 notes a change not only in number (more) but also in nature (more elaborate) of the *scholae* in the second century. The second century also saw mostly professional *collegia* compared to the first century, that had more evidence for Augustales.

10 Patterson (2006) 257–8.

11 MacMullen (1966) especially 173–9.

counts.[12] In response to the political involvement of the *collegia*, the Senate repeatedly took action against the associations.[13] Julius Caesar appears to have issued a *lex Iulia de collegiis* that prohibited virtually all associations.[14] A *senatus consultum* now commonly referred to as the *senatus consultum de collegiis tenuiorum* ("regarding associations of people of lesser means") that was issued in the first or early second century, specified what categories of *collegia* were to be allowed, thereby restricting the possibility of starting new associations.[15] The unease of the authorities towards private associations may also be illustrated by the emperor Trajan, voicing his concerns in a letter to Pliny the Younger:

Plin. *Ep.* 10.34

> Tibi quidem secundum exempla complurium in mentem venit posse collegium fabrorum apud Nicomedenses constitui. Sed meminerimus provinciam istam et praecipue eas civitates eius modi factionibus esse vexatas. Quodcumque nomen ex quacumque causa dederimus iis, qui in idem contracti fuerint, hetaeriae eaeque brevi fient.
>
> You are of the opinion it would be proper to constitute a guild of *fabri* in Nicomedia, as has been done in several places. But it is to be remembered that societies of this sort have greatly disturbed the peace of the province [Bithynia] in general, and of those cities [Nicomedia] in particular. Whatever name we give them, and for whatever purposes them may be founded, they will not fail to form themselves into factions, assemblies, however short their meetings may be.[16]

What was the effect of all this on the nature and prevalence of associations up to the first century AD? There is relatively little epigraphic evidence of formal *collegia* before the second century.[17] But there certainly was a form of socio-economic association. In Pompeii, the goldsmiths united (*aurifices universi*) supported C. Cuspius Pansa's run for

12 A more detailed overview can be found in Cotter (1996) or De Ligt (2000).

13 Cotter (1996) 75–6.

14 Cotter (1996) 76–7; Suet. *Div. Iul.* 42.3.

15 *Dig*. 47.22.1 pr. (Marcian, 3rd c.), discussed by De Ligt (2000) 247–9.

16 Plin. *Ep.* 10.34, translation Melmoth (1927, Loeb Classical Library), with minor modifications.

17 Liu (2008b) 66 concludes that "in general, *collegia* were a sporadic phenomenon in the West before the late first century AD". Bollmann (1998) 163-9, at 169 finds evidence of *Vereinshäuser* in the first century mainly for the *Augustales*. She finds little to no evidence for the Republic.

aedile in electoral graffiti.[18] Tacitus writes that after a fight between Pompeians and Nucerians at the amphitheatre in Pompeii got out of hand in 59 AD, the illegitimate *collegia* of Pompeii were dissolved (among other things): the phrasing suggests that there were illegitimate *collegia* as well as legitimate ones at the time.[19] Moreover, the continuous apparent enmity between authorities and associations could be interpreted as evidence for the fact that the *collegia* had always remained extant, and influential.[20] Indeed, the stumbling block that was the *lex Iulia* appears not to have been very long-lived, and De Ligt has convincingly argued that the implications of the *senatus consultum de collegiis tenuiorum* were not nearly as restrictive as some scholars have believed.[21] In my view, such rules and regulations are a reflection of a government attempting to impose a formal structure onto the already widespread habit of forming informal associations.

Collegia increasingly sought, and were granted, government recognition. With an imperial or senatorial grant of the *ius coeundi* (right to assemble) they became legal associations (*collegia legitima*), which underlines once more that the authorities were not entirely hostile towards private associations. Liu concludes that "the proliferation of all kinds of *collegia* in imperial Rome suggests that the official regulations may in fact have had a positive impact on the development of associations".[22] She points out that predictably the state was particularly prone to support *collegia* that were useful to the public good.[23] Governmental recognition was justified since associations were more than a potentially disruptive factor. They were also an important structuring principle in society that reaffirmed the civic order. From the perspective of the association, the grant of the right to assemble was not only important in itself, but it was also the prerequisite for other rights and privileges.[24] The right of *corpus habere*, for example, that is the right

18 *CIL* 4. 710. On the form of association in electoral graffiti, Liu (2008b) 57-60. She concludes correctly they are not formal collegia – but they are a form of professional associations, even if they sometimes refer to only "the workmen in a workshop" (p. 57). *Universi* in this example points to a larger group, though.

19 Tac. *Ann.* 14.17: *et rursus re ad patres relata, prohibiti publice in decem annos eius modi coetu Pompeiani collegiaque, quae contra leges instituerant, dissoluta* ("And, the case brought again before the magistrates, the Pompeians were prohibited another public assembly of this type for ten years, and the associations that existed against the rule of law, were dissolved"). Liu (2008b) 60-62 does not see any evidence for legitimate *collegia* in this.

20 So Patterson (1992) 23.

21 De Ligt (2000) and (2001).

22 Liu (2013) 357. The duality in the connections between government and *collegium* is emphasized by Liu (2009) 97-111 and (2013) 355ff ("double-edged effect").

23 Liu (2009) 123.

24 Liu (2013) 355 "at least from the second century on".

to act as a legal collective, would significantly facilitate the owning and receiving of property.[25] Legitimate *collegia* were in it to win it.

To sum up, the first century saw the development from informal to formally recognized and increasingly widespread associations. During the second and third centuries AD the *collegia* flourished as independent organizations, and this is reflected in their epigraphic output. Much of what follows, therefore, is based on evidence that stems mostly from the late first to late third centuries. From the late third century onwards, the role of the *collegia* changed significantly in nature, as private associations were increasingly employed for the public good in service to the state and the city of Rome, notably for the food supply.[26] But that development lies outside the scope of the current analysis.

Hierarchies and civic life

It has long been recognised that the Roman population below the elite was just as hierarchically organized as the elite – a hierarchy that was structured by voluntary associations.[27] The question is how the hierarchy of the non-elite was formed and how it interacted with the elite hierarchy. The Roman elite as reflected in our ancient sources does not seem to have taken much notice of the rest. Or did they, and is their anxiety towards associations a consequence of the existence of an alternative road to power?

Forming associations can be perceived as a quest to personal achievement, a way to create opportunities for advancement.[28] The *collegia* had a strong internal hierarchy with a wide range of magistracies that their members could aspire to.[29] This hierarchy extended to a ranking of the associations themselves: first came the three principal *collegia*, next those related to the imperial *annona*, and then interregional associations.[30] 'First-class' *collegia* seem to have been favoured by benefactors as well, so their donations made the wealthy associations wealthier.[31] An exception to the rule are the *collegia domestica*, that were somewhere on the lower end of the scale in terms of status, but that could generally count on the support of their aristocratic masters.

---

25 Solely prestige, Van Nijf (1997); legal advantages, De Ligt (2001), Liu (2009) 103–11. The right of *corpus habere* was not handed out indiscriminately, cf *Dig*. 3.4.1 pr (Gaius ad ed.). It was granted to all legitimate *collegia* only under Marcus Aurelius.

26 Gibbs (2013), 'Artisans, trades, and guilds. Late Antiquity' in the *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* with references; Cf Liu (2013) 367, Liu (2009) 112–5; Ausbüttel (1982) 99–108.

27 Verboven (2007) 870, "institutionalized through the numerous voluntary associations across the empire".

28 Venticinque (2009) 25–6: "an obvious reaction to and result of the economic, and therefore political insignificance of craftsmen and non-land holding members of any given municipality".

29 Royden (1988) collects the material on *collegia* magistrates.

30 Verboven (2007) 875–80.

31 Liu (2008a) 239 although she cautions not to push the stratification of associations too far.

The *cursus honorum* within a *collegium* was as a rule completely separate from that in the civic hierarchy. That was no reason for the officials not to be proud of their title, even in a *collegium domesticum*. *Collegium* magistrates noted their position within the association rather than their freeborn citizenship.[32] It is interesting to see that membership alone apparently was not often deemed worth mentioning in epitaphs. It was magistracies rather than occupations that people were proud of. Since office-holding within a *collegium* regularly required a *summa honoraria*, recording the title on a tombstone is also a reflection of wealth.[33]

The *collegia* offered their members a chance to social status and rank that was as a rule not open to them in the civic hierarchy.[34] Within the ranks of the *collegium*, slaves could rise to become magistrates.[35] It was "an avenue for the ambitious without subverting the basic organization of society".[36] MacMullen observed that *collegia* both "resembled the whole social context they found themselves in and imitated it as best they could", calling them "miniature cities".[37] The terminology of their magistracies mirrored those of the city: there was a board of councillors (*decuriones*), for example, and a *quaestor*.[38] It was a literal alternative to the civic order. Verboven dubbed this phenomenon "the associative order".[39] In his view, however, the associative order provided a means for successful *collegiati* to gain the social and symbolic capital that was valued within the civic order – and it gave them, or at least their children, the chance to actually enter into that civic order.[40] In his view, *collegiati* were mainly successful businessmen whose wealth was looked down upon because of how they earned it. The argument works equally well reading 'wealthy freedmen' in place of 'successful businessmen', depending on one's interpretation of who were accepted members.

32 Joshel (1992) 113–9, specifically 118.

33 Joshel (1992) 115: "In general therefore, most of the men with this form of occupational title would have been among the wealthier practitioners of their trades".

34 E.g. Patterson (2006) 260; Kloppenborg (1996) 18; Ausbüttel (1982) 48.

35 Liu (2009) 177 n. 56 points out the unambiguous examples of *CIL* 11. 4771 (*fullones*) and *CIL* 14. 2874 (*cisiarii*); Royden (1988) lists no slave magistrates, but does not include these two inscriptions in his book.

36 Patterson (2006) 262.

37 MacMullen (1974) 77, 76.

38 Patterson (2006) 255.

39 Verboven (2007).

40 Cf Venticinque (2009) 128 on Roman Egypt, who suggests that the boundaries between elite and non-elite (i.e. *collegiati*) became blurrier when further away from the centre of power.

The *collegia* themselves were an integral part of the community.[41] As a reflection of the close connection with the town, their names would sometimes include the town name, as in the case of the *collegium fabrum tignuariorum Ostiensum*.[42] The *collegiati* participated in civic life as benefactors as well as recipients of benefactions; they were conspicuously present during religious festivals and processions, they could have separate seating areas in the theatres and set up buildings, statues and inscriptions in the public space.[43] Interaction with elite patrons was mutually beneficial and confirmed as well as shaped the community: "the *collegia* could be expected to reciprocate meaningfully through the grant of honorific titles and so on in a way impossible for the individual."[44]

Membership composition

> It is as if no principle of either inclusion or exclusion could meet all demands – as if clusters of every conceivable private sympathy required expression. Where two neighbors at a corner pub today will raise their glasses and at most exchange a friendly "Cheers!" the two in antiquity seem to have said, "Be it resolved, to call ourselves the society of…."[45]

There was significant variation in Roman associations. There were associations from a minimum of three to over a hundred members;[46] there were private, semi-public, and state associations. Membership of an association was not open to everyone, but still the *collegia* were open to many: it was available to slave, freed, free, male, and female. This was a matter of matching the right individual with the right *collegium*, because many associations catered for a specific group of people. Candidates for membership of a *collegium* therefore had to fulfil certain requirements of occupation, religion, wealth, gender, or other. If qualified, they had to be voted in, generally by the guild magistrates or by the democratic vote of all members. A kind of background check of prospective

41 Verboven (2007) 881; cf Van Nijf (1997) and (2002); The ambivalence of the people of Tarsus towards the linen-weavers (an association?), as sketched out by Dio Chrysostom 34.21-3 in detail (they were "as it were, outside the constitution", ὥσπερ ἔξοθεν τῆς πολιτείας; sometimes considered on the inside and sometimes on the out), is revealing and deserves more attention in this respect. Dio argues that they should be accepted as citizens.

42 Cf Patterson (2006) 256.

43 Patterson (2006) 262-4 (benefactors); Patterson (1994) 232, 235: Augustales, *decuriones*, and *collegia* were the three groups important in civic life in the second and third century.

44 Patterson (1992) 22, his emphasis.

45 MacMullen (1974) 82.

46 For the legal minimum, *Dig*. 50. 16. 85 (Marcellus, attributed to Neratius Priscus): *Neratius Priscus tres facere existimat 'collegium', et hoc magis sequendum est.*

candidates could be part of the procedure.[47] For trained artisans or craftsmen, however, membership of the corresponding association does not appear to have been obligatory, hereditary, or self-evident in any other way.[48] There is thus every reason to assume that membership of (professional) associations was not universal.[49]

MacMullen once guesstimated that in the first century AD, one-third of the (male) urban population were members of an association.[50] This view has recently been challenged by Liu, who carefully calculates a maximum of only 13 per cent of the male population of the city of Rome, using the combined data for the first four centuries AD.[51] Her problem with the earlier guesstimate is that it did not use a strict definition of formal *collegia* for the calculation: it was based on the numbers from Pompeii as representative for other cities, counting as associations all (occupational and other) identifiable 'groups' that were found in Pompeian inscriptions, including the electoral graffiti. The current inclusive analysis of the associative phenomenon would argue for the inclusion of such informal (or rather, 'less formal') associations, however.[52] An inscription like that of "the fullers for Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, civic priestess", surely suggests that there was a collective of the fullers, even if no mention is made of a *collegium* per se.[53] In the broader picture, the distinction between formal and informal *collegia* in epigraphic evidence generally is not a problem: to my knowledge there are few instances of 'unspecified' associations whose status as such is ambivalent outside the Pompeian graffiti.

Even with a clear dataset for the associative phenomenon, no certain numbers will come up; it is also likely that the percentage will lie somewhere between 10–30 per cent for the first century AD.[54] The epigraphic evidence shows unequivocally that *collegia* then became both more numerous and more prosperous in the second and third centuries

47 Broekaert (2011) 27–9 with reference to the *lex* of the *citrarii et eborarii*, *CIL* 6. 33885, *debebunt utique curatores de eo / [que]m adlecturi fuerint ante ad quinq(uennales) re[fe]rre.*

48 Compulsion and inheritance of guild membership may have played a part from the fourth century onwards, see Gibbs (2013) with references.

49 Verboven (2007) 883–4 on the proliferation of guild membership; see also Van Minnen (1987) 68–9, who illustrates for Roman Egypt that it could be difficult not to be part of a guild.

50 MacMullen (1966) 174. Cf Ausbüttel (1982) 36-7.

51 Liu presented these calculations in her paper for the conference 'Work, labor and professions', Ghent 31 May 2013, but they were left out of the published version, Liu (2017). According to her calculations the real percentage was probably lower; extensive refutation of interpreting occupational or religious groups as formal *collegia* in Liu (2008b).

52 Liu (2017), and elsewhere, herself is all in favour of this new approach, and goes on to consider as *collegia* some debatable evidence that I would not necessarily include as such: for instance, the networks surrounding Tryphon and Pausiris, for which see also chapter 3.

53 *CIL* 10. 813: *Eumachiae L(uci) f(iliae) / sacerd(oti) publ(icae) / fullones.*

54 A promising long-term project has now started: The Ghent Database of Roman Guilds(+), where the plus refers to the fact that it includes associations more generally.

AD though here, too, their numbers remain elusive. But *collegiati* probably remained a minority throughout, and it needs to be kept in mind that there always was a significant group of outsiders. Qualitative data can considerably further our understanding of who could join the *collegia* and who was excluded.

Wealth

The *senatus consultum de collegiis tenuiorum* could tentatively be read to suggest that *collegia* were particularly common among the 'poorer', depending on one's interpretation of *tenuiores*.[55] The *collegia* have been referred to as a form of social security, "designed for lower class self-help".[56] This suggests they were 'mutual aid societies' that catered to the needs of the poor, and of those who had no family to fall back on – interpreting *tenuiores* as the poor and destitute. In this view, they also provided the financial means by which a bereaved widow might take care of her children and could secure the funds for a decent burial, for her deceased husband and for herself and her children in the future.[57] But membership was probably out of the reach of that widow if she were truly poor and destitute.

The *collegium*-charters that have come down to us suggest that membership was not free. Aspiring members were probably required to pay an entrance fee, as well as a regular monthly contribution.[58] The best known charter of a Roman association reports that the worshippers (*cultores*) of Diana and Antinoos from Lanuvium owed the *collegium* 100 HS plus an amphora of good wine upon admission; their monthly contribution amounted to 5 *asses*.[59] This entrance fee was not negligible, and together with the continuous monthly contributions effectively makes money a selection-criterion for membership.[60] *Collegia* also required their members' presence at meetings, banquets, and so on, and the time investment, too, was one that presumably not everyone could

55 See above; *Dig.* 47.22.1 pr (Marcian).

56 The words are Van Nijf's (2002) 307 who then goes on to refute this interpretation; social security: MacMullen (1966) 174.

57 "Mutual aid societies", Garnsey and Saller (1987) 156; the hypothetical widow was introduced by Hopkins (1983) 213.

58 Hawkins (2006) 106–7; Cf Liu (2009) who writes that it is plausible, but not very widely attested that *collegia* commonly demanded an entrance fee, p. 163 with n. 10 listing the evidence.

59 *CIL* 14. 2112, now in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme Diocleziani in Rome; Cf Bendlin (2011), with updated text and translation.

60 Patterson (1992) 21; Cf Venticinque (2009) 41–2 and (2010) 274 with n.4 for Roman Egypt.

afford.[61] Burial arrangements through a *collegium* were costly by implication.[62] The idea that the associations functioned mainly as a burial insurance for the poor has long been refuted.[63] These considerations make clear that *collegia* did not provide social security to the poor in our sense of the word. One might say that they did so in the Roman sense of the word. *Tenuis* was a relative concept, that distinguished a very wealthy elite from all the rest: when Augustine referred to himself and his father as *tenuis* or *pauper*, for example, we know that he certainly was not referring to any financial problems the family might have had.[64] In all likelihood the use of the word '*tenuiores*' in the *senatus consultum de collegiis tenuiorum*, therefore, did not so much refer to the poor, but to the nonelite or the 'not-wealthy'.[65]

It is certain that the professional *collegia* attracted a number of wealthier members, some of whom belonged to the senatorial or equestrian elite. A *collegium* with such upper-class membership did not conform to the general rule of the *sc de collegiis tenuiorum*. That would have made the *collegium* illegal, so it is likely that it would have had to apply to the authorities to gain the official status of association.[66] This practical drawback may not have been so severe in reality – it was argued above that many associations were granted the right of assembly – and one can imagine that the presence of elite members had its advantages. That there was such a wealthier group of members and associates, is evident from the amount of money circulating in substantial benefactions bestowed upon associations, as well as in the significant expenses incurred by the associations' involvement in burials and collective deeds of euergetism.[67] Their place in the urban community depended on it. Most of the occupational inscriptions relating to

61 Liu (2017) 209. On p. 210 she cites a very interesting case of someone resigning from his association because he could not bring up the investment anymore: ἀσθενῶς ἔχων (*P. Mich*. 9. 575, l. 4–5, Karanis 184 AD).

62 Verboven (2007) 875: "Membership of an association was in itself relatively expensive. Indirectly burial by or with assistance of a *collegium*, was an expensive option. Rather, the *collegia* contributed to adding lustre to the funeral of their members, affirming for the last time their social status, reflecting favourably on their family and heirs".

63 Contra Mommsen (1843) whose views have long been influential, e.g. Hopkins (1983) 214. But see now Perry (2006) chapter 1, spec. 29–32.

64 Brown (2012) 148-154; Aug. *Conf.* 2.3.5 for Patricius as a *tenuis municeps*; Aug. *Sermo* 356.13 referring to himself as *hominem pauperem, de pauperibus natum*, "a poor man, born from poor parents"; Cf Woolf (2006); Shaw (1987b) 8–10 seems to have changed Peter Brown's mind, who still took Augustine's word (*tenuis*) at face value in his biography, Brown (1967) 21.

65 Ausbüttel (1982) 25: "Mit dem Wort *tenuiores* wird die einfache, aber (…) keineswegs besitzlose Bevölkerung im Gegensatz zu den *honestiores* oder *divites* bezeichnet".

66 Cf De Ligt (2000).

67 This is evident for example from Liu's discussion of membership in the *collegia centonariorum,* Liu (2009) 164–9 and Liu (2008a); more generally, see also Ausbüttel (1982) 43–8.

the *collegia* record *collegium* magistrates or benefactors, who cannot have been entirely without means.[68] *CIL* 6. 1872 is found on an altar dedicated to Tiberius Claudius Severus, by the association of fishermen and divers at Rome.

***CIL* 6. 1872**

> Ti(berio) Claudio Esquil(ina) Severo / decuriali lictori patrono / corporis piscatorum et / urinator(um) q(uin)q(uennali) III eiusdem corporis / ob merita eius / quod hic primus statuas duas una / Antonini Aug(usti) domini n(ostri) aliam Iul(iae) / Augustae dominae nostr(ae) s(ua) p(ecunia) p(osuerit) / una cum Claudio Pontiano filio / suo eq(uite) Rom(ano) et hoc amplius eidem / corpori donaverit HS X mil(ia) n(ummum) / ut ex usuris eorum quodannis / natali suo XVII K(alendas) Febr(uarias) / sportulae viritim dividantur / praesertim cum navigatio sca/pharum diligentia eius adquisita / et confirmata sit ex decreto / ordinis corporis piscatorum / et urinatorum totius alv(ei) Tiber(is) / quibus ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) coire licet s(ua) p(ecunia) p(osuerunt)
>
> To Tiberius Claudius Severus of the Esquiline tribe, *decurialis*, *lictor*, patron of the associated fishermen and divers, threefold president (*quinquennalis*) of the same association, because of his benefactions, first among which two statues he placed out of his one funds, one of Antoninus Augustus our emperor [= Caracalla], the other of Julia Augusta our emperor-mother; one [statue] with Claudius Pontianus his son, a Roman knight; and on top of that he gave to the same association 10,000 sesterces so that out of the dividend of these on his birthday, the 17 Kalends of February, gifts can be handed out man by man; above all for the navigational rights (*navigatio scapharum*) gained through his diligence and confirmed by decree of the board (*ordo*) of the association of fishermen and divers of the entire Tiber-shore to whom it was allowed by senatorial decree to assemble (i.e. they had the *ius coeundi*).

This text gives a good overview of what such a man might be capable of in terms of money (and influence).[69]

The wealthier segment of the population thus took part in larger associations as well, and some associations, like the Iobacchoi, were even characterized by a largely upper-

68 For Rome, Joshel (1992) 113.

69 *CIL* 6. 1872 = *ILS* 7266, 206 AD. An different side of the altar adds consular dating and the corporate magistrates responsible for setting up the dedication.

class membership.[70] There were real benefits to be gained from *collegium* membership, so the presence of the elite is unsurprising: It appears that by the third century some of the more affluent Romans joined a *collegium* to gain immunities from *munera publica* (public benefactions for which only the wealthy were eligible), or to get other privileges.[71]

Collegia were therefore not for the poor, and they did include some rich people. In line with this finding, the possibility that the professional *collegia* included only employers, not employees, has been stressed repeatedly.[72] In this view, the association of bakers would consist of wholesalers or large property-owners in charge of those actually kneading the dough and baking the bread, which interestingly sounds rather like what we think we know of that famous *pistor*, M. Vergilius Eurysaces. Membership would have concerned master craftsmen and shop owners, rather than wage-labourers, apprentices or salesmen. Indeed we have seen that the truly poor were not among the *collegiati*. However, it is highly likely that a skilled labourer could afford to join an association.[73] And since not every skilled artisan was an entrepreneur, this means that the *collegiati* would – at least potentially – include employees as well as employers.[74] In some cases the *collegia* effectively were so large that it is quite unlikely that they only included the top echelon of master artisans and shop owners, to the exclusion of others.[75] Moreover, the inclusion of employers and employees matches the hierarchical nature of the *collegia*, reflecting the relationships outside of them. I suspect that one of the reasons that the idea of associations of employers still is cited, is that guild membership is one of the criteria scholars have used to try and distinguish between a manual labourer and a wholesaler – when an inconclusive job-title was the only thing certain. It is true that there is nothing in the ancient evidence to suggest that affiliation with a *collegium* was

70 Remus (1996).

71 Liu (2009) 109–11; Verboven (2007) 881. This led to legal measures to exclude from these privileges those who were too wealthy or who were not actually of the nominal occupation, *Dig*. 50.6.6.12 (Callistratus). Cf also Liu (2009) 57–62.

72 Recently voiced by Verboven (2007) 882, Patterson (2006) 255, and Van Nijf (2002) 308. See also the influential work of Ausbüttel (1982); This possibility was also emphasized by Brunt (1980) 87, 91, including the *collegia*-inscriptions explicitly among "those [inscriptions] which might be held to mention manual workers at Rome, but in fact often relate to employers".

73 See, for example, the section on 'economic differentiation' in Groen-Vallinga and Tacoma (2017) 118-22; cf Ausbüttel (1982) 46.

74 Skilled slaves in *collegia* are especially unlikely to have been entrepreneurs; for slave members in *collegia* see below.

75 Cf Liu (2009) 169-171.

close to universal, so there were restrictive factors at work.[76] However, I do not believe that the selection criterion for *collegium* membership was 'entrepreneurship'. They must have been restrictions of a different kind.

Legal status

Slaves, freed, and freeborn were equally welcome to join associations as long as they complied with the association's conditions for entry. It is difficult to say anything more about the respective proportion of the freeborn, freed, and slaves among the *collegiati,* however. Virtually everything we know about individual *collegiati* outside of Roman Egypt, comes from inscriptions and, like all epigraphic material, the *collegia*-inscriptions are not without biases. Private associations in Rome had the fortunate habit to keep lists with the names of their members (and beneficiaries) and, more importantly, to inscribe them on stone. Some of these documents survived, and are now known as the *alba collegiorum*. Unfortunately, however, for most members these *alba* do not explicitly record filiation, libertination, or servile status. Perhaps they explicitly omitted legal status to emphasize the general equality of their members to the outside world. To make matters worse, explicit mention of libertination was omitted in the epigraphic record more generally from the second half of the first century onwards. It is interesting that in accordance with the lack of status indication in the *alba*, Joshel's study of the occupational inscriptions for individuals from *CIL* 6 finds that professional *collegiati* were particularly likely to leave out proper status indication in favour of stating their ties with a *collegium*.[77] This would also indicate a tendency among *collegium* members to emphasize collective identity and equality rather than individual status distinctions, although the significant proportion of *collegium* magistrates among them underlines that the associations in themselves were actually strongly hierarchical in nature.

Scholars who took up the challenge of studying the membership composition of associations including status structures, resorted to onomastics. Onomastic analysis indicates that most members were free, but it cannot always say whether they were freed or freeborn.[78]

---

76 Unless the Pompeian graffito *CIL* 4. 960 can be read as "all of the woodworkers": *Cuspium Pansam/ aedil(em) lignari(i) universi rog(ant)*. There is no evidence that the Pompeian woodworkers formed a *collegium*, however. Compare also the *universi dendrofori* in *CIL* 8. 23400 (quoted below, n. 90).

77 Joshel (1992) 117–9.

78 For the onomastic approach see Huttunen (1974). These *incerti* were not necessarily *ingenui*, as Ausbüttel (1982) 39–40 concludes on the basis of some very questionable onomastics: he works with the assumption that freedmen are (all and only) those with a non-Latin cognomen. See Liu (2009) chapter 5 for a systematic analysis of membership composition of the *collegia centonariorum*, the value of which is not limited to the *collegia centonariorum*.

The majority of those known *collegium*-members whose legal status we can identify with any certainty, appear to have been freedmen.[79] A noticeable majority of office holders in the *collegia* were also of freed status.[80] These observations led some scholars to believe that associations were chiefly or exclusively made up of freedmen.[81] However, since the evidence for *collegium*-membership is largely epigraphic, and freedmen are relatively prominent in the epigraphic evidence from the Roman empire, it is to be expected that freedmen are relatively well-represented among *collegiati* as well. But the predominance of freedmen in associations ostensibly was not always so pronounced: it is lacking in the numerically significant *collegia centonariorum*.[82] The conclusion that members of associations were mostly freedmen is not so straightforward.

I would suggest that the argument that *collegia* (and professional associations in particular) were a freedmen prerogative builds on a number of other presumptions regarding Roman freedmen. Freedmen were an elusive group of individuals who are highly visible in the ancient evidence, and therefore speak to the scholarly imagination. Freedmen have at various times been equated with successful businessmen, the *nouveaux riches*, or a version of the bourgeoisie, middle class/*plebs media* – and so have the *collegiati*.

Conspicuous funerary monuments, and literary references to wealthy freedmen like Petronius' famous satirical character Trimalchio, all contributed to a picture of freedmen as rich upstarts: the *nouveaux riches* or, from an old-fashioned Marxist perspective, the Roman counterpart of the 'bourgeoisie'. Their obvious wealth could not have run in the family because of their servile background. The money had to be earned through their economic enterprises. There were many sectors of the economy that the elite traditionally kept away from. The evidence at first seems to support the idea that (successful) businessmen invariably were freedmen. The occupational inscriptions taken at face value also suggest that manual labour was generally executed by freedmen, and the artisans and craftsmen historically make up the 'middle class' in society. The associative order outlined by Verboven was the way through which Roman upstarts could convert economic capital into social and symbolic capital, and although Verboven to his credit does not explicitly talk about a middle class, this is how one presumably moved up from the *plebs media* to the upper-class.[83]

A real middle class cannot be isolated in Roman society, let alone be equated with freedmen. It is also clear that the group of freedmen in itself was decidedly heteroge-

79 Cf Joshel (1992) 117–119.

80 Royden (1988) 230.

81 E.g. Van Nijf (2002) 308.

82 Liu (2009) 171–2.

83 Verboven (2007).

neous. These observations are not new. Some of the old notions, however, still resonate in attempts to explain the function and membership composition of *collegia* through the freedman presence – a view not fully supported the evidence. Associations were not a freedman prerogative.

The participation of slaves and *ingenui* in Roman associations has not been studied with quite the same intensity as freedman participation. It is tacitly assumed that the freeborn were allowed to congregate into professional and other voluntary associations; Ausbüttel even assumed that most of the *collegiati* were freeborn.[84] The latter assumption cannot be supported by the evidence, but it is securely attested that the freeborn were part of the *collegia*. Publius Aufidius Fortus, son of Publius, for example, was prefect of the *fabri tignuarii* in Ostia, and patron as well as an honoured official (*quinquennalis perpetuus*) of the associated fruit sellers and divers in the same city.[85] Another example is Lucius Cincius Martialis, son of Lucius, who was affiliated with the *collegium* of *fabri tignuarii* at Rome.[86]

We know that at least in theory slaves, too, were eligible to join a *collegium*, even if not all associations were open to them. The inscription of the *cultores* of Diana and Antinoos in Lanuvium specifically records prescriptions for the eventuality that a master should refuse to hand over the remains of a deceased slave to the *collegium*.[87] Slaves who were manumitted were expected to donate an amphora of wine to the association. The text therefore clearly reckons with slave membership among the *cultores*. The jurist Marcian also underlines that there was no reason why slaves could not join an association, provided they had their owner's permission.[88] Slaves were even among the guild magistrates sometimes.[89] This is a vivid illustration of how the collegial hierarchy would sometimes overturn the hierarchy of society (see below). Looking at the attested members, however, few *collegiati* can be securely identified as slaves.

Gender

What has been said so far about membership in associations largely applies to the male population. The *collegia* may have been less inclusive when it comes to gender, however. Women are seldom recorded formally among the members listed in the *alba*

84 Ausbüttel (1982) 39–40, cf n. 78 above.

85 *CIL* 14. 4620, *corpus mercatorum frumentariorum et urinatorum*.

86 *CIL* 6. 9405.

87 Implying that it was common practice (or at least desirable) that the *collegium* arrange a proper funeral for their slave members, *CIL* 14. 2112, 2, 3–5.

88 *Dig*. 47.22.3.2 (Marcianus), translation Cotter (1996): *Servos quoque licet in collegio tenuiorum recipi volentibus dominis,* "It is also lawful for slaves to be admitted into associations of indigent persons, with the consent of their masters".

89 See n. 35 above.

collegii: they are not attested as members of the professional *collegia* at all, though their membership is sometimes confirmed for religious associations.[90] Yet as we have just seen, the distinction between professional and religious *collegia* may have been little more than an indication of two different sides of the same coin.[91] In addition to female membership of predominantly male associations, there are one or two references to all-female associations: the collective of female mimes (*sociae mimae*) from Rome is the best example.[92] Exclusively female collectives seem to have existed in Roman Italy on a limited scale but, parallel to the idea of a secondary labour market, we might call it a 'secondary associative phenomenon'.[93]

There is a difference between legal membership of associations on the one hand, and women's actual engagement with the *collegia* on the other.[94] A famous example that always comes up in this context is Eumachia, commemorated for her benefactions by the fullers of Pompeii.[95] The recent work of Emily Hemelrijk illuminates the position of women who come up as benefactress, patroness, or so-called 'mother' of a *collegium*. Hemelrijk argues that contrary to patronesses of associations, the title of 'mother' of the *collegium* (*mater collegii*) was bestowed upon women who in all likelihood were 'insiders', chosen from among the same social strata. She tentatively suggests that these women may have been associated members themselves.[96] It is tempting to read into this that the women may have been recognized artisans, as members of the occupational associations. As Hemelrijk shows, however, few 'mothers' were recorded within professional associations. Moreover, there is no way of knowing whether their engagement

90 Hemelrijk (2015) 200 for occupational *collegia*, 199-204 for membership of associations in general. It is interesting to note that virtually all come from Italy, Hemelrijk p. 200, 224; Cf Waltzing I (1895) 348; Ausbüttel (1982) 42 "Allerdings besassen einige, vor allem religiöse Kollegien, einen hohen Prozentsatz weiblicher Mitglieder" – he mentions an association from Mactar, Africa, with the telling title *universi dendrofori et sacrati utriusque sexus* (of both sexes), the reference must be *CIL* 8. 23400; cf North (2013) on variations in the relation between the gender of the worshippers and admission to religious cults; Dixon (2001b) 14.

91 An interesting background to the observation of Waltzing I (1895) 348-9, that "[e]n ce point, les collèges d'artisans différaient donc des collèges funéraires qui admettaient les femmes et leur confaient même des fonctions collégiales". If the distinction is not valid, what is the significance of the observed difference?

92 *CIL* 6. 10109 quoted in full below; noted by Hemelrijk (2015) 205; Ausbüttel (1982) 42; Waltzing (1895) 348.

93 Hemelrijk (2015) 205–221.

94 Hemelrijk (2015) chapter 4 and 5; Hirschmann (2004) 403–4, 412.

95 *CIL* 10. 813 quoted in the text above; Hirschmann (2004) 409; Hemelrijk (2015) 198 and (2008) 119 n. 12 notes that Eumachia is not explicitly indicated as a patroness of the fullers.

96 Hemelrijk (2015) especially chapter 4 and 5; earlier publication of findings in Hemelrijk (2012) on fictive motherhood, (2010) and (2008) on female patronesses and 'mothers' of *collegia*; see also the discussion of Liu (2009) 178–180.

with an association did not originate chiefly from their relationship with another (male) member.[97] Because there is very little evidence for female membership of professional *collegia*, the latter option seems to be the most likely explanation. This outcome is entirely in line with the engendered patterns of labour in Roman society. "[F]ictive motherhood allowed women a position of authority within a city or *collegium*, a role which was cast in socially acceptable terms".[98] It seems that women could be, but were not usually among the members of an association. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, this does not mean that they were not involved in a trade.

Ethnicity

The existence of a *corpus splendissimum mercatorum Cisalpinorum et Transalpinorum* at Mediolanum and Novara, or the epitaph of the president of the *corpus negotiantium Malacitorum* found in Rome – to name but a few examples – indicates that common ethnic background could be the organizing principle behind an association, for those who moved to or within Roman Italy.[99]

The port cities of Ostia and Puteoli were also home to many migrants, often merchants from abroad, and here they organized themselves into collectives that sporadically come up in the epigraphic sources.[100]

Clustering of migrants in larger cities more generally, however, is chiefly attested through trading stations (*stationes*) such as the *Piazzale delle Corporazioni* in Ostia and the famous Tyrians of Puteoli; but *stationes* were perhaps more like embassies (with a commercial function) than associations.[101] When Verboven writes that *"collegia* grouping foreigners are widely, but not abundantly, attested throughout the empire", it is significant that this includes *stationes* – and it is even more noteworthy that, with the exception of Ostia and Puteoli, much of the more substantial evidence comes from outside of Roman Italy.[102] Likewise, there are no inscriptions for resident aliens in Roman

97 Hemelrijk (2015) e.g. 184-5; family was important in the choice for patronesses, too, 231–35; also Hemelrijk (2012), and (2008) 140: "as a rule, a 'mother' of a *collegium* was a female official who was probably recruited from among the female members of the association, or from the relatives of male officials."

98 Hemelrijk (2012) 212.

99 The *corpus splendissimum* is also attested at Aventicum, Lugdunum and Trier, Verboven (2011b) n.31 for references; this particular epitaph is *CIL* 6. 9677.

100 Verboven (2011) 337 lists Berytenses, Heliopolitanenses, Germellenses, Nabataenses and individual foreigners. He writes: "Puteoli was an exceptional place. Like Ostia, the city was a commercial stronghold, where the number of outsiders rival[l]ed the number of citizens. Both towns shared many features, but differed substantially from 'ordinary' cities".

101 Tacoma (2016) 236-7; For the *Piazzale* see *CIL* 14. 4549 and Terpstra (2013) 100-12. The Tyrians at Puteoli: *CIG* 3. 5835 = *IG* 14. 830, 174 AD with Terpstra (2013) 70-84.

102 Verboven (2011) 337.

Italy united in *collegii consistentes* or *peregrinorum,* as there are in other provinces. In Lugdunum there was a *collegium* of the *fabri tignuarii consistentes* as well as a *collegium fabrum tignuariorum* (of locals, we may presume). This leads Liu to signal exclusion of resident aliens from associations "in large port cities or commercial centres".[103] Whereas there are sporadic examples that seem to reflect this duality elsewhere in the empire,[104] a similar ban is not apparent in Italy. Foreigners may have been prevented from joining existing *collegia* sometimes, but if they were it is not traceable.

In sum, migrant associations in Roman Italy do not appear to have been common, even in the city of Rome. It must be assumed that migrants who wished to join a collective were quickly assimilated into the existing pluriform associative structure.[105]

Occupation

Gender appears to be the best general indicator for in- or exclusion in associations. Legal status or wealth does not seem to be a specific requirement for membership in the professional associations. More interestingly, however, occupation was not always a knock-out criterion either.[106] Perhaps that curious fact should not come as a surprise, considering the functional overlap between associations that was emphasized earlier in this chapter. Nevertheless, surely the titular profession of an association must have meant something. After all, Roman history would have it that the associations first created in the time of the Kings were occupational in nature.[107]

In professional associations, occupation took pride of place. The *lex* of the dealers in ivory and citrus-wood (*negotiatores eborarii et citrarii*) is clear on the matter.

***CIL* 6. 33885, 4–6**

> [item] placere ut si alius quam negotiator eborarius aut citrarius [p]er / [fr]audem curatorum in hoc collegium adlectus esset uti curatores eius / [cau]sa ex albo raderentur ab ordine…

103 Liu (2017) 214 with 214-16. She notes that the *consistentes* demonstrably accepted local members into their ranks, which mitigates a strict duality.

104 Cf Koestner (2017) on the linen-weavers of Alexandria in *P. Giss*. 40 II.

105 Tacoma (2016) 232-237, excluding the *stationes*, and see 237-40 for the volatile nature and weak ties of many migrant networks.

106 Ausbüttel (1982) 36, 74; Liu (2013) 360: "The link to a particular occupation, however, did not mean that all the practitioners of a trade had to become members of the corresponding association, or that each and every professional association admitted artisans and/or tradesmen of its titular trade only".

107 The first collegia are said to have been created by Servius Tullius or Numa Pompilius, *Flor.* 1.6.3; Plin. *HN* 34.1.1; 35.46.159; Plut. *Num.* 17.1-2; cf *Dig*. 47.22.4 for *collegia* in the Twelve Tables.

> if by a mistake of the curators someone other than an ivory dealer or a citrus-wood dealer should have been admitted into this *collegium*, then the curators will be erased from the membership list by the *ordo* because of it...[108]

Note that the curators are removed, but the text does not explicate what was done about the erroneously appointed *collegiatus*.[109]

It is probably significant that the *negotiatores eborarii et citrarii* were based in the city of Rome: larger cities like Rome and Ostia had a greater variation of associations, often connected with highly specialized trades such as the *faber soliarius baxiarius* (women's sandal maker).[110] With such a wide choice in associations it is difficult to see why, say, a *faber soliarius baxiarius* would even consider to join the *eborarii et citrarii* rather than the *collegium* of his own trade. There were obvious economic and social benefits to associating with those in the same trade. As a rule, therefore, professional *collegia* could indeed be defined by shared occupation. However, it appears to have been a recognized fact that various professions could also sometimes be assembled under the heading of one occupational *collegium*: the law acknowledged that this occurred, although it is difficult to find actual attestations of it.[111] It has been suggested that occupational plurality within a professional association was characteristic particularly of smaller settlements, in which case this scenario may have been the more common one throughout Italy.[112] This geographical differentiation is where I shall turn now.

108 *CIL* 6. 33885, 4–6. The *ordo* here probably refers to the guild or guild magistrates, cf Tran (2007a) 124.

109 Expulsion was a possibility, cf Tran (2007a).

110 *CIL* 6. 9404.

111 E.g. *Dig.* 50.6.6.6; 50.6.6.12; for an example see *AE* 1981, 387; cf Liu (2009) 203–8 on 'outsiders' in the *collegium centonariorum*; Verboven (2007) 883-4 with other examples. The converse was also possible: there are those with multiple affiliations, despite the fact that it is forbidden by law (*Dig* 47.22.1.2, Marcian), see Liu (2009) 206–8. Cf Hawkins (2006) 109 who suggests that individuals with multiple affiliations were in fact exceptional, and that they were generally recruited as benefactors.

112 Liu (2009) 22.

Urbanism and association

There is a correlation between urbanism and association: generally speaking, *collegia* are attested in urban centres.[113] In part this is due to the nature of the evidence: associations are chiefly attested epigraphically, and inscriptions on stone are an urban occurrence. Moreover, associations generally tend to form where people cluster together in large numbers, and that is in the cities. The more people, the more associations. The perceived distribution pattern of *collegia* inscriptions is therefore not surprising. The precise nature of the correlation between urbanism and the associative phenomenon is, however, not immediately apparent. In order to get to the nature of this connection, the distribution of inscriptions recording *collegia* deserves somewhat closer scrutiny.

There was a wide variation in number, size, and prestige of associations, all of which was largely related to their location.[114] It will become clear that some basic distinctions between *collegia* in large and small towns have already been noted in the scholarly literature. But there is a third category, both the largest and most obvious one: the associations of Rome. Rome cannot be equated with the other large cities, and conversely the material from the eternal city has a tendency to become an unwarranted model for all (large) cities. The tripartite distinction between the capital, large cities, and small settlements is not often explicitly recognized.[115]

Rome

Almost two thirds of the epigraphic attestations of *collegia* come from Italy.[116] The majority of *collegia* inscriptions originate from the capital.[117] This pattern appears to be broadly consistent with the general pattern of epigraphic output. More significant is that the city of Rome also exhibits a greater differentiation in the 'occupational' associations

113 Liu (2008b) 65 notes "the case of Pompeii implies that a high degree of urbanization, such as that found at Pompeii, or craft-related specialization does not automatically lead to the formation of *collegia*. It is my understanding that the relationship between urbanization and the formation of *collegia* is not always straightforward." This viewpoint is based on a strict definition of formal *collegia* which I have discussed under the heading of 'formal organization and variation' above, where I outlined the development of private associations into *collegia*, and of *collegia* into active organizations in the civic community. What follows is valid, too, if in the first century there were private associations (as I have argued above for Pompeii) rather than formal *collegia*.

114 Ausbüttel (1982) 33 pointed out that there probably were regional differences, but does not go into this.

115 Liu, especially (2013) and (2008b), is the positive exception. For a working definition of large, medium, or small settlements, see De Ligt (2012) 201.

116 Ausbüttel (1982) 32.

117 Ca 700 according to Liu (2013) 352.

attested than any other city:[118] The difference is not just in number, but also in nature of the inscriptions. In Rome, there appear to have been three *centuriae* of women's sandal makers alone.[119] In Rome, too, there are *collegia* for highly specialized professions like *caudicarii* (lightermen) and *specularii* (mirror makers?), or the *lenuncularii traiectus Luculli* (ferrymen working at the crossing of Lucullus), "and many, many other specialists quite untranslatably named according to what they did for a living".[120]

Rome stood at the apex of the urban network. Migration to Rome was substantial and included many young males, who migrated without any family or pre-existing networks.[121] The city may have had a million inhabitants, locals as well as immigrants. Because of the large number of people involved, all of whom were looking for a place to belong, as often as not without a family to fall back on, the structuring principle offered by *collegia* was more important in Rome than anywhere else in Roman Italy. As a result, there were many identifiable associations in the capital but, significantly, most of them did not enjoy the same social prestige as their counterparts in other settlements. Perhaps more than anywhere else, in Rome the 'associative order' presented an alternative for those who had no part in the civic order.[122]

In most cities *collegia* became part of the civic order, and as part of the civic order, *collegiati* gained certain privileges. The development was outlined in more detail above. Associations were included in public banquets and ceremonies, and together with the *decuriones* and Augustales, they were the core group of recipients of distributions and benefactions from wealthy patrons.[123] Taking over civic benefactions and duties in the absence of the traditional elite, *collegium* magistrates and *collegiati* enjoyed a certain prestige. By implication, so did their patrons and benefactors, as indicated by the fact that they proudly advertised their relationships of patronage and euergetism with the associations. This mutually beneficial system facilitated attracting high-ranking indi-

118 Liu (2013) 352 notes a total of c. 500 different *collegia* at Rome. Cf Royden (1988) 238; cf Liu (2009) 22–3. Compare Harper (2011) 102 who finds that also household "scale and specialization were correlated".

119 *CIL* 6. 9404.

120 *CIL* 6. 1795, *CIL* 6. 2206 and *CIL* 14. 5320 respectively, all also attested in other inscriptions; quote MacMullen (1974) 73.

121 Tacoma (2016) chapter 4, esp. 107–123.

122 The associative order: Verboven (2007) and below; this symbolic order especially in Rome: Liu (2013) 362.

123 Cf Liu (2013) 362; Patterson (2006), (1994), Patterson (1992) 21-2; Van Nijf (1997) for the Roman East.

viduals as patrons and benefactors for the *collegia*. All of that was, however, not the case at Rome.[124]

The capital represented a unique civic landscape. The emperor resided at Rome, and so did the Senate – and many senators in addition. This was the seat of power that attracted the elite from all over the empire. With the emperor in the lead, all of these wealthy men were in constant competition for political power. The emperor took pains to affirm his position in relation to the *plebs*. Euergetism to the people and to the city of Rome, in the form of a building program, games, and distributions of money or bread, was a prime method to do so. The virtual monopoly to euergetism claimed by the emperor left little space for the *collegia* to step in as civic benefactors. There was also no need to fulfil a desire for political influence among those who had very little, as in smaller cities. It was difficult for associations in Rome to secure wealthy patrons, both because of the associations' limited role in the community and in high-end politics, and because of the limited social capital that came with their position.[125]

This general account leaves out the considerable variation in types of association, however. In Rome they ranged from the *collegia domestica* of the elite *domus* to the official *collegia apparitorum*.[126]*Collegia domestica* and others of a more private nature presumably did not compete for a more substantial role in the community, as their modest aims may have been fulfilled by their elite patron. Most of the professional collectives seem to have fallen somewhere in between these two, not merely presenting social but also economic networks, that were of great value to their members but less so to elite patrons and the civic community.

There certainly were very large, influential and prestigious associations in the city. An association like that of the *pistores* (bakers) or the *navicularii* (skippers) gained imperial recognition and the right of *corpus habere*, presumably because of their important role in the *annona*.[127] The *collegia tria* or *principalia*, the 'three', or 'principal associations' were among the ancient and respected guilds everywhere, including Rome. These three principal associations commonly concern the *fabri* (often *fabri tignuarii* or *tignarii)*,

124 Noted by Liu (2013) 362. Ausbüttel predicts quite the opposite, (1982) 48: "So werden in Rom und Ostia reichere Leute einem Verein angehört haben als z.B. in Britannien".

125 Presumably one of the reasons why so many *collegia* are seen to have engaged in emperor worship in the hope to gain this powerful patron's favour, cf Liu (2013) 364.

126 Liu (2013) 356; The *collegia domestica* are more relevant to chapter 4 on the elite *domus* than here. The specific nature of the *collegia domestica* shows also, e.g., from the prominence of women, Hemelrijk (2015) 186–189.

127 *Dig*. 3.4.1.pr (Gaius ad ed.); see also Verboven (2007) 875-878.

centonarii, and *dendrophorοi*.[128] Tentatively these translate into the builders, textile dealers, and worshippers of Magna Mater (literally 'tree-carriers'). The *fabri tignuarii* of Rome were one of the most long-lived and largest *collegia* in the capital that we know of.[129] There were *fabri, dendrophori* and *centonarii* here, too.[130] Many other associations were also prominently present in the capital through their buildings, *scholae* or temples, the majority of them of an occupational signature.[131]*Collegia* set up inscriptions and statues in public places, and dedicated them to deities and the imperial house.

Larger cities

The port city of Ostia is the one settlement that would conceivably resemble Rome best, because of the close connection between the two. Walking around what is left of the city today, commercial spaces catch the eye. Ostia as we know it was largely constructed or transformed in the second century AD, when *collegia* flourished.[132] The elaborate buildings or *scholae* of associations undeniably shape the urban landscape, and the *Piazzale delle Corporazioni* is unparalleled, with its rows of market stalls or offices for various collectives.[133] Like Rome, Ostia is known for its great variety of occupational *collegia* and, as in Rome, they are omnipresent both in the epigraphic record and in the material remains of the townscape. In both respects, however, it appears that Rome and Ostia

128 Sometimes the *utriclarii* are also included. Liu (2009) 50–5 questions the value of studying these three *collegia* as a coherent group, stressing differences in origins and development. See also ibidem pp. 393-4 on the epigraphic record of the *tria collegia/collegia III*, urging caution in the equation of the *collegia tria* with these *collegia* when the sources do not specify which ones are meant. In what follows I use *collegia tria principalia* to refer to these particular three associations as is common in scholarly literature; The prominence of these *collegia* has sometimes been linked to public utility as a fire brigade vel sim. That the *collegia centonariorum* and *fabrum* in particular were so widespread because they might have served as a fire brigade or were involved with maintaining public safety, as suggested by earlier scholars on the basis of Pliny, *Ep.* 10.33 and 34 (quoted above), has rightly been questioned, see Van Nijf (1997) 177–81, Perry (2006) 7–18 and Liu (2009) chapter 4, pp 125–160 with additional references. Contra Verboven (2007) 880, who still speaks of the "fire brigade associations". Callistratus, *Dig*. 50.6.6.12 does speak of the public utility of the *fabri* (passage quoted elsewhere). If we compare the finding that in 1791 AD a third of all the wage-workers in Paris were employed in the building trade (Brunt (1974) 87), the prominence and public utility of an actual builders' association is perhaps not so unlikely.

129 Largest: *CIL* 6. 1060 points to at least 59 *decuriae*, of around 22 men each. Long-lived: *CIL* 6. 9034 (lustrum XIIX) and *CIL* 6. 9406 (lustrum XXVII). There are attestations from the 1st to the 4th century.

130 Liu (2009) appendix B, p. 384-390 .

131 Bollmann (1998) 169.

132 Meiggs (1960) 133 (133-145 'the architectural revolution').

133 Commercial space: Meiggs (1960) 272-4; DeLaine (2005); *Piazzale delle corporazioni*: many corporations are named in the mosaics on the floor of the offices, documented as *CIL* 14. 4549; *Scholae*: Bollmann (1998).

were exceptional within Roman Italy.[134] This makes it all the more vexing that there were significant differences between the position of the *collegia* in the capital, and Ostia.

Ostia was a city of commerce, not a political hub. The Isola Sacra necropolis holds the remains of traders and craftsmen, with few or no reported magistrates.[135] Professional associations at Ostia are disproportionately well-attested epigraphically compared to other occupational inscriptions from the town (roughly 2:1). Incidentally and unsurprisingly, the most prominent guild is that of the *fabri tignuariorum Ostiensum*. There are also *fabri* (without addition to the name), as well as *dendrophori*, but no known *centonarii*. Many of the associations here concern collectives of sailors and traders, which is to be expected in a port city. The visibility of associations both in the epigraphic record and in archaeological remains of the town plan seems to reflect their importance in the community. As a result of their position, the *collegia* at Ostia do not seem to have had any problem to engage high-ranking and wealthy patrons, though many admittedly were of the new elite of wealthy freedmen.[136] A town like Pompeii also accounts for twenty-five known different professional associations.[137]

Besides these two examples, the epigraphic record for *collegia* in the larger towns of the Italian peninsula is limited. Half of these cities have no record of any associations, the other half have one, maybe two. Puteoli does not appear to have had many associations despite its obvious importance in commerce, though there are *dendrophori* here.[138] The city of Capua, that seems to have ranked second in size after Rome, has *centonarii* and two interesting references to unspecified '*collegia*', where "the *collegia* have set up" (*collegia posuerunt*) a dedication to influential individuals. Similarly, *CIL* 11. 5416 from Asisium

134 Bollmann (1998) 169-70 notes that the rich evidence for *Vereinshäuser* in the second century is largely restricted to Rome and Ostia. Her discussion of the '*Vereinshäuser in städtischen context*' is structured accordingly: in Rome, Ostia, and the rest.

135 Meiggs (1960) 455; Kampen (1981) 23.

136 E.g. L. Calpurnius Chius, *CIL* 14. 309, mid-late 2nd c. AD. His name suggests family ties (libertination) with one of the known consuls of the name L. Calpurnius Piso, perhaps (closest in time) the consul of 175 AD whose light might have shined down on Chius. Chius became a central person in Ostia's civic community: his epitaph lists that he once was sevir and president of the Augustales, president and twice treasurer (*curator*) of the *corpus mensorum frumentariorum* at Ostia, treasurer of the Ostian *codicarii*, three times and honorary president of the *collegium* of Silvanus Augustus maior; and *magister* to Mars Ficanus Augustus in the *collegium dendroforum*.

137 Verboven (2007) 874, in 41 inscriptions including the famous election notices; Liu (2008b) on the question whether these groups should be understood as *collegia* or not, to which her answer is negative, page 62: "the phenomenon of *collegia* had not developed in Pompeii by the time the city was destroyed".

138 Other than these, there is a *collegium scabillariorum* (some sort of ritual musicians?); *Baulanorum* (ethnic); *Heliopolitanorum* (ethnic), see above.

commemorates a patron of the city and three associations (*municipii et collegiorum III*).[139] The scarce references to *collegia III*, like this one, have been taken to mean 'the three principal *collegia*', in casu the *fabri*, *centonarii* and *dendrophori*.[140] Though one should be careful in the assumption, it is easy to see where it comes from and it may not be far beside the truth: with the exceptions of Ostia and Pompeii, an investigation into the associations of larger cities largely coincides with mapping the principal associations.

The question becomes why Ostia and Pompeii show such a different picture, compared to other large cities. That said, Ostia and Pompeii are both relatively large within a rather broad category of settlements. Ostia could perhaps also be explained through its proximity to Rome, though important differences between Ostia and Rome were pointed out above. More importantly, the state of the evidence in Ostia and Pompeii is better than in many other cities, which accounts for some of the discrepancy. If that is the case, however, should the circumstances in Ostia and Pompeii be seen as representative of other commercial centres? Comparison with the situation in other provinces would suggest as much, but comparison with the other settlements of Roman Italy would indicate that perhaps Italy was exceptional.

Small towns

The range of (professional) *collegia* predictably was small in minor urban centres: in these settlements, too, many of the (professional) associations belong to one of the *collegia principalia*.[141] The *fabri* are everywhere, but there appear to be some regional differences within this pattern: the *centonarii* are predominantly located in north and central Italy, and almost absent from the south where the *dendrophori* are most common.[142] Recent analysis of the occupational inscriptions of Picenum by Cristofori offers an interesting case in point, as it has virtually no evidence for *collegia* other than the three principal ones.[143] But there are exceptions. The modest settlement of Falerio is relatively well documented in the region, and it is evident that *collegia* played an important part in its community. An elaborate inscription offers evidence for the existence for the three *collegia principalia* in the town, but there is also an epitaph set up for a magistrate of the

139 *Centonarii* in Capua: *AE* 2010, 325; *collegia posuerunt*, *AE* 1985, 273 and *AE* 1972, 75; cf also the *reparator collegiorum* of *CIL* 9. 1596 (Beneventum).

140 Liu (2009) 393. In my view, *AE* 1985, 273 and *AE* 1972, 75 from Capua cited in the previous note very likely also relate to the *III collegia* – in both instances there is illegible space on the stone before the word *collegia* that would accommodate 'III'.

141 The Augustales remain the most common *collegium* throughout; *Collegia* were certainly not limited to the *fabri tignuarii* outside of Rome and Ostia, which is what Royden (1988) 238 writes.

142 Liu (2009) 29-36 with appendix B, table on p. 384-390 listing *fabri, fabri tignuarii, centonarii, dendrophori, utriclarii.*

143 Cristofori (2004).

collective of the fullers, who was also a magistrate of the *fabri*; his wife was a 'mother' to the *fullones* as well.[144] Another inscription mentions unspecified but presumably commercial associations taking part in the construction of a road: these *collegia* are said to be 'contiguous to the *forum pecuarium* (cattle market)'.[145]

There may be a rationale behind this more limited array of associations. Hawkins suggested that associations may bring together artisans of broadly related trades, to enable "extensive vertical subdivisions of labour".[146] He cites a passage from the *Digest* where the jurist Gaius writes that the designation *faber tignuarius* refers "not only to those of hew timber, but to all who work as builders".[147] Theoretically the *collegium fabrum* could accommodate a broad range of people working in construction. It has been argued that Hawkins' idea is particularly useful for understanding associations in the smaller urban centres, because of the attestation of these more general *collegia* in smaller centres, versus the highly specific occupations in the names of associations attested for larger cities.[148] As we have seen, however, the more complex differentiation of *collegia* was limited to Rome, Ostia and, to a lesser extent, Pompeii.

Many of the prerequisites and stimuli for the proliferation of *collegia* in Rome and Ostia were not equally present, or not pressing enough, in smaller settlements. There were simply fewer artisans to unite into associations, which would have made the (enduring) existence of more than one or a few associations untenable. It also seems reasonable to suppose that many of the social advantages of the collegiate network were less urgent in a neighbourhood where everybody already knew one another. To anticipate the socio-economic function of the associations to be discussed below, therefore, Liu may be correct hypothesizing that the very existence of *collegia* as well as "the potential of associations in further reducing transaction costs among members may be in reverse proportion to the size of the city".[149] Hawkins' vertical subdivision of labour therefore may well be part of the explanation for the existence of associations in larger cities. The active presence of *collegia* in even some of the smallest towns, however, cannot be

144 *Collegia principalia CIL* 9. 5439; *fullones/fabri CIL* 9. 5450, quoted in full below. Hemelrijk (2015) 251–69 and (2008) for 'mothers' of *collegia*.

145 *Collegia principalia, CIL* 9. 5439; *Collegia quae attingunt … foro*, *CIL* 9. 5438.

146 Hawkins (2006) 111–5, quote 115.

147 *Dig*. 50.16.235.1 (Gaius): *"Fabros tignarios" dicimus non eos dumtaxat, qui tigna dolarent, sed omnes qui aedificarent*, transl. Hawkins (2006) 111.

148 Cf. Liu (2009) 22: "Hawkins is certainly correct in noting that the Roman occupational *collegium* often included a wide range of artisans that were related to a broadly defined trade. But that seems to be a phenomenon typical of smaller centers. Larger commercial centers such as Rome, Ostia and Lugdunum featured many *collegia* whose titles suggested highly specialized trades". Cf Verboven (2007) 880.

149 Liu (2009) 22.

explained merely by their function as a trust network or private enforcement network, but rather by their importance in the civic community. Small towns in particular needed the support of a broader group of benefactors if they were going to remain extant, and an active *collegium* could play a part in this.[150]

THE SOCIAL PHENOMENON OF SUBSTITUTE FAMILIES

Since the final decades of the twentieth century, scholars have 'discovered' *collegia* as a social phenomenon: it was a natural reaction to the formal and juristic treatment that went before.[151] Joining a *collegium* was a voluntary choice that broadened an individual's social network beyond the family and other networks he or she may have been associated with. Like the family, the *collegium* became a part of the Romans' self-identification.[152]

The plethora of associations in the early Roman empire has sometimes been explained by a need for a surrogate family. The association was expected to take care of various issues when the natural family could not, such as financial intermediation, religious dedications and, above all, burial arrangements.[153] Consequently, the *collegia* have been referred to as *grandi familie* by De Robertis, Schultz-Falkenthal similarly writes that they were "so etwas wie eine grosse Familie". Associative life has been termed *la vie familiale*.[154] There are some indications that the *collegiati* themselves also appreciated each other this way, as they occasionally refer to the others as brothers (*fratres*). Surely, the 'brother builders' (*fabri fratres*) must refer to an association: the Romans were no strangers to the use of terms of fictive kinship as terms of endearment.[155]

In the absence of family, specifically in the absence of children, the Romans worried over a proper burial.[156] Anonymous graves marked by tiles or amphorae in the Isola Sacra necropolis were not necessarily appealing, and what is more: Martial's *Epigram* 8.75, 9-10 suggests that many of the poor were simply cremated, their ashes scattered (into the Tiber perhaps), their memories forever erased.[157]

---

150 Patterson (2006), 271f for his model of the small town, earlier in (1994) 236.

151 Perry (2006) chapter 6; see especially the work of Nicolas Tran (2006), (2011).

152 Joshel (1992) 113–22; Van Nijf (1997) 111.

153 For fictive or substitute families, see e.g. Wilson (1996) 13; various issues, cf Garnsey and Saller (1987) 157.

154 De Robertis (1946) 77; Schultz-Falkenthal (1968) 163; Waltzing.

155 *CIL* 5. 7487; Cf Hemelrijk (2015) ch. 5 on 'mothers' (and 'sisters') of *collegia*; Compare Harland (2005) and (2007) for a similar phenomenon in the Greek East.

156 Hopkins (1983) 213; Patterson (1992); cf Hübner (2013) 87 ff.

157 Bodel (2000); cf Patterson (1992) 16 with ref. to Martial; Hopkins (1983) 205–11.

Mart. *Ep.* 8.75, 9–10

> Quattuor inscripti portabant uile cadauer,
> accipit infelix qualia mille rogus
>
> Four branded slaves were carrying a common corpse, of the kind that an unhappy pyre receives a thousand.

Collegia habitually concerned themselves with funerary matters for their members. It follows from the nature of the ancient evidence on *collegia* – which consists of many epitaphs – that funerary activities are their best attested pursuit.[158] The charter of the *collegium* of the *cultores* of Antinoos and Diana at Lanuvium stipulates that the association will pay out 300 HS for the purpose of burial.[159] Fellow *collegiati* mourned for the deceased with all due ritual, participating in the funerary procession. The members of the *cultores* from Lanuvium received monetary compensation to attend the funeral; members of an unidentified association in Roman Egypt, conversely, were fined 4 drachmas if they did not go, and another 4 drachmas if they did not shave their heads in mourning.[160]

Collegia in their own right seem to have had access to burial space for their members. The monument of the *sociae mimae* in Rome measured 15 x 12 Roman feet; the *sodalici lanariorum carminatorum* (wool-merchants and -carders) from Brixellum sported a much larger plot of 100 x 55 feet.[161] In the city it would often be a columbarium, or a number of niches in a columbarium tomb, where members could be buried.[162] Also in the case of a single family columbarium related to an elite *domus,* an overarching *collegium* is regu-

158 Patterson (1992) 20; Ausbüttel (1982) 70, 71: the funerary activities of *collegia* are only sporadically attested from the 4th century onwards and so they seem to have waned in favour of Christian rites.

159 *CIL* 14. 2112.

160 *P. Mich*. 5. 243, 1–12; cf Venticinque (2009) 39–40.

161 *CIL* 6. 10109: *Sociarum / mimarum / in fr(onte) p(edes) XV / in agr(o) p(edes) XII*; *CIL* 11. 1031: *D(is) M(anibus) / haec loca sunt / lanariorum / carminator(um) / sodalici / quae faciunt / in agro p(edes) C / ad viam p(edes) LV*.

162 Patterson (1992) 20-1, including an interesting reference to *CIL* 6. 9405 where a number of niches appears to be given to specified members (and 10 unassigned places) of a *collegium*. There is no clear evidence for *collegia* setting up or owning a columbarium tomb, see chapter 4; cf Patterson (1992) 21 who points to the *cultores* of Hercules Victor of *CIL* 10. 5386 who certainly owned a large burial plot (*loca sepulturae*); Liu (2013) 365-6 also notes *CIL* 6. 9405, plus other examples.

larly attested that ostensibly took care of the funerary arrangements.[163] Testamentary endowments to *collegia* often stipulated the continuation of commemorative rites.[164]

It is not unlikely that there were *collegiati* who did not have a family to provide their burial and therefore relied on a *collegium*. Many labour migrants to the city of Rome will have been unmarried young men who had left their birth families behind.[165] The same principle may have operated to a lesser extent in other urban centres. A number of migrant and local young men had some time before marriage when, because of the high mortality rates that were even higher in the city, there may not have been surviving parents to commemorate them. *CIL* 10. 7039 from the Sicilian city of Catina could be an example of this:

***CIL* 10. 7039**

> D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / L(ucius) Arrius / Secundus / vix(it) ann(os) XVII / marmorari(i) / convive fecer(unt)
>
> Sacred to the divine spirits. Lucius Arrius Secundus. He lived 17 years. The marble-workers sharing his life set up [this monument].

The marble-workers appear to have financed the burial of the deceased, Lucius Arrius Secundus, and actively contributed to the arrangements (*fecerunt*).[166] Only seventeen years of age, Secundus could fit the profile of a young man without family. Sigismund-Nielsen has shown that many 'anonymous' burials, meaning epitaphs without record of their dedicator, were set up for this demographic group, arguing on the basis of this and other criteria that they too were buried by a *collegium* for lack of family.[167]

But there were certainly members of associations who did have biological families. Not every member was necessarily buried in a collective burial place like a columbarium. The *collegium* did not take over primary responsibility from the family. Rather, in matters of death as in life, there seems to have been a delicate cooperation between the

163 Hasegawa (2005) 81-8 presents most of the direct and indirect evidence; E.g. *CIL* 6. 6215 (Statilii), *CIL* 6. 7282 (Volusii), *CIL* 6. 9148–9 and 10260–4 (Sergia Paullina). See also ch. 4.

164 Liu (2008a) 240.

165 Tacoma (2016) chapter 4, esp. 107–123.

166 From Catina. This particular example was chosen because I did not want to leave unmentioned Perry's telling reconstructions of the possible story behind it, Perry (2006) 1–5.

167 Sigismund-Nielsen (2006) 204 "younger males of the working classes", ibidem 206 specifies them as unmarried men ages 15-30. I do not believe that all of these anonymous burials were set up by *collegia*.

association and the relatives of the deceased.[168] Depending on the circumstances, the *collegium* could arrange everything, from retrieving the body of the deceased to a place in a communal tomb; but in other instances it would simply pay out to the next of kin.[169] Many members were buried by a *collegium*.[170] Associations would sometimes arrange a funeral for the biological family of their members, too.[171] When the family rather than the association set up the epitaph, or when family takes pride of place, the inscription often concerns *collegium* magistrates.[172]

The following is a clear example of how family and *collegium* may have operated together.

***AE* 2001, 879b**

> D(is) M(anibus) sacrum / L(ucio) Gavellio Felici Su/ellia Prisca coniu/gi b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit) et collegi/um dendrofo/rorum
>
> Sacred to the divine spirits. To Lucius Gavellius Felix. Suellia Prisca set this up for her well-deserving husband, and the association of the tree-carriers (set this up).

The associations could also be burdened with the protection of the family tomb of one of their members.[173] In some instances, the *collegium* gained access to the tomb when the family line died out, as in the following example.[174]

---

168 Patterson (1992) 23, Van Nijf (1997) 32–3, and Venticinque (2010) 293: "Including provisions for burial in guild regulations or offering legal assistance does not need to imply a lack of reliance on one's kin or community as has often been suggested".

169 Cf. the Lanuvium inscription, *CIL* 14. 2112, col. I.26-32: when a member has died more than 20 miles away and his death has been reported, three men will be sent to conduct the burial; when it has not been reported, the expenses of his burial will be compensated after the fact.

170 Joshel (1992) 113.

171 Cf Hemelrijk (2015) 183–86.

172 Joshel (1992) 113-4. But she herself notes (208, n.45) that the evidence is skewed because these individuals are largely concentrated in two tombs – Joshel counts individuals, not inscriptions or monuments.

173 Ausbüttel (1982) 69–70. The *collegium* received money for this, as in *AE* 1951, 94 (1,000 HS to the *centonarii* of Comum).

174 Cf also *AE* 2004, 210 (Ostia).

CIL 6. 8750

> Diis(!) Manibus / T(itus) Aelius Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Primitivus / archimagirus / fecit Aelia(e) Tyche et sibi et Aeliae / Tyrannidi coniugi et libertis li/bertabusq(ue) meis vel Aeliae Tyran/nydis / posterisque eorum /
>
> custodia mon{i}<u>menti inhabitandi ne quis inter/dicere velit quotsi nemo de n(ostra) memoria / exstiterit pertinebit ad collegium cocorum / Caesaris n(ostri) quot veniri donarive vetamus si ad/versus ea quis fecerit poenae nomine feret / arcae cocorum HS L m(ilia) n(ummum) / ate ex usuris eorum / celebretur suo quoq(ue) anno/ h(oc) m(onumentum) h(eredem) n(on) s(equetur)
>
> To the divine spirits. Titus Aelius Primitivus, freedman of the emperor, head cook, set this up to Aelia Tyche and himself and to Aelia Tyrannis his wife and my freedmen and – women or those of Aelia Tyrannis, and to their descendants.
>
> The care of the monument to be dwelt in (inhabitandi), so that no one may interfere, [we stipulate] that if no one of our memory [i.e. family] should exist, [the care] will fall to the association of the cooks of our Caesar. We forbid it [the monument] to be given or sold. If anyone should do these things in opposition [to these stipulations], he shall hand a nominal fine to the treasury of the cooks of 50,000 *nummi*, a yearly sacrifice from the revenues of this should be celebrated in his year. This monument does not go to the heirs.[175]

This is the inscription of the family tomb of T. Aelius Primitivus and his wife (both his first (Tyche) and second partner (Tyrannis)). His family including freedmen clearly takes precedence here. Primitivus apparently fulfilled a magistracy as *archimagirus* in the imperial association of cooks, which will take care that the tomb is not violated on the penalty of 50,000 *nummi* – to benefit the *collegium*.

The collaboration of family and association in matters of death and burial is illustrative of the way in which family and associative life overlapped. The *collegium* mourned the death of *collegiati* and their relatives, but there are indications that it was equally

175 The translation of this text is more difficult than its meaning. Cf Weaver, *Repertorium familiae Caesarum*, 276–7 for Aeliae Tyche (= dative) instead of Aelia, and for the meaning of ate [= ἄτη], as a penalty in the form of a yearly sacrifice. *CIL* 6. 7458 has a remarkably similar text to this one; its contents are virtually identical to *CIL* 6. 8750, but it does not mention Aelia Tyrannis, only Tyche as Primitivus' wife, and adds that the *collegium cocorum*, "exists on the Palatine" and was "located in this place": *quod consistit in Palatio* and *corpori qui sunt in hac stationem*. See for that text and the protection of tombs by a durable institution, Crook (1967) 136–7.

involved with the happier family life events of marriage and birth: the members of an unidentified association in Roman Egypt were required to pay 2 drachmas to the association on the occasion of their marriage or the birth of a son, and one drachma for the birth of a daughter. That same collective has it written in their charter that "If anyone neglects another in trouble and does not give aid to release him from his trouble, let him pay eight drachmas".[176] Eating, celebrating, and grieving together, *collegiati* can in many ways be usefully seen as extended family.

Collegia and family were not just intersecting and complementary networks, however: *collegium* and family could literally coincide. There is evidence for *collegiati* who were also related as family. This phenomenon is difficult to quantify, among other things because of the absence of explicit filiation and libertination in the membership lists that was already noted above. Occupation and guild membership were not hereditary in the period under scrutiny, although it must be assumed that many did follow in their parents' footsteps.[177] It is therefore hard to say if we can speak of a "significant percentage" of kinship bonds among *collegiati*.[178] The membership lists occasionally contain identifications such as *sen(ior)*, *iun(ior)*, or *fil(ius)*, the son, in cases of homonymy.[179] Liu illustrates that in the case of the *collegium centonariorum*, there were family clusters within *collegia*, sometimes over two generations as in the case of the Octavii in the *collegium* at Rome.[180] Pearse reconstructs three generations among the *fabri tignuarii*, also at Rome.[181] Venticinque adds convincing material that shows blood relations between *collegiati*; his examples are largely from Roman Egypt, however, and the material is not abundant.[182]

Looking beyond the membership lists, it is clear that many *collegia* do indeed demonstrate kinship relations. In the following epitaph, interestingly, two sons chose to give precedence to official titles (including that of their mother) over kinship bonds and piety.

176 *P. Mich*. 5. 243 (*BL* 9. 160); Venticinque (2010) 280–5 including the full text and translation of the charter.

177 Chapter 3 on intergenerational dependence.

178 Venticinque (2010) 279: "Persons united by at least one bond of kinship with a brother, father, or son account for a significant percentage of the overall membership."

179 Ausbüttel (1982) 39. Unlike him I feel that the distinction senior/junior in case of homonymy probably is an indication of kinship as well as age.

180 Liu (2009) 180–203, including patron-freedmen or *colliberti*.

181 Pearse (1976) 173; Liu (2009) 181–3.

182 Venticinque (2009) 44–7 and (2010) 278–9.

***CIL* 9. 5450**

> D(is) M(anibus) / T(ito) Sillio T(iti) lib(erto) / Prisco / mag(istro) colleg(ii) / fabr(um) II et q(uaestori) II / mag(istro) et q(uaestori) sodal(icii) / fullonum / Claudiae Ti(beri) lib(ertae) / uxori eius matri / sodalic(ii) fullon(um) / T(itus) Sillius Karus et / Ti(berius) Claudius Phi/lippus mag(istri) et q(uaestores) / colleg(ii) fabr(um) / fili(i) parentib(us) / piissimis
>
> To the divine spirits. To Titus Sillius Priscus, freedman of Titus, twice magister of the *collegium fabrum* and twice *quaestor*, *magister* and *quaestor* of the *sodalicium fullonum*. To Claudia, freedwoman of Tiberius, his wife, 'mother' of the *sodalicium* of fullers, Titus Sillius Karus and Tiberius Claudius Philippus *magistri* and *quaestores* of the *collegium fabrum*, sons to their most revered parents.

Family clustering within *collegia* is also attested for forged family ties between freedmen and patron, though not much research has been done on this.[183] Inscriptions of *colliberti* commemorating a patron already illustrated the continued bond with their patron, and their trade.[184] It is only natural that freedmen should proceed to join the *collegia* – it is known that associations accommodated many freedmen. Theoretically *familia*-ties within the *collegium* could occur for slaves, too, though their membership is difficult to trace or further explain. *Collegia domestica* of elite households largely seem to coincide with the *familia*, which means that for slaves and freedmen here the *collegium* may actually be equated with their 'family'.

In sum, the relationship between families and guilds seems to have been complementary.[185] And so there is some truth in the idea of *collegia* as a substitute family. The historical pattern predicts that the absence of family ties influenced the emergence of associations.[186] Family ties were perhaps not less important, but they were not omnipresent in the city where the dominant family form was the nuclear family,[187] and where people often migrated to without taking their family with them, because they had the intention to return one day. Many young men will also have migrated before they had formed a family of their own. To the numerous immigrants to Rome and other

183 Liu (2009) 180-203.

184 See chapter 3 and 4.

185 This is the thrust of the argument of Venticinque (2010) 277: "I argue that guilds, and in particular the ethical regulations dealing with relationships between members and their families, sought to create and maintain bonds of trust between members, rather than to compensate for any deficiency".

186 Lucassen, De Moor, and Van Zanden (2008) 15.

187 Compare chapter 3 on family forms.

large Italian cities, therefore, the association must have been an important substitute to their native family. To the locals, associative family might sometimes have been more durable than bloodlines in a high mortality regime, and it could even have incorporated biological family anyway. To slaves (and ex-slaves), finally, the *collegium* may have been the family they could not have.

THE ECONOMICS OF ASSOCIATION: PROFESSIONAL *COLLEGIA* AS TRADE GUILDS, UNIONS, OR UNIQUE TO ROME?

> *Collegia* were not constituted for economic purposes … and this is reflected in the names they gave to their societies –'Mates and marble workers', 'Brother builders', 'the comrade smiths', 'the late drinkers'.[188]

There is an obvious social aspect to associating with others. Rather than proving that "*collegia* were not constituted for economic purposes", the titles for associations suggest that they were not constituted *solely* for economic purposes – the fact that they often include a profession surely indicates some economic engagement. In his important historiography of the Roman *collegia*, Jonathan Scott Perry wrote that "the dominant trend of contemporary collegial studies has been to explore the 'social' features of these organizations, to the exclusion of the other 'interests' that association may also have served".[189] Perry's work was published in 2006. The tide has now turned. Scholars emphasize the interaction between the various roles of the associations, and particularly the general involvement of *collegia* in the economy has again become the topic of research interest.[190]

Many of the *collegia* are professional in name. Accordingly they could be seen as economic associations. The comparison of occupational *collegia* with Medieval and Early Modern trade guilds virtually imposes itself. But because of the absence of trade monopolies or universal membership in Roman society, the comparison invariably led to the conclusion that the *collegia* were no guilds, and *collegiati* were nothing like the "economic masterminds of a medieval commercial revolution".[191] This view of *collegia* as

188 Walker-Ramisch (1996) 133; the names of the *collegia* she cites clearly were taken from MacMullen (1974) 77. On the brother builders (*CIL* 5. 7487) and the relation between associations and (fictive) family members, see below.

189 Perry (2006) 207.

190 See, e.g. Liu (2017), Verboven (2017b).

191 Van Nijf (1997) 11–17, quote from page 12.

'not guilds' had a powerful protagonist in Moses Finley, who forcefully argued for their economic insignificance. In his *Ancient Economy* he writes on *collegia*:

> In no sense were they guilds trying to foster or protect the economic interests of their members, nor did they reveal a trace of the hierarchical pattern of apprentice, journeyman and master that characterized the mediaeval and early modern guilds.[192]

According to Finley, craftsmen, and craftsmen associations, were marginal factors in what he perceived as a largely agricultural economy. The comparison with trade guilds, and the 'mistranslation' of *collegia* as trade guilds, has nevertheless remained.[193] It is now known that the later trade guilds were not merely economic collectives, but that they fulfilled a score of other social functions too, not unlike the Roman associations.[194] Even the medieval guild monopolies probably were not as strict as has been thought. There is thus no reason not to refer to occupational associations as 'guilds', which I will occasionally do from here on.

A perceived lack of evidence is another reason why the economics of association have been underexposed. Many studies into associations have focused on the funerary and dedicatory inscriptions that were set up by the *collegia*, as well as on membership lists, and on legal evidence for state intervention in line with the story of rebellion and conflict that was understood from ancient literary evidence. The ancient evidence has not provided much incentive to emphasize the economic importance of associations.[195] Taking absence of evidence as evidence of absence underestimates the fact that the act of association in itself can be economically significant. Changing the questions may provide answers. Are there any traces of economic zoning? How did the associative networks contribute to the economy? Quite apart from inscribed monuments, there is documentary evidence for the economic involvement of *collegia* even though most of it

192 Finley (1999[3]) 81, cf 138: "…there were no guilds, no matter how often the Roman *collegia* and their differently named Greek and Hellenistic counterparts are thus mistranslated". See also MacMullen (1974) 19: "Any analogy with a medieval guild or modern labor union is wholly mistaken".

193 See Verboven (2017b); and e.g. Gibbs (2012) and (2011), Broekaert (2011), Van Nijf (1997), Van Minnen (1987).

194 Cf Liu (2009) 16–7; Van Nijf (1997) 11–18; Van Nijf (2002) usefully compares the *collegia* to yet another collective, the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch civic guards.

195 Perhaps that is only to be expected, says Perry (2006) 207: "If, for example, a *collegium* were agitating for better working conditions, would it be likely to have inscribed a document demanding a resolution of their grievances by the power elite? And even more importantly, would they have chosen to share their most secretive deliberations with the larger society in an inscribed monument?"

comes from Roman Egypt.[196] And then there is the fact that *collegiati* were a privileged group, in society, but also by law. With the hypothesis of economic significance rather than insignificance in mind, suddenly much of the existing sources from the Western provinces, too, can be read as hinting at economic activity of the *collegia*, even if the evidence is not primarily economic in nature.

Occupational clustering

Professional associations generally were a local phenomenon. It has been argued that dealers and craftsmen working in related businesses were inclined to settle together in specific parts of the city.[197] This clustering or economic zoning could have then led to the formation of the occupational *collegia*.[198] For the city of Rome in particular, toponyms regularly suggest a connection with trades, such as the Forum Boarium ('cattle market'), and several districts and streets of Rome attest to a particular trade: the Via Sacra for example was the home of dealers in a number of luxury trades. Prostitutes were apparently found in the Subura.[199] Clustering of trades is historically well attested for preindustrial cities, like London. Clustering creates the clear economic advantage that buyer and seller can easily find each other. The idea is that if you needed a scythe, you went 'among the scythe makers', '*inter falcarios*'. Holleran suggests that clustering also made the sharing of information among workers in the same branch easier, and may have accommodated specialization because it makes for an easy network of subcontracting.[200] In theory, there could also be practical advantages in sharing access to raw materials and clustering noisy and smelly trades. There is a marble district in Emporion, to facilitate transport over water, and bricks were produced outside Rome where there were clay beds.[201]

The problem with the Roman evidence is that it is inconclusive. The presence of a *Vicus Lorarius* (harness-maker), for example, is attested in an inscription that records a *pigmentarius* (dealer in paints) and not a *lorarius*; similarly there is an *argentarius* (silversmith) attested *inter aerarios* (copper smith); there is also an *argentarius* from the blacksmiths' alley (*Vicus […]ionum ferrariarum*). By the second century the *Vicus Sandalarius* (sandal makers) was more famous for its booksellers than its sandal makers.[202] Conversely, it is

196 See, e.g., Gibbs (2011), Venticinque (2009) and (2010), Van Minnen (1987).

197 For occupational clustering in Rome, Tacoma (2013) 139–42; Holleran (2012) 53-60; MacMullen (1974) 70–9 with appendix on page 129–135.

198 MacMullen (1974) 73.

199 Cf Mart. *Ep.* 6.66.

200 Holleran (2012) 57.

201 Tacoma (2013) 140.

202 Holleran (2012) 54–5 with reference to *CIL* 6. 9796 (*pigmentarius*), 9186 (*inter aerarios*), and 9185 (*Vicus […]ionum Ferrariarum*).

quite likely that not all sandal makers were located in the *Vicus Sandalarius*. Most *vici* were not named after an occupation. And even what is potentially the most smelly of trades, fulling, was not clustered in one part of the city.[203] The list could be expanded. "The dominant pattern is one of random scatter, with a modest degree of clusters of specific shops and industries".[204] Economic zoning was simply not the way in which the Romans battled an inadequate information supply.

Trust networks

Accurate, up to date information probably was a scarce good in the Roman world.[205] Transport of information and goods was slow and precarious, and mortality rates were high.[206] Market demand was volatile; finding dependable workers was not always easy.[207] All of these factors led to a high degree of market insecurity and economic uncertainty: transaction costs were high.[208]

A labour market only works if there is an institutional framework to enforce labour relations and to secure the rights of both parties. Roman law supplies some of the necessary provisions, including contracts and the possibility for a law-suit.[209] It remains to be seen whether they were adequate. The legal framework was certainly biased towards "connections and money", which diminishes the chances of success for the nonelite.[210] Status distinctions could distort the outcome of a legal action against a well-connected opponent of high status; an opponent of lesser means may not have been able to compensate for a monetary loss, even when the case was won.[211] That is, if the defendant had appeared in court at all, for which the plaintiff perhaps needed the help of powerful patrons; in case of a no-show they needed to pay an auctioneer to be able to procure justice, seizing and selling the defendant's property.[212] Costly and protracted legal actions like these must have provided only a last resort. One can imagine that artisans who mostly conducted smaller transactions would try and avoid the hassle if at all possible,

203 Flohr (2013).
204 Tacoma (2013) 142.
205 Broekaert (2011) 242–5.
206 Broekaert (2011) 221; Terpstra (2008), especially 352-4.
207 Holleran (2017); Hawkins (2006).
208 Cf also Temin (2013a) 97-99 with the example of grain merchants.
209 Terpstra (2008) 351.
210 Terpstra (2008) 365.
211 Hawkins (2006) 94–95.
212 Terpstra (2008) 365; more extensively in Kelly (1966).

and that they were in need of a simpler, less expensive and time-consuming way to gain some economic security and lower transaction costs.[213]

Against this background, the economic importance of a network of people you knew and trusted and who worked in related positions was even higher than it is today, in a world where information travels faster than we can manage it. Clearly it was important to find out as much as possible about the trustworthiness and creditworthiness of a potential business partner or employee. Within a *collegium,* there was plenty of opportunity to share information or to contract out work among fellow associates, reducing transaction costs. Moreover, the formal, hierarchic nature of the *collegia* made them suitable for enforcement and control.

The *collegia* therefore were an important addition to the Romans' institutional framework.[214] Hawkins contends that associations functioned as reputation-based private order enforcement networks, and his view begins to be accepted more widely.[215] The argument may briefly be summarized as follows. The network of *collegiati* provided a basis of trust. There was a strong distinction between insiders and outsiders, making possible long-term cooperation. Not just anyone could join.[216] The formal organization of *collegia* was well-suited to maintain the bonds of trust between their members on the one hand, and to protect the reputation of the *collegium* in the outside world on the other. Surviving guild charters and regulations regularly include a set of communal sanctions that the *collegium* could resort to should a member harm another *collegiatus* in any way: their interference was not limited to economic wrongdoing.[217] Penalties ranged from a warning or a monetary fine to expulsion; the wrongdoer would lose face and become an untrustworthy economic partner, thereby losing valuable connections and opportunities.[218]

The efficiency of associations as private enforcement networks can of course be questioned.[219] It should be noted that with guild by-laws, too, the relation between what was written and what was practiced is not always clear. Decrease in membership, insufficient finances and defaulters could all be a problem. Because of their hierarchical

213 Terpstra (2008) 353: "Most business will have taken place in networks and between known associates"; For some objections to these ideas, see Moatti (2017).

214 Cf Temin (2013a) 100 on the extent of this framework for merchants (= adapted from Kessler and Temin (2007)); Hawkins (2006).

215 Hawkins (2016); Hawkins (2006) chapter 2; see also Hawkins (2012); Broekaert (2011) for a similar argument on 'the potential advantages of being a *collegiatus*'.

216 Cf Broekaert (2011) 227–8.

217 Cf Venticinque (2010) 285–8.

218 Cf Broekaert (2011) 221: "Commercial networks created by the *collegiati* hence offered protection against various risks and uncertainties in a volatile trading world."

219 This paragraph deals with the critique written up in Liu (2017).

nature, there is a chance of internal rivalry among members that could slowly erode the association.[220] Enforcement becomes difficult when the durability and stability of the *collegium* was not secure.[221] If membership became non-committal like this, and if (as Liu suggests) so many alternatives existed, the *collegium* as private order enforcement network would disintegrate.[222]

It seems that the network provided by an active *collegium* as an institution must have been a powerful tool. Not only does membership appear to have been highly valued, the specific nature of *collegia* in Rome and Ostia and the scarce number of associations in the other cities suggest that there were not, in fact, many alternatives. Within the *collegia* that were sustainable enough for us to know of them, networks of trust were strong. The social and religious aspects of collegial life add to so-called multiplex relationships: "The more ties, the closer the connection between the members and the more likely they are to help and protect each other".[223] The integration within *collegia* would be even stronger if there was some overlap with biological or forged family ties, as sometimes was the case; moreover, it is not impossible that family ties were expanded by marriage bonds that were formed through the guild.[224] Apprentices may have been contracted out among fellow *collegiati*.[225] In my view, even the existence of clusters of trust and competition between them within a large *collegium* could strengthen ties, albeit within a subgroup of the association.

Apart from building trust and ensuing business networks among the members themselves, membership of a *collegium* can tentatively be said to have increased the trustworthiness of each individual member in the eyes of potential customers, clients,

220 Liu (2009) 23 points to the strong hierarchy within the *collegia*, so that a member may still find himself in a dispute with an opponent of higher status which could potentially influence the outcome.

221 E.g. Liu (2013) on durability.

222 Liu (2017) 206-12; on p. 216 she argues that because of the lack of alternatives, "*collegia* as reputation based, private order enforcement mechanism may have been best applicable to the organizations of the resident aliens".

223 Broekaert (2011) 227 on multiplex relationships, see also 229–30. Similarly, Venticinque (2010) 288: "What began in the guild hall continued and extended beyond it in the form of closer business partnerships and social and economic connections". Hawkins' explanation of *collegia* as private order enforcement networks also fits Charles Tilly's concept of 'trust networks', as briefly mentioned by Venticinque (2009) 47 and (2010) 276–7.

224 cf Broekaert (2012); Liu (2017) 216.

225 This is actually the main body of Liu (2017) 217-24. Whereas I think that *collegiati* certainly may have used this method to find a master artisan to teach, I do not believe that her examples of family networks of masters and apprentices (Tryphon and Pausiris, discussed at length in chapter 3) provide enough evidence to indicate the existence of an association of weavers; Venticinque (2010) 289-91 likewise sees apprenticeship as a tie between households – via guilds.

or business partners from outside the association. And it is no wonder if *collegiati* were a preferred choice, because there are some indications that the *collegium* may even have accepted liability in case of debts or adverse business outcomes for their members.[226] Moreover, it appears that the *collegium* as a collective, too, was viewed as a trustworthy business partner by external principals, and that the authorities preferred to hand out the contract for public works and distributions to a recognized association.[227]

In sum, whereas the membership of a professional *collegium* was not compulsory for Roman artisans and craftsmen, it seems that not joining an association may have made professional life rather difficult. The happy few on the inside may have made economic life more difficult for those on the out.[228]

Financial benefits

Collegia were recognized legal actors: associations with the right to *corpus habere* could own property and could engage in contracts with 'outsiders', they could sue, and be sued, collectively.[229] There is strength in financial partnership.

If collectives could own property, it follows that they could own slaves and freedmen – even if these were also among their ranks. Collective slaves of *collegia* are not widely known or studied, because there is very little evidence: Ulpian writes that Marcus Aurelius explicitly gave *collegia* with the *ius coeundi* the right to manumit. As a consequence, he goes on, associations could also claim the inheritance of their freedmen.[230] In other words: *collegia* had slaves to manumit. If there was common property, such slaves would be useful to manage it.

Other forms of collective ownership are also attested. An association of merchants set up an altar to the *genius* of the *horrea Agrippiana* in Rome.[231]

---

226 Broekaert (2011) 237-8 with reference to evidence from Roman Egypt: *P. Mich. Inv.* 1277 ("If any one of the undersigned men is held for debt up to the amount of one hundred drachmai in silver, security will be given for him for a period of sixty days by the association") and the very similar *P. Mich. Inv.* 720 (thirty days). Venticinque (2010) 282-3 also has these examples and adds *P. Ryl.* 2. 94 = *Sel. Pap.* 2. 255, 1st c. where an actual dispute has arisen and the weavers' guild steps in.

227 For Roman Egypt, Venticinque (2009) specifically 61 ff; Liu (2009) 23 notes the difficulty in investigating the 'radius of trust' for *collegia*.

228 'The dark side of particularized social capital', Ogilvie (2011); Cf Van Minnen (1987) 68–9 for Roman Egypt.

229 *Dig.* 3.4.1. pr.-1 (Gaius).

230 *Dig.* 40. 3.1 (Ulpian, Sabinus book 5) and *Dig.* 40.3.2 (Ulpian, Sabinus book 14).

231 An altar, or a statue base? The photograph available in the Clauss-Slaby database allows both. *AE* 1915, 97 = *AE* 1923, 57 = *AE* 1927, 97; the other sides of the altar are also inscribed: *Posit(um) dedic(atum) V Idus Iun(ias) / Cn(aeo) Cossutio Eustropho / L(ucio) Manlio Philadelpho // Cur(atores) ann(i) III.* Example from Broekaert (2011) 236.

***AE* 1927, 97**

> pro] salut(e) geni{um}<i> horreor(um) / [A]grippianorum negotiantib(us) / L(ucius) Arrius Hermes / C(aius) Varius Polycarpus / C(aius) Paconius Chrysanthus / immunes s(ua) p(ecunia) d(onum) d(ederunt)
>
> To the well-being of the genius of the horrea Agrippiana by the merchants. L. Arrius Hermes, Caius Varius Polycarpus and Gaius Paconius Chrysanthus, *immunes*, donated this votive from their own funds.

The mention of *immunes* (honorary members with exemption from fees) and, on another side of the monument, *curatores*, indicates that this text concerns merchants in the formal structure of a *collegium*. Here it would seem that they shared storage space in the *horrea*, which could for obvious reasons be useful for merchants. In a similar vein, the *corpus Heliopolitanorum* in Puteoli owned seven *iugera* of land with a cistern and shops (*tabernae*), for the use of members present and future (*eorum possessorum / iuris est qui in cultu corporis Heliopolita/norum sunt eruntve*).[232] Incidentally, this inscription indicates economic cooperation (and zoning) for an otherwise 'ethnically' identified association.

The most important common property may have been the treasury.[233] The *collegium* received admission money and monthly fees, as well as the *summa honoraria* of their magistrates. Endowments to *collegia* are relatively well-attested and could concern substantial sums.[234] Add to this that many guilds also had properties that generated revenue: there probably was money. The common treasury could potentially be a valuable tool in an insecure market, if only because many professional undertakings required a capital investment at the outset. The problem is that we do not know what associations did with their funds. It is possible that they extended loans to members and associates from the common treasury against a favourable rate of interest, or that they encour-

232 *CIL* 10. 1579, with Verboven (2011b) 343. In Roman Egypt there is additional evidence for a sixth-century *collegium* of linen-weavers renting out workshops to its associated members, Broekaert (2011) 233 with reference to *SB* 14. 12282.

233 Liu (2008a) 242 for the unique *arca Titiana,* that belonged to the *centonarii* and *fabri* in Milan jointly, *CIL* 5. 5578; 5738; 5612; 5869.

234 Liu (2008a). *CIL* 6. 1872 = *ILS* 7266, 206 AD quoted above is an example of an endowment, of 10,000 HS in this case.

aged loans between members in which case the formal framework of the association functioned as a guarantee that the money would eventually be paid off.[235]

There were other economic advantages to being a *collegiatus* that have already come to the fore in a different context, but they may be briefly recalled here. *Collegia* were regularly included in distributions of food or money, in which case members invariably received a larger share than the plebs. Often this was a specific *collegium* which, we may safely conclude in line with what has been said above, was probably the single or most important local *collegium*. *CIL* 11. 6053 is exemplary, in its generosity first and foremost towards the councillors (20 HS), then the Augustales (12 HS), the *collegium* of *mercuriales* (10 HS), and finally the people (7 HS).[236] This pattern recurs throughout Italy and the Empire.[237]

Finally, membership of a legitimate *collegium* could come with governmental grants of immunity from public benefactions (*munera*) or other *privilegia*.[238] This is an advantage of *collegium* membership that probably was not widespread in the period under scrutiny. It appears to be connected to the increasing reliance of the state on *collegia* for public services connected to the grain and other supplies over the third and fourth centuries.[239]

Trade unions?

Thus far the focus has been on 'internal' economic benefits, and I have dealt chiefly with relations of trust and enforcement mechanisms for dealings between *collegiati*. It is perhaps to be expected that the *collegia* also pursued external economic benefits by promoting their common interests, regulating a trade like the medieval guilds or demanding more pay or fiscal privileges like a modern trade union.[240] There were no legal formalities to stop them from taking economic action. Still, Tacoma felt that he could write that

> [p]rofessional associations are best known for what they did not do: they did not interfere in the urban economy, at least not before late antiquity. No price-setting

235 Broekaert (2011) 237; Liu (2008a) 245 who suggest in addition that the *collegia* may also have extended credit to outsiders. The only document referred to by both scholars is *P. Strasb*. 4. 287 (6th c. Hermopolis) recording a loan between members of the same association of tow-workers. Interestingly, it is a loan without interest and without surety or penalty.

236 Verboven (2007) 882 with this and other examples; Patterson (2006) 256.

237 But probably not in the city of Rome, Liu (2013) 362.

238 Liu (2009) 109-11; Verboven (2007) 881; *Dig*. 50.6.6.12; and see above.

239 Liu (2009) 113-4.

240 Ausbüttel (1982) 100 argues that the *collegia* did not act as an economic collective, because to his mind *collegia* were not a collective of a single professional group as I believe they were.

> occurred, they had no intermediary role in assigning apprenticeships, they offered no control of the quality of products, they did not monopolize labour.[241]

The evidence for economic action by *collegia* in Roman Italy has really not been researched thoroughly. The reason is simple: much of the evidence we have is from Roman Egypt, it all concerns highly specific cases and it is difficult to draw a general picture form it. Matthew Gibbs in his recent article on *collegia* in the *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* is highly optimistic about the abilities of the guilds to take collective action.[242] But the evidence deserves a closer look.

There is one unique document that shows a form of price regulation and parcelling out the areas of work among the members of an association of salt-dealers, basically doing exactly what we would expect a professional *collegium* to do. It is a first-century papyrus from Tebtunis that has no parallel.[243] Price-fixing by guilds to my knowledge is not otherwise attested, until its prohibition in late Roman law.[244] Likewise guild monopolies were a phenomenon of the later empire only, such as a fourth-century deal for the *saccarii* (porters) unloading goods at the gates of Rome.[245]

There are sporadic attestations of collective action, though most of them late and outside of Roman Italy: there was a riot concerning the bakers at Ephesus in the late second century AD, which we know from a state decree urging the bakers to comply; five *corpora* of sea-going *navicularii* in third-century Arles put a complaint before the *praefectus annonae* Claudius Iulianus about the supply of grain, and got assistance from him as documented in a beautiful bronze plate found in Beirut.[246] The *nautae Rhodanici* may have succeeded in gaining fiscal privileges from the emperor Hadrian in return for which they put up an honorary inscription, found in Valencia.[247] The one example from the city of Rome would be the rebellion of *monetarii* working in the imperial mint against the emperor Aurelianus. They allegedly went to war out of fear of punishment, presumably for fraud.[248] The rebels were defeated cruelly – Aurelian's cruelty is empha-

241 Tacoma (2016) 233.

242 Gibbs (2013) s.v. *collegia*.

243 *P. Mich*. 5. 245; Hawkins (2016) 73; Van Nijf (1997) 13-14.

244 *CJ* 4.59.2; with Venticinque (2009) 70 and n. 89; Van Nijf (1997) 14-15 refers to what was apparently a price war in Smyrna, 1st/2nd c. AD.

245 Liu (2009) 110, with reference to *CTh* 14.22.1 (364 AD); Cf De Robertis (1971) II 192; Sirks (1991) 258.

246 Bakers *IEph.* 215 = *SEG* 4, 512 – the nature of the disturbance is unclear but it may have been a strike, Buckler (1923), caveat Harland, http://www.philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/?p=6299 (accessed 28-7-2016); *navicularii CIL* 3. 14165,08 = ILS 6987, for a brief account of what happened Broekaert (2011) 248.

247 Tran (2011) with reference to *CIL* 12. 1797.

248 Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 35.6 *poenae metu*; he also refers to fraud, cf Eutropius *Brev.* 14.1.

sized by various antique writers.[249] The mint was dissolved for several years. This was not an association arguing for better terms. The possible involvement of several senators and the amount of attention for the revolt in the antique literature suggest that perhaps this was more than a conflict between the emperor and the *monetarii* trying to save their own skin, and that it had developed into a general uprising against the emperor.[250] Nevertheless it is clear that guilds could and did work together in the event of problems with the state or city council – or in case of public assignments from that city council.[251] Conflicts and contracts could also occur with a less lofty employer, of course.[252]

Patrons of the association were likely to intervene on behalf of the *collegium* or an individual members.[253] The political network of high-placed patron was presumably the most efficient way for the collegium to achieve their goals. The inscription for Tiberius Claudius Severus cited above is actually not only an example of a wealthy benefactor and his gift to the association, but it is also an example of an individual's negotiation for navigational rights for the *corpus piscatorum et urinatorum*.[254]

The associations as institutions were steadily incorporated into the imperial bureaucracy, which appears to have made clever use of all available organizational structures. In Roman Egypt, many associations paid their taxes collectively and thereby had become part of the imperial bureaucracy.[255] It remains to be seen what the actual benefits to the state were, and to the *collegiati* – paying taxes collectively was not at all universal, nor was membership of an association. Moreover, there does not appear to be any evidence for this outside of Roman Egypt.[256] It was only in the later empire that the state began to go through *collegia* for specific public services on a larger scale.

For Roman Italy during the first three centuries AD, then, it is in my view impossible to go beyond the conclusion that it is highly likely that *collegia* could defend their interests more easily than individual craftsmen or traders. But as a collective, too, they were at the mercy of the governing bodies in the empire.

---

249 Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 35.6; HA *Aur*. 38.2; ibid. 21. 5-6; *Epit. De Caes*. 35.4; Eutropius *Brev.* 9.14.

250 Cf Dey (2011) 112-13, with n. 7 for extra literature.

251 *P.Tebt.* 2. 287 = *W.Chr.* 251; *P.Oxy.* 12.1414 with Venticinque (2009) 61-7.

252 *P. Oxy* 1668 = *Sel. Pap*. 1.150 – in my opinion, this does not concern a guild, but cf Broekaert (2011) 248.

253 Broekaert (2011) 249–51 discusses this at various levels.

254 *CIL* 6. 1872 = *ILS* 7266. cf Liu (2013) 364.

255 Venticinque (2009) 48–9; Van Minnen (1987) 49. The aforementioned salt-dealers of *P. Mich*. 5. 245 did the same.

256 Gibbs (2013) s.v. 'collegia' in the *EAH* tentatively suggests on the basis of *CTh.* 13.1.17 that paying taxes collectively possibly became obligatory in the 5th century.

CONCLUSION: INTERSECTING AXES OF REFERENCE

The first three centuries AD witnessed rapid change in the position of voluntary associations: their numbers and prestige grew to reach a peak in the second and third century, after which they became increasingly absorbed into the structure of empire. The increase of *collegia* was paired with an increase of governmental rules and recognition of legitimate associations: both developments seem to have reinforced one another. Despite their growing numbers in this period, however, *collegiati* always remained a minority.

Members of associations can be characterized perhaps as a subelite. They filled a niche in the urban community that came with a certain prestige. *Collegia* were a highly visible sub-section of the population that engaged in benefactions to the community and in turn received them from powerful patrons. The collective was prominent and influential in urban society and its esteem and combined power rubbed off on individual members. The internal hierarchy of *collegia* created the associative order, a *cursus honorum* similar but opposed to the civic order, which presented an alternative road to power, as well as a road to alternative power, for those who were for reasons of (mainly) legal status, origin and/or gender not part of the traditional competition for civic influence.

Collegiate membership had the appearance of openness: slave, freed and free could join, and so could men and women. The analysis in this chapter has demonstrated that membership was actually highly selective, because each association had its own demands and restrictions: not just anyone could join. Exclusive membership was perhaps also a prerequisite for the way associations seem to have meddled in all areas of life as dense trust networks. It is no wonder that those on the inside were always a minority.

Members of associations cannot have been the truly poor, who would not have been able to fulfil the financial minimum requirements of many *collegia*. The associations' place in the civic order and the continuation of the *collegia* demanded a substantial income. It is also clear, however, that membership was not restricted to employers and wholesalers. The assumption that membership of associations was a prerogative of (wealthy) freedmen turns out to be equally problematic. Although there is little concrete evidence for slaves and freeborn in the associations, it is evident that membership was decidedly heterogeneous, even within the group of freedmen. Women were the group less likely to join; yet, female members of the *collegia* are attested which suggests that even for them, associations presented a road to alternative power and influence.

Looking at the distribution of various professional *collegia*, it is unsurprising that Rome and Ostia stand out: this is where a plethora of associations can be found. This finding is a reflection of the difference in the position of *collegia* in the civic community. Rome was, of course, one of a kind. Ostia was tightly linked to the capital, though it is interesting to see that here the *collegia* were of a slightly different nature, reflecting the commercial

nature of the port city, and in Ostia associations were apparently more prestigious overall. In Roman Italy as a whole, conversely, the types of associations are limited. The so-called three principal *collegia* are respected and well-reputed everywhere. In larger towns their existence as an umbrella-association (that is including various sub-types of occupation) may be explained in part by the need for vertical subdivision of labour. In smaller towns, however, this need was not as pressing, and their presence is perhaps more defined by their role in the community.

The limited range of associations has consequences for an understanding of their possible role as surrogate families. The argument largely rested on the need for burial provision for the poor. It can be safely said that this was incorrect. As it turns out, however, funerary evidence is a good reflection of the range of overlap between family bonds and *collegia*, ranging from burial solely by the *collegium*, to only the family and everything in between. Some Romans will have been without family at the time of their death, which is predicted by high mortality, urban family forms, and the problems of family formation of migrants in the city. In some cases, family and association were literally the same thing, including biological relations or extended family of (fellow) slaves and freedmen. Both collegial and familial relationships lay at the heart of most business partnerships. It should not come as a surprise that sometimes they were one and the same.

The recognition of combined social and economic functions in *collegia* reintroduces the comparison with medieval and early modern guilds. The multiplex ties of social, religious, familial *and* economic nature provided an valuable and efficient means of battling economic insecurity and transaction costs in a world where information was scarce. The formal organizational structure of the associations aided enforcement of business partnerships and other labour agreements, provided of course that the *collegia* were stable and durable. There is, therefore, quite enough common ground to incorporate the Roman *collegia* in a global history of the guilds in pre-industrial times.[257] The collective was a business partner to the outside world, its importance was reflected in legal state benefits, collective property aided in battling economic risks, and the association could take collective action to defend the rights of individuals of the group.

257 Lucassen, De Moor, and Van Zanden (2008) 10. The article is entitled 'The return of the guilds: towards a global history of the guilds in pre-industrial times'.