Sacerdotes piae: priestesses and other female cult officials in the western part of the Roman Empire from the first century B.C. until the third century A.D.

Gaspar, V.M.

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This PhD thesis investigates the roles of women in public religious life in the towns of the western, Latin-speaking part of the Roman Empire. The main sources on which this study is based are inscriptions, evidence that has been neglected until very recently.
Sacerdotes piae

Priestesses and other female cult officials in the western part of the Roman Empire
from the first century B.C. until the third century A.D.

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Veerle Maria Gaspar
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Promotor: prof. dr. E.A. Hemelrijk

Overige leden: prof. dr. G.D. Woolf
prof. dr. M. Gnade
prof. dr. L. de Blois
prof. dr. O.J. Hekster
dr. L.A. Dirven
dr. J.A. van Rossum
dr. A.M.J. Derks

Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen
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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements iii
Introduction 1
Chapter 1: Methodological and historical backgrounds 8
  Introduction 8
  1: Status Quaestiosis 8
    1.1: Works on religious roles of women in the western provinces 9
    1.2: Views on the religious roles of women in Roman antiquity 10
  2: The role of women in Roman society 12
  3: Romanization and its influences on towns and people 15
    3.1: The diffusion of Roman(ised) habits and difficulties identifying them 16
    3.2: The impact of Romanization 17
  4: Civic religion in the provinces 19
    4.1: Civic religion and the role of the elite 19
    4.2: Différences between towns and regions 20
  5: Public and private in the Roman Empire 21
    5.1: The ancient sources on public and private 24
    5.2: The ancient sources on Roman and foreign 26
    5.3: Modern views 28
    5.4: Politics, community and ‘publicness’ and the changing role of women 30
    5.5: Location and its relation to public religion 31
    5.6: Organising public religion in Rome, Italy and in the provinces:
        the role of the local council 34
    5.7: Financing public religion and the appointment of public priests 35
    5.8: Summary 36
  6: Epigraphy and the study of Roman priestesses 38
    6.1: Reasons for erecting inscriptions and their relation to Romanization 39
    6.2: Problems and limitations of the use of inscriptions as historical source 40
    6.3: Types of Inscriptions 43
Conclusions of this chapter 44
Chapter 2: Female priesthood: an overview 46
  Introduction 46
  1: Religious titles 46
1.1: Sacerdos and its variants  
1.2: Antistes and antistitia  
1.3: (Mater) Sacrorum  

2: Distribution and Romanization  
   2.1: The geographical and chronological spread  
   2.2: Sacerdotes stricto sensu  
   2.3: Priestesses of cities and perpetual priestesses  

3: Deities served by female officials  
   3.1: Goddesses  
   3.2: Gods  

Conclusions of this chapter  

Chapter 3: Religious officials in the cult of Ceres  

Introduction  

1: The Ceres cult in Rome  
   1.1: Ceres in early Rome: the Aventine triad and the Greek cult  
   1.2: Priestly officials of the Roman Ceres  

2: The Ceres cults in Italy  
   2.1: The Italian Ceres cults  
   2.2: The cults of Demeter in Italy  
   2.3: Priestly titles and local peculiarities  
   2.4: Priesthoods of Ceres and their links to Libera, Magna Mater and Venus  
   2.5: The rank and social standing of the Italian priestesses of Ceres  

3: The Ceres cults in Africa  
   3.1: The epigraphic evidence  
   3.2: Peculiarities of the African Ceres cults  
   3.3: The names of the African priestesses  
   3.4: The social rank of the priestesses  
   3.5: Cult and priestly standing in Carthage  
   3.6: The standing of non-Carthaginian priests of Ceres or the Cereres  
   3.7: Some conclusions about the African cults of Ceres  
    
    Excursus: African priestesses of Tellus  

Conclusions  

Chapter 4: The religious side of being a priestess  

Introduction  

1: Religious tasks  
   1.1: Sacrificing  
   1.2: Processions, festivals and banquets  

v
1.3: Dedicating
1.4: Other tasks
1.5: Tasks of ancillary officials

2: Priestesses as embodiment of ritual
2.1: Age and years of service
2.2: Chastity and prostitution
2.3: Clothing and outward appearance

Conclusion

Chapter 5: Being a woman, holding a priesthood: the social life of the priestesses

Introduction

1: Family life and public image
1.1: Marital status and the role of family members
1.2: The public image of the priestess: death and remembrance

2: Becoming a priestess
2.1: Election and appointment
2.2: The familial background of the priestess and hereditary priesthoods
2.3: Summae honorariae and gifts

3: Priesthoods and social rank
3.1: The rank of the priestesses in the provinces
3.2: Multiple and joint priesthoods, social rank and standing
3.3: Holding a priesthood as a way to consolidate or enhance one’s standing

4: Priesthoods, euergetism and public honour
4.1: Benefactions and patronage
4.2: Public honours
4.3: The cause and result of acting in public: auctoritas

Conclusion

Epilogue

Conclusion

Summary

Nederlandse samenvatting

List of abbreviations

Appendix

Catalogue

Bibliography

Biography
Introduction

‘No offices, no priesthoods, no triumphs, no decorations, no gifts, no spoils of war can come to them; elegance of appearance, adornment, apparel – these are the woman’s badges of honour; in these they rejoice and take delight; these our ancestors called the woman’s world.’

These are the words of the tribune Lucius Valerius as written down by Livy in his 34th book. With his speech in 195 BC, Valerius tried – eventually successfully – to convince the senate that the Oppian Law should be repealed, while at the same time the women of Rome were demonstrating against this law that limited women's display of expensive goods.

That women could not hold triumphs or acquire war booty is obvious, and that political offices were closed to them may be clear as well, but to state that they could not hold priesthoods is simply incorrect, not only regarding the women who lived anno 195 BC in Rome itself (to whom this fragment of Livy refers), but also – and especially – those living in the cities of Italy and the provinces of the Empire in later times. There, women could become prominent in public life as priestesses (sacerdotes) or members of the lower cult personnel, as many inscriptions, statues and buildings dedicated by these women from all over the Roman Empire show.

No wonder that it has been stated by modern historians that religion ‘provided the single public space where women played a significant formal role,’ despite the apparent conflict between the traditional (domestic) activities reserved for women and public religious service. While most priests in the Roman Empire were men, from the third century BC onwards women acted increasingly in major ritual roles and priesthoods. Although most priestesses lived in the imperial period and in Italy and the provinces, they were certainly not absent from Rome, where several women, presumably for reasons of argument omitted by Lucius Valerius, held a religious office even in early times. The Vestals were the oldest and most important public priestesses in Rome; their special status has been subject to much discussion. The regina sacrorum and the flaminica Dialis held their office because of

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1 Livy 34.7.8-9. Transl. Evan T. Sage. Non magistratus nec sacerdotia nec triumphi nec insignia nec dona aut spolia bellica is contingere possess. munditiae et ornatus et cultus, haec feminam insignia sunt, his gaudent et gloriantur, hunc mundum muliebrem appellareat maiores nostri. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations in this dissertation are my own.
2 In the eastern part of the Empire women could hold offices with a seemingly political character, but these were honorary. See: Van Bremen (1996).
3 The existence of Vestals and the priestesses of Ceres (see chapters 2 and 3) clearly proves this.
8 Beard, North and Price (1998) 82.
10 See also footnote 29.
their marriage to the *rex sacrorum* and the *flamen Dialis* respectively, and the same was true for the *flaminicae Martialis* and *Quirinalis*. Unfortunately very little is known about these last priestesses and their tasks.

It has been remarked several times that in the cities of Italy and the provinces the evidence for women acting as priestesses is more abundant. Despite this fact, which shows their importance for religious life, modern scholars have not paid much attention to the role of women in provincial religion; there is no in-depth study of priestesses in the Roman Empire. In order to fill this gap, the present thesis will focus on female religious officials in Italy and the Western provinces of the Empire. As ‘Roman religion’ was the result of a two-way process in which Rome influenced the provinces and the provinces influenced Rome, it seems justified to speak of the women who figure in this study as ‘Roman priestesses’.

Apart from filling a gap, this thesis, which is mainly based on epigraphic evidence but includes – whenever possible – also literary sources, has another goal. This second goal is to provide an exhaustive review, enabling us to check, and in some cases correct, our understanding of the public roles of women in Roman religion. It has been thought for a long time that women’s role in Roman religion was unimportant, or even marginal. This view is based on literary sources like Livy, quoted above, and is focussed on the city of Rome, where, it is said, only the Vestals, the *Flaminica Dialis* and *Regina Sacrorum*, and some ‘foreign’ women (the Greek priestesses of Ceres) held a religious office. However, Latin inscriptions – evidence that has been neglected until very recently – provide a different picture of women’s religious roles, both in and outside Rome. It will become clear that women served various deities in a wide range of religious offices.

Several questions concerning the nature of the priesthoods held by women will be discussed: what kinds of religious offices were open to women? Where did priestesses serve and in which cults? What was the most important cult open to them, and what were the most notable characteristics of this cult and its priestesses? The practical side of holding a religious office – including special requirements and tasks – and the position of priestesses in their local communities are other key elements that will pass under review. By discussing these topics, I hope to reach a better understanding of female priesthoods in the cities of Italy and the western provinces of the Roman Empire. Although the central topic of this study is female priesthood, it also deals with gender. Male priests will figure as material of comparison, especially when they acted in the same cults as priestesses.

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11 According to Boëls (1973) 92, the parts of religious couples supplemented each other for the sake of a harmony between religious powers. In general, couples were important in Roman religion: the gods themselves were often worshipped in couples of a male and a female, Le Bonniec (1958) 297.
12 Rüpke lists two *Flaminicae Martialis*, both named Publicia; *Rüpke* 2853 and 2854. See also Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 3.13.11.
13 Boëls (1973) 77.
14 In addition, Roman citizenship was not limited to the city of Rome, and many provincial towns showed many similarities with the City, see also chapter 1.
15 For references, see chapter 1, section 1.2.
As a result of the obvious socio-cultural differences between Rome, Italy and the provinces, and the fact that most gods and goddesses served by priestesses were Roman deities (or rather: had the same names as those worshipped in Rome), the concept of Romanization will figure prominently in this thesis.

Chapter 1 provides a discussion of this term as well as a short overview of the most relevant modern studies on women in Roman society – particularly with respect to their place in religion. In a separate section attention will be paid to civic religion, which forms the religious context of most local priesthoods. As the terms ‘public’ and ‘private’ are closely linked to women in Roman society and to civic religion, I will examine their meaning in the first chapter as well. Furthermore, the possibilities and limitations of epigraphic evidence for the study of priestesses will be dealt with.

In chapter 2 several questions that explain some basic aspects of the phenomenon of female priesthoods will pass under review: in which cults did women serve, what titles did they carry and where were their inscriptions found? Although this view is nowadays more nuanced, it has often been assumed that women served goddesses and men served gods. This chapter will clearly show that this supposition is rightly contested.

The third chapter is based on the largest single group of inscriptions recording priestesses. It will provide a discussion of the role of women in the cults of the goddess Ceres, and in the related cult of Tellus. The character of Ceres, her cults and religious personnel in Rome, Italy and Africa, the three areas where *sacerdotes Cерерis* have been attested epigraphically, will pass under review. Throughout the chapter, attention will be paid to gender, standing and the social background of the priestesses. Besides, Roman, Greek, Italian and indigenous factors that helped shape the Ceres cults will figure prominently.

Chapters 4 and 5 give answers about the daily lives of priestesses in local towns. The subject of chapter 4 is the *religious* side of holding a priesthood. This chapter discusses the various religious tasks of priestesses and of women with ancillary offices, from dedicating to sacrificing. Sacrificing and its relation to women have been subject to some debate. It has been stated that women were not allowed to carry out animal sacrifice, but as we shall see, this view needs to be corrected. Sometimes, priestesses had to meet special requirements, for instance being chaste during their time of office and wearing special clothing. These requirements are the topic of the second part of chapter 4 which discusses the function of priestesses as embodiment of ritual.

Chapter 5 focuses on the place of priestesses in local society, both as women and as public persons. It starts with a short description of the family life of the priestesses and their image that was propagated in their epitaphs. This is followed by a discussion about the appointment of the priestesses, the *summa honoraria* they had to pay and the way familial relations could play a role in being elected.

\[16\] Apart from the *flaminicae* acting in the imperial cult.
as priestess. Furthermore, their social rank will pass under review, just as the benefactions they gave to their towns and the public honours they received in return. This shows that another persistent assumption about the life of Roman women – that the only appropriate place for them was inside the house – is simply incorrect. All these topics show that holding a priesthood influenced the whole life of a woman, that it was something to be proud of and to be remembered after her death. This can best be demonstrated by the wealth of evidence left behind by the famous priestesses of Pompeii, with which this thesis ends.

The present study is based on a catalogue of inscriptions that record women who served as priestesses and other religious officials. The epigraphic material consists of Latin inscriptions erected in Italy and the western, Latin speaking provinces of the Empire. In practice this means that the inscriptions were originally set up in Rome, Italy, Gallia and Hispania, Mauretania, Numidia and Africa, Germania, Pannonia, Moesia and Dalmatia. No priestesses – that is: of the deities included, see below – are attested epigraphically in other provinces.17 As the names of several Roman provinces changed over time, I have decided to use the names in vogue at the death of the emperor Trajan in AD 117 (e.g., Hispania Tarraconensis instead of Hispania Citerior). For the sake of convenience, I have made a distinction between inscriptions from Africa Proconsularis, Mauretania and Numidia, but it should be kept in mind that the borders of these provinces shifted in the course of time as a result of Roman political decisions (see also chapter 3, section 3).

Almost all inscriptions recording priestesses stem from the imperial period, and accordingly, the first to third century AD will be central in this study. However, some Italian priestesses of Venus and Ceres are attested on inscriptions from the end of the Republic, and therefore, the period under discussion is wider than those three centuries under imperial rule.

Ceres and Venus have already been mentioned as goddesses whose priesthoods were held by women, but they were no exceptions: many other deities were also served by priestesses. This thesis focuses on female religious officials who served in the cults of Roman and Romanised deities and personifications, like Spes and Salus. The deities who are recorded in the catalogue are not only some of those included in the pantheon as listed by Ennius,18 like Juno, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mercury and Jupiter, but also various others, like Bona Dea, Liber, Tellus, Fortuna, Caelestis, Mater Matuta, Angitia, Saturn and Dis Pater. Apart from these gods, goddesses and personifications, priestesses whose religious title does not clarify which deity they served, are included, for instance

17 Even though there is evidence for ‘prophetic priestesses’ among the Germans, see: Rives (2002) 153-155. See also chapter 2, footnote 46.
18 The Di Consentes were Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Apollo; Ennius, fragment 45 = Varro RR 1.1.5; Long (1987) 235; Turcan (1988) 10. The pantheon is no useful category, for we do not know whether the order of gods was fixed or subject to individual decisions, Rüpke (2007b) 4-5.
women who are simply called *sacerdos* (see sections 1.1 and 2.2 of chapter 2). Besides, priestesses who carried a Roman(ised) title, but who served deities that had no Roman names, are recorded in the catalogue. Their inscriptions make up only a small part of the total, but as the priestesses were clearly subject to influences from Rome (e.g., resulting in the erection of Latin inscriptions and the use of Latin religious titles) they deserve to be discussed as well.

In addition to priestesses (*sacerdotes, antistitae* etc.; see chapter 2), several women who held offices as *magistrae* and *ministrae* have been attested epigraphically. Like many *sacerdotes, magistrae* and *ministrae* did not always add the name of a deity to their title. When there are convincing arguments to range them under the category of religious officials, these women are also recorded in the catalogue. Apart from *magistrae* and *ministrae*, I have also included women with other religious functions in the cults selected above, for example the *canistriarum* of Ceres in North Africa, or women supporting a local cult and its priestesses in a more mundane way, for instance by providing the victims as ‘public pig breeder’ (*porcaria publica*) or acting as religious slaves.

Due to the limited scope of this thesis, I had to exclude some priestesses and members of the lower cult personnel. I have decided not to include women serving as religious officials in the cults of deities originating from the Near East and Egypt, i.e. mainly those of Isis and Magna Mater, even though I am aware that some of these deities received a state cult in Rome at an early stage, and that, in case of Magna Mater, the cult spread to the rest of the Empire via Rome, and not directly from Pessinus. The women acting as priestesses of these divinities are only occasionally mentioned in the text as comparison or when they offer the best way of illustrating some aspect of female religious life in general. The priestesses involved in the imperial cult are another category I have not included, partly for the same reason: as *flaminicae* are more frequently attested on inscriptions than any other type of female priesthood, it is beyond the scope of the present study to incorporate them, other than as

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19 E.g., cat.no.195.
20 See also chapter 4, footnote 92.
21 Fortunately, a special study has already been devoted to women in the cult of Isis, see Heyob (1975). Priestesses of Isis are for the first time attested in the imperial period; they seldom held the highest positions and not all cult offices were open to women, Heyob (1975) 82, 88, 95, 110.
22 A specific study of the religious officials of Magna Mater – both men and women – is still a *desideratum*. The goddess had an elaborate cult organization, with many different groups of male and female officials from various backgrounds, Beard (1994) 173.
23 The priesthood of Magna Mater had always been open to both sexes, and flowered mainly in imperial times when citizens could become priestesses and priests (though not *Galli*, although from the reign of the emperor Claudius onwards, the *archigallus* had to be an officially appointed Roman citizen); Grallot (1912) 239; Thomas (1984) 1528; Rüpke (2005) 630-631; Lambrechts (1952) 148. Only when the priestesses of Magna Mater served also other deities, they are included in the catalogue.
24 I mention the *CIL* numbers (or those of other *corpora*) of these inscriptions that are not included in the catalogue in the footnotes. The inscriptions that are included in the catalogue are referred to by their catalogue numbers.
material of comparison. A second reason to exclude them is that they have already been discussed extensively in several recent articles.25

Another group of priestesses that is excluded are the Roman Vestals, whom have been given much attention by modern scholars.26 They have not only been left out because they were different; different from any other phenomenon of Roman life or ritual,27 but also because the cult of Vesta was restricted to Rome28 and a few surrounding towns:29 Bovillae, Lavinium30 and Tibur.31 As a consequence, Vesta’s priestesses have not been attested in the rest of Italy and the provinces of the Empire, and therefore they are not comparable to the priestesses that are recorded in the catalogue. The same holds true for the reginae sacrorum and the Roman flaminicae of individual gods (i.e. the Dialis, Martialis and Quirinalis).

As I focus on the Latin speaking part of the Empire, priestesses in Greek-speaking provinces who are recorded on Latin inscriptions or priestesses living in the West but attested on Greek inscriptions, are not included.32 Occasionally, they are mentioned in the text or referred to in a footnote when their inscriptions add some useful information, can be used as comparison or record a relevant priesthood – for example that of Ceres.

Concerning this selection of inscriptions and priestesses, there are a few specific problems. The first is that, although the catalogue will be as complete as possible, it can never be exhaustive, because not all inscriptions have been published yet and new ones are discovered regularly.33 In addition, there is a

25 Hemelrijk (2005); Eadem (2006a and b); Eadem (2007). I exclude the flaminicae and sacerdotes of imperial women, but I include women who served goddesses or personifications related to the imperial house, like Tutela Augusta and Spes Augusta, for although these were closely related to the imperial cult, they were not identical with it. The two female sacerdotes Augustalium that are attested epigraphically are excluded, even though the religious activities of the Augustales were not always limited to the imperial cult, Mouritsen (2006) 237, 240, 241, 242. AE 2001, 854 records Marcia Polybiana from Liternum (region 1). The Augustales from this town seem to have been mainly involved in the imperial cult, as the words i qui in cultu domus divinae contulerant that are part of Marcia Polybiana’s inscription, show. Therefore, this inscription has not been included in the catalogue. The other inscription recording a female sacerdos Augustalium (AE 1993, 477) stems from Misenum (region 1), a town in which the links between the Augustales and the imperial cult were also especially strong, see Mouritsen (2006) 241. Accordingly, this inscription is also excluded. About CIL 6, 9044 = ILS 7355, Rüpke (2005) 1050, no. 1967, writes that the woman mentioned may have been honoured with a priesthood, but there is no evidence to prove this.
26 Beard (1980); Beard (1995); Martini (2004); Mekacher (2006); Wildfang (2006); Takács (2008).
29 Granino Cecere (2003) discusses the epigraphic and literary evidence for the Vesta cult outside Rome. See also Wissowa (1915) 2-4, about the Vestals from Bovillae and Wissowa (1915) 23 about the one from Lavinium.
30 According to a legend from Lavinium, Vesta made a woman her priestess, Eichnauer (1988) 50.
31 Eichnauer (1988) 49-50
32 When used by the native inhabitants, the use of Latin in the non-Latin speaking parts of Italy had a political side and showed the acceptance of Roman values, Lomas (1993) 175. The same is true for other parts of the Empire.
33 Cf. Millar (1983) 83. Besides, it is difficult to determine to what extent this catalogue is representative of all priestesses of the western provinces, cf. Joshel (1992) 17. Besides, it should be stressed that the epigraphic material is lacunose and stems from many different places, which implies that the picture that emerges from the total collection is inevitably deformed by religious differences between the provinces. Obviously, this is true of
discrepancy between epigraphic and iconographic evidence. Sometimes statues\textsuperscript{34}, wall-paintings,\textsuperscript{35} reliefs that accompany inscriptions or votive stones with only carvings, depict female religious officials who have not been attested epigraphically.\textsuperscript{36} This iconographic evidence will not be discussed. Despite these omissions, there is still a wealth of information available, which enables us to gain a clear picture of women’s religious roles in the Western part of the Roman Empire.

\textsuperscript{34} Wrede (1981) 114, 298.
\textsuperscript{35} Silberberg-Peirce (1993-1994) 30: On several wall paintings, often in houses of members of the imperial family, priestesses are depicted.
\textsuperscript{36} Stones with carvings but without accompanying text that records women in a priestly role, are not included in the catalogue.
Chapter 1: Methodological and historical backgrounds

Introduction

As women are central to this dissertation, this chapter starts with an overview of ancient and modern writings about women in antiquity, showing the place the present thesis takes in the field (section 1). This status quaestionis is followed by a short discussion of the role of women, both in Rome and in the western provinces of the Empire, providing the necessary background to which the phenomenon of female priesthood can be interpreted (section 2).

I have already indicated in the introduction that Roman religion was not the religion of the City only, and it is the differences in priestesses open to women between Rome, Italy and the provinces that are striking, just as provincial religion with its various facets itself. Closely related to religion and the differences between Rome and the provinces is the process of Romanization, which will be discussed in section 3. A key factor in this process, linked to the existence of provincial religion is urbanisation and the development of urban life. Therefore, a special section deals with the municipal organization of religion and the role civic religion played in the lives of the inhabitants of provincial towns (section 4).

As the concepts public and private have played an important role in works about both Roman women and Roman religion – not only in the works of modern scholars but also in the Roman discourse – they will be discussed in section 5. The last section (section 6) of this chapter deals with inscriptions, the main sources used in this thesis. A discussion of the characteristics, possibilities and limitations of epigraphic evidence for the study of priestesses will be provided.

1: Status Quaestionis

Ancient History was for a long time determined by a traditional way of interpreting the sources; this was done by men and in the context of the nineteenth and twentieth century bourgeois’ view on the sexes,¹ resulting in several persistent assumptions about the roles and proper place of men and women in Roman society. In the sixties and seventies, as a result of the women’s movement,² the study of women in Antiquity became more common.³ After the concept of gender was introduced to historians

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by Joan Scott in 1986,\(^4\) it became a core notion: instead of paying attention to women, separate from men, the masculine was incorporated and the role played by gender as a social construct was emphasized.\(^5\) Furthermore, attention was paid to the biases of the (mainly literary) sources that were only rarely directly produced by women.\(^6\) As a consequence, other sources entered the field of women’s ancient history, like inscriptions, sculpture, coins, \textit{papyri} and vase paintings.\(^7\)

\textbf{1.1: Works on religious roles of women in the western provinces}\(^8\)

However, despite these important changes, many works about religious roles of women in antiquity rely solely or mainly on literary sources.\(^9\) As the literary sources are produced by men from the upper class and tend to focus on the elite, they are doubly biased. These works have moral, didactic and artistic aims and are often not contemporaneous with the things they describe.\(^10\) They are prescriptive and have a limited scope, tending to obscure the role of women, especially those acting in the public sphere. They are – on the field of religion – only interested in women’s activities in rites in which men did not play a role.\(^11\)

Therefore, the information these literary sources offer about (the importance of) priestesses is limited; only when they acted in untraditional or exceptional ways attention has been paid to female \textit{sacerdotes} (mostly the Vestals).\(^12\) Women holding religious offices in the provinces are virtually absent from these works – although that has more to with a Romano-centric attitude than with gender.\(^13\) Probably for these reasons, modern works about Roman priesthoods concentrate on male priests and on Rome. And when the religious roles of Roman women are discussed, the focus is on female public festivals (e.g. the \textit{Matronalia}), likely as a by-product of the assumption that women were almost exclusively concerned with fertility and children, as Schultz writes.\(^14\) This thesis tries to restore

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\(^6\) For more information about the gender approach and the role of feminism in ancient history, see e.g.: Gold (1997); Hallett (1993); Rabinowitz (1993); Sharrock (1997).

\(^7\) Considering this change in sources used, DeForest (1993) iii, is a bit too negative when she writes that *Almost everything we know about women in Greco-Roman antiquity has been passed down through the writings of men.* Examples of positive results in women’s history when using other *non-literary* sources: Glinister (2006) 92: the use of votives in Hellenistic central Italy point to a greater participation of women in religion than often been thought. And: Schultz (2006) 4: literature combined with epigraphy and archaeology show that the religious activities of Roman women were more extensive than often assumed.

\(^8\) As may be clear, I will discuss here the modern works that concentrate on the western provinces; those about the east, like Van Bremen (1996), are left out of the discussion.


\(^12\) Kraemer (1992) 76; Schultz (2006) 4, 6-7, 50.

\(^13\) This explains the fact that the literary sources neither pay much attention to \textit{male} priests in the provinces.

the balance by showing that women could hold religious offices in cults that were not preoccupied with fertility.

As the ancient literary sources on Roman religion concentrate on (Republican) Rome, modern studies have not paid much attention to religion in the provinces, even though the provincial towns were no copies of Rome and deserve to be studied in their own right.\textsuperscript{15} Fortunately, this is changing nowadays and recently the differences between the religion of the Urbs and religion in the provinces have become the subject of various studies.\textsuperscript{16} Still, most works about women and religion in Roman antiquity focus on (the republican city of) Rome and are sometimes very general in nature.\textsuperscript{17} despite the fact that in the last two decades several detailed articles have been published about priestesses in specific areas outside Rome, or books of which parts are devoted to women’s religious offices.\textsuperscript{18} A covering study however, is still lacking, and as I have already mentioned in the introduction, this dissertation aims to fill this gap.\textsuperscript{19}

1.2: Views on the religious roles of women in Roman antiquity

The most important views that can be summarized from modern studies on the religious roles of Roman (i.e. mainly from the City) women can be divided in four main categories. The first group, to which for instance John Scheid (1992) belongs, represents the traditional view. Although he has moderated his opinion in 2003, Scheid’s previous view has been followed by several others.\textsuperscript{20} In 1992 Scheid wrote that women were excluded from the most important and official aspects of religion and acted only in marginal cults, ‘on the fringes of religious life.’\textsuperscript{21} ‘Religion – the one true religion – was essentially a man’s affair.’\textsuperscript{22} In 2003 he still asserted that women always acted as a complement to men and never out of their own initiative, but that this did not imply marginality.\textsuperscript{23} He also stated that the Roman female sacerdotes Ceraseris were possibly the complements of the male flamen Cerialis and/or the aediles of the Aventine Triad.\textsuperscript{24} However, the available evidence does not offer any

\textsuperscript{15} Ladage (1971) discusses both priesthoods in Rome and the western provinces of the Empire. He does not pay attention to priestesses, and mentions them only occasionally.
\textsuperscript{16} For example those by Beard, North and Price (1998) I, chapter 7; Cancik and Rüpke (1997); Spickermann, Cancik and Rüpke (2001) and others.
\textsuperscript{18} Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998); Savunen (1997).
\textsuperscript{19} The only book fully devoted to priestships held by women in antiquity is Guerra Gómez (1978). As it discusses not only Greek and Roman priestesses, but women involved in Christianity as well, it is very general in nature and provides only descriptions instead of discussions. When the author mentions inscriptions, he does not discuss individual priestesses or the context of the inscriptions.
\textsuperscript{21} Scheid (1992) 397.
\textsuperscript{22} Scheid (1992) 400.
\textsuperscript{23} Scheid (2003a) 138, 144: ‘Complémentarité ne signifie pas marginalité.’
\textsuperscript{24} Scheid (2003a) 143-144, 145. Scheid (2003a) 142-143 writes that in the Ludi Saeculares matrons offered a supplication to Juno, but did so on the initiative of the quindecemviri. They complemented the quindecemviri,
information about the precise relationship between the different priest(esse)s of Ceres (see chapter 3). It seems that as a consequence of a persistent view on female public roles and terms defined by literature written by men, women who acted in religious roles equal to those of men were considered by Scheid as exceptional and in need of a special explanation. In any case, such a dependence of priestesses on priests can certainly not be attested in the provinces of the Empire.

The second group of modern authors criticizes the traditional view. They also stress the special character of female priesthoods, but do not see this character as marginal or merely complementary. Schultz is an example; she thinks that priestesses have to be seen as a separate category, distinct from male public priests. She writes that we should not hold ‘the requirements of male public priests as definitive for all public priests’, because the ‘category of female priesthood is distinct from, not simply an exceptional subset of, Roman priesthoods’. Raepsaet-Charlier agrees with Schultz. She has stated that the roles of priestesses and other women active in religion were different from those of men, but no less essential for the religious life of their communities. Therefore, their roles should not be viewed negatively. When ‘the male’ is taken as basis and standard, one runs the risk of considering the actions of women necessarily as ‘less valuable’. Of course, Roman society was male-centred, but that does not have to imply that in religion the female was necessarily less important. Clearly, this view has much to offer, but we have to take care not to over-stress the role of women, as some authors tend to do. In addition, it is questionable whether priestesses in the provinces are indeed to be viewed as a separate category from priests – in fact, I think not, as male and female sacerdotes had much in common, ranging from their tasks to their descent to their prominence in municipal life.

A third group exists of modern scholars who do not overestimate or underestimate the role of women in Roman religion but lay (perhaps too) much stress on the (supposed) character of the cults in which women served. They write that women concentrated on the worship of goddesses of healing like the flaminica Dialis and Regina sacrorum complemented the flamen and the rex. This implies that Scheid sees the quindecimviri in the first place as men, and not as priests. The question can be asked whether this is justified, and whether ordinary Roman men took the initiative to organize important rites like suplications, without the assistance of priests – which I think is rather unlikely.

25 Pf Lundein (2006) 50 note 78. Pf Flemming (2007) 89, who writes that ‘(…) pre-existing assumptions about women’s position within the Roman state and society have over-determined views of her religious roles. It is therefore assumed that those cults and rites in which women actively participated must, a priori, have been marginal, because of that very participation.’
27 Pf Schultz (2006) 149. This view has some similarities with that of Scheid (2003a).
28 In Le Deuxième Sexe, De Beauvoir (1949) has extensively discussed the thesis that the male is normative and essential, while the female is inessential: he is the Subject and the Absolute, she is only the Other.
30 See e.g. Silberberg-Peirce (1993-1994) 30.
31 Obviously, differences between priests and priestesses will have existed – possibly in decision making, for in Rome this seems to have been reserved for male priests, see e.g. the Arval Brethren. Pf Scheid (2003a) 138. However, the evidence for male sacerdotes in the provinces who are involved in decision making is virtually absent, like that of their female colleagues. Therefore, I think that a division of priests and priestesses in the provinces in two separate categories is unjustified.
32 Pf Schultz (2006) 3 has also noted this focus on ‘women’s rites’ in many modern studies.
and procreation and acted in rites related to fertility and sexuality. However, the sphere of influence of divinities connected to fertility and childbirth was not restricted to these aspects, and the worship of female deities in general was an integral part of Roman religion. Furthermore, it is certainly not true that women – especially those in the provinces, as we shall see – only acted in ‘women’s cults’, focused on fertility and performed for ‘women’s goddesses’. ‘Women’s cult’ is an ideological loaded term that is better to avoid and the circular argument that when women were involved in the cult of a deity, this deity was concerned with feminine issues should be thrown overboard. Besides, women who held priestly positions which involved activities traditionally viewed as reserved for males (e.g., sacrificing, see also chapter 4 section 1.1) should not be seen as ‘crossing into male’ territory’ as some scholars think, but simply as women who held an office with accompanying tasks that ‘belonged’ to them, just as taking care of the household or bearing children, and just as other priesthoods and political offices belonged to men.

Finally, a group of modern scholars who have concentrated on women’s religious roles in the provinces can be detected. Most share the same view and think that religion provided a chance for ‘marginal groups’, including women, to advance their social standing. Religion was one of the few areas in which women could appear in public. Some authors even maintain that religion was the only public space where women could play ‘a significant formal role.’ Even though this is exaggerated, as the existence of e.g. benefactresses show, the importance of religion and religious offices for women in Italy and the provinces is clearly visible in the epigraphic sources, as this thesis shows.

2: The role of women in Roman society

In this section, I will discuss a few basic aspects of the (ideal) position of women in Roman society and Roman religion that serve as a background to which priestesses and women with other official religious roles can be interpreted. Generally speaking, in the literary sources women were perceived to

37 Cf. Schultz (2006) 15. Koch (1955) is a good example of a modern scholar who links religion, women and fertility. He writes (p.21-22) about the phenomenon of the combined priesthood of Venus and Ceres that has been attested in Italy (see chapter 3): ‘Alle Wahrscheinlichkeit spricht dafür, daß die Parallelordnung und die gelegentliche Priestergemeinschaft der Kulte aus dem Wesen der beiden Gestalten, sofern Ceres und Venus Fraugöttinnen sind, erklärt werden müssen.’ Chirass Colombo (1981) 412, 425-426, is another example, who sees Ceres partly as a women’s goddess.
be different from men; they were viewed as the – morally deficient – ‘Other’. 41 They were often supposed to be moral inferior and liable to uncontrollable emotions, because of which they needed to be guarded and their influence had to be limited. 42 They did not possess official political power; their power was informal, and as a consequence, they usually did not figure in political history, or only in a negative way (if they were too influential). 43 In analogy with their lack of official political power, which always included an element of representation, it has been argued that women could be priestesses for themselves or for other women, but that they could not represent the Roman people or other communities. 44 As we shall see, in some respects this is an over-simplification: women could be representatives of their town or a collegium. And as politics encompassed religion, one could even state that women were indirectly included in political life. 45

In general, juridical sources provide a more positive picture of women than literature. From the first stages of Roman law onwards, women had relatively much freedom and many rights in private law, though their position in public law was fairly restricted. 46 In the provinces, Roman citizenship provided women with certain rights and accordingly a strong juridical and economic position: 47 in the right of succession, equal parts were reserved for sons and daughters in case of intestacy. 48 The possessions of a woman remained hers after her marriage sine manu; they were protected against her husband. 49 In addition, women could manage their own wealth and estates and were able to make dedications, 50 but only when they were sui iuris and not under patria potestas (i.e. not subjected to the power of the male heads of their families) and were not married in manus (i.e. not placed under the legal control of their husbands). 51 According to the ius liberorum, women who were sui iuris became

41 Joshel and Murnaghan (1998) 3; Parker (1998) 154-155. Gold (1993) 280-281 writes, in my opinion a bit exaggerating: ‘(…) women generally seem to have been considered first in terms of gender’ and only secondary in terms of social status. (…) The issue of gender was always dominant, taking precedence even over social class.’
42 Some negative stereotypes of women were that of the wicked stepmother and of evil wife who was cruel, rude, entered the male sphere, and had a negative influence on her husband, Pomeroy (1976) 185-186; Foubert (2010) 100.
43 Laurence (1997) 129. There were some exceptions to this, which show that in some cases women could possess auctoritas that extended well beyond the informal, see Purcell (1986). The empress Livia is the best example, but in his article, Purcell mentions several other women with a certain amount of power.
44 Scheid (2003b) 131.
47 And possibly a stronger social position as well: citizen women might have been desirable marriage partners for men who possessed citizenship and wanted to have citizen children.
51 Treggiari (1991) 16, 32; Dixon (1986) 100; Gardner (1993) 86, 93; Spickermann (1994a) 29. And they were never in the full sense the head of a household, as they did not have potestas, Gardner (1993) 87. When they were married in manu, women became the agnates of their own children, which had great consequences for her inheritance, Crook (1986) 61; Treggiari (1991) 31; Gardner (1995) 384.
legal competence (i.e. were freed of the tutela) after they had given birth to three children.\textsuperscript{52} Furthermore, in the imperial period the power of the guardian was restricted.\textsuperscript{53} Obviously, this was only of real importance for elite women and women who possessed a reasonable amount of money – but these are the ones that generally held religious offices.\textsuperscript{54}

Still, the ideal Roman woman was a matrona, whose behaviour reflected on her husband.\textsuperscript{55} She was a married woman, a mother who took care of the household, lived a retired life and possessed certain specific qualities, like castitas (chastity) and pudicitia (modesty).\textsuperscript{56} She was supposed to wear the stola.\textsuperscript{57} However, this ideal that was stressed by ancient authors does not necessarily fit with reality.\textsuperscript{58} Often, there was a discrepancy between ideals and expected behaviour and reality.\textsuperscript{59}

A woman’s social rank depended on that of her male relatives, usually her father or her husband.\textsuperscript{60} That is to say: officially, women could have no rank (though they could be citizens!), but in practice they had, as the rank of men extended to their close female family members. Obviously, this was different regarding libertae, who reached their rank by gaining freedom. In this thesis I take rank as the membership of a certain social class, based on the main Roman criteria, e.g. the possession of a certain amount of wealth, birth and marriage. This implies that I use the terms senatorial, equestrian and decurial to indicate the rank of the priestesses. Furthermore, I will use the – anachronistic but nevertheless useful – term ‘middle class’ to identify those priestesses who did not belong to the ranks mentioned here, but were neither libertae, nor slaves (see chapter 3, section 3.4). I will also refer to libertae and servae as belonging to a rank. Social standing is used here as the result of a combination of several factors, like prestige and rank. But standing was also – and perhaps mainly, as Rives writes – determined by wealth\textsuperscript{61} and access to power, either directly or indirectly by exercising influence and having a large social network. Where rank was fixed, standing could change. Accordingly, (a high) standing was, of course, not only reserved for men, but it was obtainable for women as well.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{54} Even though this does not necessarily imply that all wealthy priestesses were also sui iuris, it seems that in many cases they were, as they could use their own money and do not seem to have figured as will-less tools in dynastic family strategies (see e.g. the epilogue), possibly in contrast to women in the Greek east, see: Van Bremen (1996).
\textsuperscript{55} Foubert (2010) 33. When a woman was insulted, it was a direct insult to her husband, Gardner (1995) 389.
\textsuperscript{56} Hemelrijk, forthcoming; Foubert (2010) 27, 28, 31.
\textsuperscript{57} Hemelrijk, forthcoming; Foubert (2010) 31-32.
\textsuperscript{59} E.g., women took part in various economic activities. Foubert (2010) 36, 41. Therefore, Gold (1993, 281) is exaggerating when she writes: ‘Rarely did a woman have a public role or a public voice.’ Besides, she contradicts herself by stating (284) that ‘There is a large amount of epigraphical evidence for many other [besides Eumachia en Mamia, passim] prominent and wealthy women in Pompeii and in other cities in Italy, and we may assume that such women often took an active role in the life of their communities.’
\textsuperscript{61} One could even maintain that wealth was in some way more important than rank, for possessing enough money was a formal requirement for obtaining an office, Rives (2007) 115.
3: Romanization and its influences on towns and people

In virtually all studies about Roman religion in the provinces, the term Romanization, a ‘process of cultural transformation by which indigenous peoples were integrated into the Roman empire,’\textsuperscript{63} figures prominently. As there is much controversy about this problematic term\textsuperscript{64} it deserves to be discussed here as far as relevant to my subject, though I will not summarize the whole debate, for this has already been done by others.\textsuperscript{65}

According to a recent view, there was no deliberate policy of Romanization,\textsuperscript{66} neither in politics, nor in the field of religion.\textsuperscript{67} Instead of a ‘top-down’ and one-way process, Romanization – in general, but more specifically in the field of religion – is nowadays considered to be a two-side process in which Rome influenced the provinces and vice versa.\textsuperscript{68} This implies that Roman religion is not the religion of the capital alone, nor the absolute standard.\textsuperscript{69} Moreover, no homogenous Roman civilisation (and neither one native, for that matter!) existed; it was no fixed entity but changed constantly.\textsuperscript{70} Therefore, becoming Roman was not adopting an unchanging set of habits, but it was taking part in the discussion about what should be the contents of this set of habits, as has been observed by Woolf.\textsuperscript{71} There were so many kinds of Romans to become that becoming Roman did not mean assimilating to any ideal type, but rather acquiring a position in the complex of structured differences in which Roman power resided.\textsuperscript{72}

The responses to Romanization among various ethnic groups, classes, genders, spheres and even in the same person were manifold. It was no single thing conceived by one single mind and applicable to any period or situation; local agents were not passive but cooperated more or less willingly in this highly complex and gradual process of acculturation.\textsuperscript{73} This resulted not in homogeneity, but instead in a great variety of new local or regional societies that were blends of...
Roman and indigenous cultures, positioned somewhere on the scale between ‘Roman’ (i.e. of the capital) and native. Curchin gives the following apt summary: ‘(...) Romanization was not a deliberate or conscious policy, nor was it an attempt to eradicat the indigenous culture. It was spontaneous rather than planned, gradual rather than rapid, and resulted in integration rather than subjugation of the indigenous culture. Romanization was not a goal to be achieved; it was a phenomenon brought about through the fusion of two cultures.’

A complicating factor was the process of Hellenization, which in several areas played a role before Romanization, especially in the field of religion (see also chapter 3, passim). At some places, Greek culture remained strong in the Roman period, which implies that the new ‘Romanised’ cultures that came into being were a mix not only of Roman and native elements, but possessed certain Greek characteristics as well. As has been remarked, Romanization was no single, uniform process, and this resulted in great differences between provinces and towns.

3.1: The diffusion of Roman(ised) habits and difficulties identifying them

The various aspects connected with ‘Roman models’ were diffused in several ways, including by religion, where native and Roman cults merged and their rites were enriched. Something that has been subject to much discussion is the role of the local elites in the process. It is obvious that, apart from religion, they played a role in administration and in monumentalizing cities, two other elements that were important in the process of Romanization. Many elite members wanted to demonstrate loyalty to Roman rule and competed with each other in trying to show off their ‘romanness’ and in

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76 Terrenato (2001) 3, compares Hellenization and Romanization: in Italy Hellenization was the closest parallel to Romanization; ‘in the sense that it [Hellenization] was a process that reduced differences across a range of disparate phenomena such as elite taste, the organization of land or political systems, across a peninsula where local and ethnic peculiarities always played the strongest role (...).’
78 Kunz (2006) 372. In some areas, not only Roman, native and Greek cultural influences can be detected, but Punic as well, for example on Sicily and in northern Africa, Kunz (2006) 372.
79 Mattingly writes that several separate ‘Roman’ identities came into being, which can best be detected in the field of religion, Mattingly (2002) 540. Especially the heterogeneity of Italy has been stressed by modern scholars, Terrenato (2001) 5; Benelli (2001) 14. This heterogeneity had a chronological side, Patterson (2006) 125-126.
83 Millett (1990) 37; Hanson (1997) 76, 78. Mackie (1983) 54-65, has shown the importance of the local elite in the organisation of municipalities in Spain.
order to gain certain advantages.\textsuperscript{85} However, despite the idea that individual choices of elite members played a major role in the process of Romanization, the motives of individuals are usually unknown.\textsuperscript{86}

Apart from lacunal evidence\textsuperscript{87} and the regional variety that has already been mentioned, there are other complicating factors related to Romanization.\textsuperscript{88} The first is that Rome itself changed constantly, not only as a result of internal events but also of influences from outside.\textsuperscript{89} Its culture was an amalgam that was continually re-defined, both in Rome and the provinces.\textsuperscript{90} This results in great difficulties when one tries to distinguish between the categories ‘Roman’ (i.e. of the City), provincial and native.\textsuperscript{91} These problems are aggravated because often very little is known about pre-Roman local societies and religions, and the relevant sources are difficult to interpret.\textsuperscript{92} Furthermore, it is often problematic or even impossible to make a distinction between Roman immigrants\textsuperscript{93} and Romanised natives.\textsuperscript{94} In short: there was no binary opposition between Roman and native, as Keay writes.\textsuperscript{95}

3.2: The impact of Romanization

Nevertheless, it may be clear that the Roman conquest brought major changes in the various local cultures and societies. It has already been mentioned that religion, urban administration and monumentalization, taken care of by the elite, were important aspects of Romanization. This is not surprising, given the fact that the Roman Empire was based on cities, and that many believed in the superiority of urban life.\textsuperscript{96} Acquiring citizenship was considered to be valuable and a privilege, at least until Caracalla.\textsuperscript{97} The people living in these cities based their ‘Roman’ identity on knowledge of Latin, Graeco-Roman literary culture, and their adoption of what was perceived as the ‘traditional’ Roman way of life and Roman values.\textsuperscript{98} However, the cities were no exact copies of Rome; apart from

\textsuperscript{85}Whittaker (1997) 152; Ando (2000) 230-231, who is writing about imperial portraits, but whose statement is in my opinion equally valid in other situations. See also Vallat (2001) 108.
\textsuperscript{86}Cherry (1997) 72.
\textsuperscript{87}Cherry (1998) 82-100.
\textsuperscript{88}Although they were not exclusively linked to Romanization as such, changing identities, tensions between textual and archaeological evidence and the (often necessary) focus on the elite have to be taken into account as well, Mattingly (2002) 538-539. Webster (2001) 211, 217-218: pro-regional varieties, contra focus on elite.
\textsuperscript{89}E.g. the Carthaginian influences on Rome and Roman religion, mainly after the start of the Punic wars, Kunz (2006) 302.
\textsuperscript{92}Cherry (1998) 2; Rüpke (2001) 72. Also: Spickermann (2001b) 35.
\textsuperscript{93}Related to religion, the type of immigrants in provincial towns could play a role: economic immigrants often favoured peregrine religions, while people immigrating because of political reason, e.g. soldiers, were more concentrated on Roman religion, Kehrer (1997) 31.
\textsuperscript{94}Cherry (1997) 73.
\textsuperscript{95}Keay (2001) 116.
\textsuperscript{97}Lintott (1993) 186.
\textsuperscript{98}Hemelrijk (2008b) 10.
imitations and adaptations of Roman habits and values, there were many differences.\(^9\) In addition, the
degree of urbanization varied a lot between the various provinces: Africa and southern Spain were
highly urbanized, while in northern Gaul very few towns existed.\(^10\)

No wonder that most changes occurred within those social groups that came into most intensive
contact with the people who represented Roman government and authority: the local elites.\(^11\) On the
other hand, this would imply that women, who had no official role in administration, were much less
influenced. Probably for this reason, little has been said about the role of women in the process of
Romanization,\(^12\) and when their role is discussed, women are indeed supposed to be less Romanised
than men. Fontana for example, writing about epitaphs from Leptis Magna, states that the ‘process of
Romanization (…) seems to affect only minimally women, relegated to domestic life removed from
power.’ ‘(…) men appear oriented towards the public world and a quicker acculturation, while women
remain almost completely outside the sphere of Latin and Romanization.’\(^13\) This same argument of
the link between a domestic life and traditional values has been put forward by Rothe in her discussion
about dress in the Rhine-Moselle region. While the men in this area\(^14\) wore Roman dress, the women
retained their native clothing.\(^15\)

However, in the cities (as contrasted to the countryside, and probably also the less Romanised
Rhine-Moselle region) this was not always the case. There, social rank could be more important than
gender, as Hemelrijk writes.\(^16\) This was especially true for certain phenomena which are often
connected to Romanization, like the system of euergetism and its accompanying public honours, the
habit of erecting inscriptions\(^17\) and religion.\(^18\) As we shall see throughout this thesis, the inscriptions
of many priestesses show their adherence to Roman values. Spickermann writes: ‘Die Existenz von
Priesterinnen in öffentlichen Kulte setze zudem einen hohen Romanisierungsgrad einer Region
voraus.’\(^19\)

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\(^12\) Cf. Schmuhl (2005) 87; Hemelrijk, forthcoming.
\(^14\) With the remarkable exception of the people in the Treveran area, where the men wore traditional clothing
while the women wore Roman dress, see Rothe (2009) 72 for a possible explanation. See also Hemelrijk,
forthcoming 2013.
\(^15\) Rothe (2009) 71.
\(^16\) Hemelrijk (2008b) 7, 18, and forthcoming.
\(^17\) Spickermann (1994a) 7, 380, 381.
\(^18\) As wives of Roman colonists women could be mediators between different population groups. Glinister (2006)
102, writes about Hellenistic Italy that women ‘played a crucial role in the adoption and adaptation of cultural
elements and the appropriation of ritual forms on both sides, helping to establish a new, shared culture and sense
of identity.’ In my opinion, this role was likely also played by women elsewhere in the Roman Empire where
Roman colonists married native women.
4: Civic religion in the provinces

4.1: Civic religion and the role of the elite

It has already been mentioned that ‘Roman life’ meant ‘city life’, and this applied also to religion. Roman religion was in the first place a religion for a defined group of citizens.\(^{110}\) Therefore, municipalisation was a catalyst in changing local religious systems in the western part of the Roman Empire.\(^{111}\) In the cities and towns the major festivals, temples and priests (both male and female) can be found\(^{112}\) and the municipal charters that are preserved pay attention to religious matters.\(^{113}\) The legal status of the town (and its inhabitants) was important in this matter: towns with Roman rights stood generally closer to Roman religion\(^{114}\) and Roman citizens tended to be more interested in the religion of their conquerors than people without Roman citizenship.\(^{115}\) It was religion that for a great part defined someone’s status in his or her community.\(^{116}\) Ando writes: ‘Romans characterized membership in their community through participation in political and religious rituals that were variously open to or required of people of different legal ranks.’\(^{117}\) In this way, power was distributed and social hierarchies were consolidated, also because the elite held most of the priesthoods and decided which cults were public (see also section 5.6 of this chapter).\(^{118}\)

Like many other aspects of Roman culture, Roman religion was mainly adopted by the local elites whose members will therefore figure prominently in this thesis.\(^{119}\) That it was the elite who was most involved in Roman religion need not surprise us, for Roman religious institutions in the provinces were useful in the competition for prestige, honour and standing, which was a crucial feature of provincial culture (see also chapter 5; euergetism and public honours).\(^{120}\) Beard, North and Price write: ‘By and large, in every kind of community the local élite tended to display less interest in local


\(^{111}\) Van Andringa (2007) 86.

\(^{112}\) Spickermann (2001b) 41. For the roles of cities in the German provinces, see: Spickermann (2001b) 21, 24.

\(^{113}\) Though only concerning finances and administration. Therefore, religion in municipalities was a way of managing local administration, as Raggi (2011) 343 writes. He (p. 334) also states convincingly that the concept of Roman religion (that is: religion controlled by the elite) was transported to the municipalities in provinces, and not so much its contents.


\(^{116}\) Besides, the civic cults provided a sense of belonging: ‘(…) identification with the city was closely bound up with devotion to its chief deity,’ Rives (2007) 108. See also Rives (2007) 110.


\(^{120}\) Beard, North and Price (1998) 336.
indigenous cults than in the universal deities associated with the Roman empire.121 The imperial cult, in which so many elite women served as priestesses, was of course the most important of these universal cults.

Not only in Rome a link between political and religious offices existed,122 but also in the provinces: magistrates and priests were members of the same socio-economic elite and civic priesthoods were comparable to civic offices (the model of civic religion).123 However, in Rome and the rest of the Empire, no priestly class existed; the basic rites – mainly prayer and sacrifice – of Roman religion were open to everyone.124 This did not mean that everybody was always fully independent with regards to religion: ‘It was only as members of a group that individuals depended on someone else for the performance of basic rituals, since in every group, whether a household or an association or a city, there were people whose role was to represent the group in its dealings with the divine (…)’.125

4.2: Differences between towns and regions

Despite tendencies towards generalisation, regional unity and interaction,126 there was no homogenous religious structure in the Roman Empire, as has been remarked above.127 Apart from the in some places persistent presence of Greek religious practices,128 native religions (or parts of them) continued to exist everywhere in the Empire. Even when deities had Roman names, they might have been perceived as local gods.129 Therefore, religion in the Roman Empire was mainly a local affair,130 with room for personal choices.131 There was not one religion, but neither several totally independent religions.132 Religious life in a local city was flexible and open, with few rules worked out, and largely based on local traditions and initiatives.133 This means that, although the basic elements of the civic model of religion (see above) can be found in the whole Empire, eclecticism was an important part of religion: no single model of religion does justice to the situation in antiquity.

121 Beard, North and Price (1998) 338. Cf. 339: ‘Religious display must have been central in the competition for status.’
127 Bendlin (1997) 52. Obviously, neither was there a homogenous religious structure before the Roman conquest, see De Cazanove (2007) 45; Rives (2007) 108.
128 Kunz (2006) 370; Orlin (2007) 63: ‘The closer contacts with the Greek world in the late third century left their marks all over Roman religious practice.’
133 Bendlin (1997) 48. Even the calendar could in theory each year be revised by the duoviri, Raggi (2011) 338.
Gaul and Germania illustrate nicely the divergence between religions in various areas, and at the same time show the effects of Roman rule. In pre-Roman Germania there were no urban traditions or literary culture, which makes this area very different from the provinces in the Mediterranean area. There was no ‘eineheitliche religiöse Tradition’, and therefore a regional religion with specifically local elements came into being after the Roman conquest. The same was the case in Gaul, where no uniform religion in the pre-Roman period existed, resulting in city cults with different Gallo-Roman local pantheons, although the rites became Roman. This regionalism is also clearly visible in religious offices held by women, as will become clear throughout this thesis.

5: Public and private in the Roman Empire

In studies about the lives of women in general and of those living in antiquity in particular, the gendered distinction between public (outside the house, mainly related to the state; reserved for men) and private (inside the house, related to the family; confined to women) usually occupies an important position. Therefore, it needs to be discussed here as well. Furthermore, it has special relevance for this thesis, because the dichotomy is also closely connected to Roman religion. There is, for instance, no consensus about the precise meaning of the concepts ‘public cult’ and ‘public priest’, and a connection between ‘public religion’ and women has both vigorously been contested and defended. For example, as we have seen above, it has been argued that the religious roles of Roman women were, with only a few exceptions, confined to the marginal (i.e. non-public and foreign) cults. In its entry about public priests, the Oxford Classical Dictionary of 1996 asserts that in Rome no public priestesses held office except the Vestals, although several inscriptions have been found – and not only in Rome – that identify women explicitly as sacerdotes publicae.

So if we accept that sacerdotes publicae existed, what does the word ‘public’ mean? Various explanations have been offered. Nearly a century ago, it has been suggested that the term publica in the title of a priestess was an indication of a high(er) status of the cult in which she served. In 2006 Schultz wrote that the title sacerdos publica ‘suggests that some female religious officials could act in their own right on behalf of the Roman people.’ She also suggested that the four sacerdotes publicae

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134 Spickermann (2001a) v; Spickermann (2001b) 17.
137 The terms civic cult, public cult, official cult and state cult are often used as synonyms by various modern scholars, but sometimes with slightly different connotations, e.g., ‘for the public good’, or ‘officially approved’. To avoid confusion, I will use them as synonyms.
139 With regards to the cult of Athena in Naples, Peterson writes: ‘(...) it seems evident that the appearance of a public priest is an indication of the importance of the cult with which he is associated.’ Peterson (1919) 198-199.
who served Ceres in Rome and Teanum Sidicinum (see also chapter 3) may have served in a cult that was organised differently from the Ceres cult elsewhere.\footnote{Schultz (2007) 14-15, note 35.}

As these explanations do not seem to be based on a thorough study of the dichotomy between public and private, they lack a sound base. To fill this gap, I shall give a short introduction to the relevance of the dichotomy for studies on Roman life, before discussing the ancient literary sources concerned with \textit{publicus} and \textit{privatus}, thereby paying special attention to the religious use of these terms. As in Roman thought the concepts ‘Roman’ and ‘foreign’ were closely related to the dichotomy, the literary sources with regard to these terms will receive some attention as well. Furthermore, I will deal with the modern views on the public-private dichotomy and explain the position taken in this thesis.

The prominence of the distinction between public/male and private/female in studies on Graeco-Roman society is the result of the great importance that both modern scholars and ancient authors have attached to politics – seen as the public sphere \textit{par excellence} – in which Greek and Roman women could not participate and on which they could exercise no direct influence by holding political offices. As the community was considered to be more important than the individual, in Roman eyes public acts (including public religious rituals) were valued more than private ones. As a consequence modern scholars have often considered the role of women in Roman society as restricted, even marginal. However, the exclusion of women from the political sphere does not imply that they were excluded from other aspects of public or civic life as well.\footnote{Weintraub (1997) 12, 28; Rigginsby (1997) 49; Corbier (1998) v; Hemelrijk (2004) 189, 196.} Although in the western part of the Roman Empire the public roles of women were mainly limited to religious life and euergetism, in the East they could also act as (honorary) magistrates, for example as gymnasiarchs.\footnote{Van Bremen (1996) ; Corbier (1998) v.} In addition, women – both in the East and the West – could act publicly without harming their reputation by assisting their husbands in times of crisis. The \textit{fides} and \textit{pietas} these women displayed towards their men were accepted motives for their public activities.\footnote{Hemelrijk (2004) 190-191.}

The ‘grand dichotomy’ of public versus private was not limited to Greek and Roman culture, but played a significant role in western society until fairly recently.\footnote{Weintraub (1997) 1; Barbey-Morand (2003) \textit{passim}; Corbier (1998) ii.} This provides a problem, for our modern (Christian) notions of this topic are not necessarily the same as those of the Greeks and Romans, and the fact that they are heavily influenced by conceptions from the nineteenth century – the period when the Latin words \textit{publicus} and \textit{privatus} became fashionable – inserts an extra layer that may distort our view of the way the dichotomy was incorporated in ancient society. Furthermore, the modern views on the dichotomy have changed several times since the nineteenth century: ‘Es ist (...
deutlich zu erkennen, daß die moderne begriffliche Fassung antiker Verhältnisse trotz der dabei benutzten, gleichbleibenden antike Wortkörper die Veränderung der modernen Verhältnisse und ihrer modernen Beschreibung (...) widerspiegelt (...)."  

Public and private – in general, in relation to women and as religious concepts – have to be seen as historical concepts that are related to specific social situations, instead of universal categories. In other words: the distinction is no anthropological constant.  

The following lines from the foreword to the work of Cornelius Nepos confirm clearly that the – in this case: gendered – dichotomy between public and private is – and was – no anthropological constant and that Roman women did not live secluded lives – in contrast to Greek women, according to Nepos. Instead, Roman women could act in the middle of public life, both related to spatial aspects and to social occasions.  

Contra ea pleraque nostris moribus sunt decoras quam apud illos turpia putantur. quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in convivium? aut cuius non mater familias primum locum tenet aedium atque in celebritate versatur? quod multo fit alter in Graecia; nam neque in convivium adhibetur nisi propinquorum, neque sedet nisi in interiore parte aedium, quae gynaeconitis appellatur, quo nemo accedit nisi propinquus cognatione coniunctus.

‘On the other hand, many actions are seemly according to our [i.e. Roman] code which the Greeks look upon as shameful. For instance, what Roman would blush to take his wife to a dinner-party? What matron does not frequent the front rooms of her dwelling [i.e. the atrium and other rooms to which guests are admitted] and show herself in public? But it is very different in Greece; for there a woman is not admitted to a dinner-party, unless relatives only are present, and she keeps to the more retired part of the house called “the women’s apartment,” to which no man has access who is not near of kin.’

Although the terms public and private are not mentioned explicitly, this quote from Nepos is but one of the many ancient sources which refer to (aspects of) both terms in connection with women. In the following section, the most relevant sources will be discussed. I will try to recover the implicit and explicit criteria these sources give of what publicus and privatus meant to the Romans. It has to be

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146 Winterling (2005) 228.
kept in mind though, that a gap existed between ideal and reality, as with so many other social concepts.

5.1: The ancient sources on public and private

When in the ancient literary sources the words *publicus* and/or *privatus* are used, very often little additional information is given, although it is clear that *publicus* and *privatus* had different meanings and could be used in many different contexts. In Digest 50.17.2 a clear explanation of what Ulpian considered to be a ‘public office’ is given. This is an important passage, for here women are explicitly mentioned:

_Feminae ab omnibus officiis civilibus vel publicis remotae sunt et ideo nec iudices esse possunt nec magistratum gerere nec postulare nec pro alio intervenire nec procuratores existere._

‘Women are excluded from all civic and public functions and therefore can neither be judges, nor can they hold magistracies, nor bring a lawsuit, nor intervene on behalf of others, nor act as procurators.’

According to this fragment, public functions were responsibilities held, or tasks carried out, for the good of and in name of others and/or the community as a whole. Hence the addition *civilibus*, which seems to stress the fact that these tasks were part of being a Roman citizen. The *officia* mentioned here refer to legal-formalistic functions that are viewed as the foundations of Roman politics and society. It is remarkable, that in the enumeration of acts and offices given here, no religious office is mentioned, although many priests (and priestesses!) held their priesthoods as representatives of their

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149 Cf. also Cicero, _Verr. 2.2.4.11_; _Amicit._ 4.15. See also Horace, *Ars Poet.* 397.
150 Ando and Rüpke (2006) 8 write correctly that using the Digest as proof of practices in the early imperial period, is risky. However, the things stated by Ulpian in this quote do not seem to have been different in earlier times; cf. Livy 34.7.8-9, quoted in the introduction.
152 The same _officia civilia_ are mentioned in _Paul. D._ 5.1.12.2, where it is said that women cannot be judges, ‘not because they do not have any judgement, but because it is accepted that they do not hold civic offices’: (...) _non quia non habent iudicium, sed quia receptum est, ut civilibus officiis non fungantur._ See also Gardner (1993) 88-9, 100-101; Feldner (2000) 385, 386.
153 However, an element of representation can also be found in for example family cults, where the _patrfamilias_ or a (male or female) _sacerdos in familia_ represented their family.
154 Cf. Cicero, _De Officiis_ 1.34.124, where private persons are contrasted to magistrates: _Ac ne illud quidem alienum est, de magistratuum, de privatorum, [de civium,] de peregrinorum officiis dicere_ – ‘At this point it is not at all irrelevant to discuss the duties of magistrates, of private individuals, [of citizens,] and of foreigners’. Cf. Cicero, _De Finibus_ 5.20.57. Cf. Ando and Rüpke (2006) 9. Translations by Loeb Classical Library.
community, and were elected by magistrates or the city council.\textsuperscript{156} In his \textit{Institutiones} however, quoted in Digest 1.1.1.2, Ulpian writes:

\begin{quote}
\textit{(…)} publicum ius est, quod ad statum rei Romanae spectat, privatum, quod ad singulorum utilitatem: sunt enim quaedam publice utilia, quaedam privatim. publicum ius in sacris, in sacerdotibus, in magistratibus constitit. privatum ius tripertitum est: collectum etenim est ex naturalibus praeceptis aut gentium aut civilibus.
\end{quote}

‘(…) Public law is that which regards the condition of the Roman state; private, that which concerns the interests of individuals; for some things are of public and others of private interest. Public law has reference to holy matters, priests and magistrates. Private law is threefold: for it is derived either from natural precepts, or from those of the nations or from those of the state.’\textsuperscript{157}

We see here that religious matters are mentioned even before magistracies, so this endorses the view that priesthoods were public (or civic) offices and offers the possibility that in the first quote from the Digest, priesthoods were omitted on purpose because women acting as priestesses were an accepted phenomenon, perhaps even common. Furthermore, we see that here the dichotomy between public and private is related to numbers, or ‘us together’ and ‘us apart’: public means collective, while private means individual. In his \textit{De Inventione}, Cicero summarizes this clearly:

\begin{quote}
Publicum est quod civitas universa aliqua de causa frequentat, ut ludi, dies festus, bellum.
\end{quote}

‘A public occasion is one in which for some reason the whole community takes part, as games, a holiday, or war.’\textsuperscript{158}

This link between private-individual and public-collective can also be detected in Cicero’s \textit{De Legibus} 2.19, where ‘Marcus’ says that in his ideal state ‘no individual should have his own gods, neither new ones, nor foreign ones, unless they are publicly recognized’ (\textit{separatim nemo habessit deos neve novos neve advenas nisi publice adscitos}).\textsuperscript{159} Festus explains what \textit{publice adscitos} implied, for he defines \textit{publica sacra} as ‘\textit{quae publico sumpto pro populo fiunt}’ (those paid for by public money and

\textsuperscript{156} Gardner (1993) 85: Women ‘had no part in those public activities which formed part of the \textit{political} aspect of being a citizen.’
\textsuperscript{157} This translation is based on Ando (2008) 67. There is no consensus about the exact translation of the terms \textit{gentium} and \textit{civilibus}, but that is not relevant here.
\textsuperscript{158} Cicero, \textit{De Inv.} 1.27.40. Cf. Cicero, \textit{Pro Murena} 76.
\textsuperscript{159} Obviously, the situation in which deities had to be publicly recognised, already existed in Rome, Rives (1995) 7.
conducted for the people), while *privata sacra* are those that are practiced *‘pro singulis hominibus familias gentibus’* (for individual men, families and *gentes*).\(^{160}\) According to this last definition, private is not necessary limited to separate individuals, but encompasses also groups of relatives as ‘private persons’.

In sum, according to the Digest and Cicero, two sources spanning a long period of Roman history, the *kind* together with the number of persons involved was an important component of the term public. Public encompassed a certain kind or group of people: sometimes, as for example on religious occasions, the whole civic community (and its financial resources, see below section 5.7),\(^{161}\) including women; sometimes the political community, excluding women.

### 5.2: The ancient sources on Roman and foreign

Apart from the dichotomy between public and private, another distinction that is closely connected to it, especially regarding Roman religion, deserves our attention. In the provinces of the empire, *sacra publica* could also be the native cults that were not considered to be Roman (and were, accordingly, ‘foreign’) but were allowed by the *pontifícies* to be performed.\(^{162}\) In these cults both men and women served as *sacredotes*. Therefore, not only ‘public’ and ‘private’, but also ‘foreign’ and ‘non-Roman’ or ‘native’ are important terms in the discussion about religious roles of women.\(^{163}\) Yet, as is the case with the dichotomy between public and private, it is very difficult to make a clear distinction between the two concepts, even though the Romans themselves used the terms. Festus gives a definition of the so-called *sacra municipalia*, which are, in fact, non- (or: pre-) Roman religions:\(^{164}\)

*Municipalia sacra vocantur, quae ab initio habuerunt ante civitatem Romanam acceptam; quae observare eos voluerunt pontifices, et eo more facere, quo adsuissent antiquitus.*

‘Those holy matters are called municipal which a people had from its beginning, before it received Roman citizenship, and which the pontiffs wanted them to continue to observe and to perform in the way in which they had been used to perform them from old times.’

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\(^{160}\) Festus, 284L. Cf. Paul in Festus: *publica sacra quae pro populo fiebant, privata quae pro singulis hominibus familiasque appellabant.*

\(^{161}\) This could imply ‘the Roman people’, but also the citizens of a small town somewhere on the fringes of the Empire.

\(^{162}\) Rives (1995) 170; Ando (2003a) 196.

\(^{163}\) Ando and Rüpke (2006) 8.

\(^{164}\) 146L.
Furthermore, Festus offers a definition of what he explicitly calls ‘foreign rites’: *sacra peregrina*. These rites are

> *quae aut evocatis dis in oppugnandis urbis Romam sunt conata, aut quae ob quasdam religiones per pacem sunt petita, ut ex Phrygia Matris Magnae, ex Graecia Cereri, Epidauro Aesculapi: quae coluntur eorum more, a quibus sunt accepta.*\(^{165}\)

‘either those that have been introduced in Rome by way of summoning the gods in the besieged cities, or those that are obtained in peace because of some religious reasons, as Mater Magna from Phrygia, Ceres from Greece, Aesculapius from Epidaurus: those are worshipped according to the manners of those, from whom they are received.’

So even though a distinction was made between Roman, foreign and native, the practice of *evocatio*, mentioned by Festus, shows that the boundaries between the terms were not fixed.\(^{166}\) Therefore, in itself, the concept ‘foreign’ does not explain much, for the Romans absorbed ‘foreign’ cults and rites during their whole history,\(^ {167} \) and ‘the line between Roman and non-Roman might be drawn differently in different contexts.’\(^ {168} \) In addition, Roman public religion encompassed the traditional cults of the ‘Romans’ (or rather: the cults the Romans themselves labelled as ancestral) and newly established cults, over which the Senate made decisions.\(^ {169} \) Therefore, *sacra peregrina* is an artificial concept.\(^ {170} \)

The cult of Magna Mater, defined by Festus as ‘foreign’ is a good example of the blurring boundaries between Roman and foreign (and public!). It was officially incorporated in the Roman state during the Republic after consultation of the Sibylline books: in 204 BC, the eastern goddess Cybele was granted (as *Mater Deum Magna Idaea*) a public cult inside the *pomerium* of Rome.\(^ {171} \) Despite attempts to Romanise the cult of the goddess, it was often portrayed as something dangerously foreign, especially with regards to the self-castrated *Galli*.\(^ {172} \) ‘The image of frenzy, dancing, and oriental ecstasy is only one side of the picture. The other side shows a cult whose ritual forms overlap with those of Roman civic religion, broadly encompassed in the framework of state control.’\(^ {173} \) This was the result, according to Mary Beard, of a debate on the nature of the Roman and the foreign, of

\(^{165}\) 268L.

\(^{166}\) Ando (2003b) 233. Nevertheless, every time the Roman Senate saw something that needed to be repressed, it was labelled ‘foreign’, Ando (2003b) 201.

\(^{167}\) North (2003) 201.

\(^{168}\) Orlin (2010) 104.


\(^{172}\) Beard (1994) 166, 175, 178.

defining a Roman identity. This identity had eroded as a result of the growing Empire, which led to the incorporation of so many different rites and cults.\textsuperscript{174} In conclusion, the division between Roman, foreign and public was in reality a fluid one.\textsuperscript{175}

5.3: Modern views

Although a distinction between public and private in their different meanings may be helpful to interpret various situations in the ancient world\textsuperscript{176}, a rigid division between the two concepts does not do justice to the fluid reality in antiquity.\textsuperscript{177} The terms ‘public’ and ‘private’ are not only liable to change, they are also relative concepts, just like ‘foreign’ and ‘Roman’ as we have seen in the previous section.\textsuperscript{178} In discussions about the house, which in our society is seen as the private place par excellence, the relativity of the ‘dichotomy’ has been demonstrated clearly. In his book on houses in Pompeii and Herculaneum,\textsuperscript{179} Wallace-Hadrill argues that Roman houses incorporated a spectrum that varied between totally public and totally private, with ‘subtle grades of relative privacy’.\textsuperscript{180} For instance, in buildings that are generally considered ‘private’ such as houses, people used the ‘language of the public’, e.g. by using columns, an architectural element that was linked to public buildings.\textsuperscript{181} Furthermore, certain rooms that were private most of the time had a public function during certain parts of the day, for example the atrium, where a patron’s morning salutations took place.\textsuperscript{182}

Not only with respect to houses, but to other aspects of Roman society as well, there seem to have been no strict boundaries between public and private. The most relevant example is the distinction between the forum and the domus, terms which have often been linked with the political community and the household, and men and women respectively – though we have seen above that the domus was not totally private. Partly as a consequence of modern predispositions about the proper roles of men and women, the concepts outside and inside, visible and invisible, powerful and powerless and dominant and subordinate have also been connected to the distinction between forum and domus. These dichotomies were not absolute, and reality was much more complex.\textsuperscript{183}

\textsuperscript{174} Beard (1994) 187.
\textsuperscript{175} See Scheid (1995) about the gods worshipped Graeco ritu. Zoll (1995) 136, writes that the traditional dichotomy between Roman and non-Roman is insufficient
\textsuperscript{177} Connelly (2007) 5. See Blok (1987) 6-11 for a discussion of the 19th century roots of this dichotomy.
\textsuperscript{178} Connelly (2007) 5.
\textsuperscript{179} Already in 1992, Eck had written that in Rome, the atrium was an extended forum. Eck (1992) 362, 365.
\textsuperscript{182} Wallace-Hadrill (1994) 12. Three years after Wallace-Hadrill had explained his view, Riggsby suggested to use a model – called the ‘onion model’ – that is, in fact, quite similar to Wallace-Hadrill’s spectrum. In Riggsby’s opinion, the core of the onion is completely private, its outer layer is completely public, and the layers in between vary from nearly totally private to nearly totally public. Accordingly, no fixed boundary between public and private existed, Riggsby (1997) 49. And cf. Weintraub (1997) 37; Foubert (2010) 6.
\textsuperscript{183} Foubert (2010) 7, 37, 39.
Several other examples, all relevant to the lives of women, can be found.\textsuperscript{184} The status of collegia is most illuminating and important for this thesis, as various women held religious offices within collegia. According to Steuernagel, collegia formed an alternative political, social and religious network.\textsuperscript{185} They were not totally private (except family groups or domestic collegia, see also section 5.8), nor completely public, though some were publicly recognized.\textsuperscript{186} The members of this last group of collegia enjoyed a certain status within the local community, for example the Cereales in Carthage and surroundings (see chapter 3).\textsuperscript{187}

Temples and religious rites also show the blurred boundaries between public and private: public temples (i.e. those dedicated publicly) could be used for private purposes (e.g. the erection of votives), and public rites (i.e. those enacted for the well-being of the/a community) could be interpreted and valued differently by each attendant: ‘even public cults could have a private dimension.’\textsuperscript{188} Individual private cults could be ‘absorbed by cities’, and accordingly their priests could become civic priests.\textsuperscript{189} Alternatively, many popular rites were not celebrated centrally and many public rites were only attended by priests and a few others.\textsuperscript{190} Roman gods and goddesses were often worshipped on different levels, varying from totally public, supervised by the pontifices and carried out on the forum for the well-being of the whole city, to totally private, in the form of a libation poured by an individual before his dinner. These stages are clearly visible in the cult of the goddess Ceres: she was worshipped in Rome in a state cult for the whole community, figured probably in several (mainly South Italian) places in Thesmophoric cults that were usually only open to initiates, and was honoured everywhere in the Italian countryside at farmsteads and in private sanctuaries (see also below).\textsuperscript{191}

These examples illustrate plainly that it is highly problematic to make a clear distinction between public and private with respect to various aspects of Roman society – religion being no exception – and that the two terms cannot be seen as a binary opposition.\textsuperscript{192}

\textsuperscript{185} Steuernagel (2006) 142.
\textsuperscript{186} By giving benefactions collegia could influence the public sphere, Steuernagel (2004) 206. Furthermore, the architecture of their buildings often referred to that of public buildings, Steuernagel (2004) 191.
\textsuperscript{187} Rives (1995) 204.
\textsuperscript{189} Gordon (1990c) 246.
\textsuperscript{190} Rüpke (2007b) 4.
\textsuperscript{191} See chapter 3, sections 2.1 and 2.2.
\textsuperscript{192} Cf. Rüpke (2007a) 1: ‘Traditionelle, öffentliche und öffentlich finanzierte Kulte und Kultorte müssen aber keinen Gegensatz zu religiösen Aktivitäten von Gruppen bilden; in manchen Fällen bieten sie solchen privaten Aktivitäten sogar die Infrastruktur.’
5.4: Politics, community and ‘publicness’ and the changing role of women

In this section I will discuss some – often rather restricted – definitions of public and private given by modern scholars and pay attention to the elements that have been perceived as essential aspects of the two terms. These aspects include location and money, already mentioned above, and the role of the local council. It will become clear that all these elements have their own difficulties and are not easily applicable to the role of women in Roman religion.

Very often, and in conformity with the ancient sources, a link has been made between publicus and ‘community’ or ‘politics’. According to Riggsby, who stays close to the definitions offered in the sources, publicus means: ‘of or pertaining to the people/community’, that is: all acts that belonged to or affected the community, and were executed in public.193 A public activity was an ‘activity which interests the community qua community.’194 Privatus is then negatively defined as ‘anything or anyone not connected to the community as a whole’.195 However, this definition leaves little room for the sliding scale. Furthermore, according to this definition groups of which various people were members – like collegia – would all be private.196 As I agree with Steuernagel’s view on collegia as summarized above, which defines collegia neither as public, nor as private, I think Riggsby’s definition is too strict.

Winterling, who writes that in the Roman Republic a difference was made between the res publica (defined by him as städtischen Gemeinwesen) and the domus, stresses the importance of the political connotations of the term publicus. The opposition of domus and res publica had implications for gender relations as well: Winterling states – probably a bit too simplistic – that in Republican times acting in political life was reserved for men, while women were directed to their homes.197 This dichotomy between domus and res publica started to change during the late Republic and resulted in socio-political relations that could not anymore be described adequately by the words publicus and privatus.198 This became even more difficult in the imperial period: ‘Die Kaiser selbst unterliefen in politischer Hinsicht die Trennung von Rolle und Person und damit die alte Unterscheidung von magistratus, dem ein Amt bekleidenden [the civic equivalent of publicus, VG], und privatus, dem amtflosen Bürger.’199

The empresses and other women of the imperial family also fit in this changing period. They acted in public, and not only with regards to traditional ‘female’ areas.200 It has been suggested that the imperial women followed the example of the Roman priestesses of Ceres and the Vestal Virgins, who

196 Collegia were not included in the lex Ursonensis (see Rüpeke (2006a) 37) as they were obviously not considered to be the object of public religion in the sense of ‘pertaining to the whole community’.
197 However, as the evidence from the early Republic is meagre, one could question Winterling’s statement about the existence of a strict dichotomy between res publica and domus in this early period.
200 Corbier (1998) iv, vii. However, one should not forget the important aristocratic women from the Republic.
had important autonomous roles and received certain privileges.201 The evidence of women holding priesthoods and acting otherwise outside their *domus* shows clearly that in the last decades of the Republic and during the imperial period the dichotomy between *res publica* and *domus* did not overlap with the dichotomy of man versus woman.202

5.5: Location and its relation to public religion

Apart from the stress on the political aspects of the public-private dichotomy, it is clear that in the view of many modern scholars location is important as well. The *domus* was the private place where women were supposed to live their lives (although they did not always do so, as may be clear). However, the Roman house also plays an important role in the discussion about public and private in Roman *religion*. Several scholars have linked the extent to which a cult was ‘public’ or ‘private’ to the location where it was practiced: the Roman *house* is considered to be the primary place where private religious activities of diverse small groups took place.203 Although I agree with this view to a certain extent (see my definition of private activities of women below), there is a snag: a rite, crucial for the Roman people as a whole, such as the December festival in honour of Bona Dea was performed *pro populo* in a *domus* – albeit one of a magistrate.204

Not only houses but also other supposedly ‘private’ areas were important in relation to religion. It has been stated that a shrine built on private property has to be considered as private,205 and, the other way round, that ‘the use of public space implied public recognition.’206 Rives mentions Thugga in North Africa where the main shrines were public, because they had entrances to the central market.207 The importance of the market place for public religious life is not only stressed by Rives,

202 However, although new oppositions of ‘private’, ‘public’ and ‘imperial’ came into being, the traditional Roman view on public and private can still be found in literature from the first until the third century AD: the *res publica* was still contrasted to the *domus*; and *magistratus* was viewed as the opposite of privatus, Winterling (2005) 236, 239. Therefore, the ‘römische Selbstbeschreibung mittels der *publicus-privatus*-Dichotomie war nicht – wie zur Zeit der Republik – durch Einheitlichkeit und Konsistenz, sondern durch Differenzen, Kontrafaktizitäten und Paradoxa gekennzeichnet (...).’ Winterling (2005) 243.
204 Cicero, De Har. Resp.: quod fit per vigines Vestalis, fit pro popolo Romano, fit in ea domo quae est in imperio. Cf. 17.37, Ad Att., 1.12.3, 13.3; Juvenal, Sat. 9.117; Cassius Dio 37.35; Suetonius, Div. Iul., 6; Brouwer (1982) 210; Versnel (1992) 48. Besides, ‘private’ family cults were not isolated from the public sphere; most conformed to the official, ‘public’ cults, Savunen (1997) 119; Cancik (2006) 33-34; North (2007) 116, 121. Cf. Rüpke (2007a) 2; Rives (1995) 34; Derks (2002) 542. Private houses could be used as a location for the cult of important deities of individual towns, for example that of Dionysos in Ephesos, but also of various cults in Rome, see Schäfer (2007) 163. And the other way round: most *Mithraea* (which are usually seen as private) in Rome and Ostia were located in public buildings and sanctuaries. This is also true of the *Mithraea* in Gaul and Germania, and of the shrines of other so-called mystery cults as well, see Spickermann (2007) 127.
206 Rives (1995) 185. Cf. Rives (2007) 82: In Rome, public cults had temples that were public monuments and rites that were performed by public magistrates or priests in name of the whole people.
but also by Savunen. She writes that a public cult was practised in the forum. However, I do not agree with Rives and Savunen for public temples in the provinces were not always located in the city centre. In the Digest it is even explicitly stated that a place that was publicly dedicated could be located either in the city or in the countryside. The best examples are sanctuaries of the goddess Ceres that were often built outside the city walls (cf. Vitruvius 1.7.1, see below). Possibly, one of the temples in Pompeii near the Stabian gate was dedicated to the goddess and in Falerii the temple of the goddess mentioned in CIL 11, 3083 was probably built outside the city limits.

Ando has stressed the importance of the pomerium in Roman religion, mainly in relation to the dichotomy of ‘foreign’ versus ‘Roman’. He writes that the pomerium incorporated various binarisms that were central in public life, like ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ and ‘Roman’ versus ‘foreign.’ Furthermore, he implicitly states that the cults inside the pomerium were ‘Roman’, while the ‘foreign’ cults were practiced outside this boundary. Yet, even the pomerium appears to have been of no decisive importance in connection to public religion and Roman or non-Roman cults. Latin, ‘public’ deities could have their temples outside the pomerium, (e.g. Diana on the Aventine) while an exotic goddess such as Magna Mater – who also received an official cult – was granted a sanctuary inside the pomerium. And Ceres, Liber and Libera, (see chapter 3) received a temple outside the pomerium. Their temple was either built on the Aventine, opposite the Circus Maximus (Tac. Ann 2.49), or under the modern church of Santa Maria de Cosmedin on the old forum Boarium. Furthermore, it is problematic to use the term pomerium outside Rome: it is uncertain whether all local cities had their own pomerium, while they certainly did have public cults.

208 Savunen (1997) 119. However, private cult acts (i.e. of individuals) could also be conducted on the Capitol, as Seneca’s description of people doing their business on the Capitol, quoted by Augustine, De Civ. Dei 6.10, suggests.

209 Derks, (2002) 451. With relation to the temple itself – not necessarily linked to its location – Derks (2006, 244) writes that the public character of a cult (in his case the cult of Lenus Mars in Trier) can be deduced from the monumental architecture of its sanctuary. However, according to his earlier article from 2002 (p. 541) a public cult was not necessarily connected to a monumental temple.

210 Digest 1.8.9: Sacra loca ea sunt, quae publice sunt dedicata, sive in civitate sint sive in agro. ‘Sacred places are those that are dedicated publicly, either in the community [i.e. a town], or in the countryside.’ ‘Publicly’ here means the by emperor of his authorized agent, as is specified in 1.8.9.1. Elsewhere, Ulpian has specifically defined a ‘locus publicus’, although his explanation is not very elucidating: Publici lo ci app ellatio quem admodum accipiatur, Labeo definit, ut et ad areas et ad insulas et ad agros et ad vias publicas itineraque publica pertineat - 'The definition of public place is accepted as Labeo has defined, so that it is related both to areas, islands, fields, public roads and to public ways.' Ulp. D. 43.8.2.3. My own translations.

211 Savunen (1997) 137. The sanctuaries of Demeter and Kore in Magna Graecia were also located on the outskirts of the town, often near springs, Hinz (1998) 236.

212 Taylor (1923) 76-77, 243. In Africa, Ceres temples was often located near theatres, e.g., in Lepcis Magna and in Bulla Regia, Poinssot (1963) 49-50. Cf. Foucher, tabbourt.perso.slt.fr/maghreb/FoucherPaganisme.doc, 8. However, often, the precise location of a temple is unknown. See for instance: Poinssot (1963).

213 Ando (2003b) 235.

214 Spaeth (1996) 7, 82, 83. Speath favours the Aventine as location, because it was a plebeian district and Ceres had links to the plebs.

215 There is evidence for pomeria of various towns in the Empire, and Goodman (2007) 60 writes that coloniae likely had one. When towns did not have a formal pomerium, they had other boundaries like walls, that defined the area where burials were not allowed, an important function of the pomerium in Rome, Goodman (2007) 62.
Vitruvius offers an explanation for the different locations of the sanctuaries of various divinities. These locations were in accordance with the rites, the character and the sphere of influence of the deities in question, and had little to do with their importance, ‘Romanness’ or ‘foreignness’: 216

*aedibus vero sacris, quorum deorum maxime in tutela civitas videtur esse, et Iovi et Juno et Minervae, in excelsissimo loco, unde moenium maxima pars conspicatur, areae distribuantur. Mercurio autem in foro aut etiam, ut Isidi et Serapi, in emporio (...). Marti extra urbem sed ad campum; itemque Veneri ad portum. (...) Item Cerei extra urbem loco, quo non omnes semper homines nisi per sacrificium necessé habeant adire; cum religione, casta sanctisque moribus is locus debet tueri. ceterisque diis ad sacrificiorum rationes aptae templis areae sunt distribuendae.*

“For the temples, the sites for those of the gods under whose particular protection the state is thought to rest and for Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, should be on the very highest point commanding a view of the greater part of the city. Mercury should be in the forum, or, like Isis and Serapis, in the *emporium* (...) Mars outside the city but at the training ground, and so Venus, but at the harbour. (...) 2. Ceres also should be outside the city in a place to which people need never go except for the purpose of sacrifice. That place should be under the protection of religion, purity, and good morals. Proper sites should be set apart for the precincts of the other gods according to the nature of the sacrifices offered to them.”

What Vitruvius offers here, are only guidelines and an explanation of the sacred geography of Rome itself. They are not necessarily a description of reality as there were no fixed rules. 217 ‘No master plan of Rome’s social topography existed’, according to Rüpke, and this was the same for provincial towns in the imperial period. 218 Timгад in Africa is a good example: during the reign of Trajan, there was no space free within the city walls, so new large sanctuaries were built outside, even the Capitol. 219 In addition, in the imperial period, the choice for temple locations could depend on imperial propaganda and preferences, for temples of gods who did not belong to the Capitoline triad could be built on prominent spots. 220 This implies that it is virtually impossible to conclude anything about the public or private and Roman or non-Roman character of a certain cult, based only on the location of its temple.

In sum, the criterion ‘location’ provokes many difficulties and is therefore better avoided or at least used with great caution. Only when it is known whether a shrine was built or a religious act carried out on public land, one can be reasonably sure that the shrine or religious act (and therefore

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216 Vitruvius 1.7.1-2; transl. Loeb Classical Library. See also Stambaugh (1978) 560-561.
also the person acting) had at least partly a public character. But even then location should never be used apart from other criteria.

5.6: Organising public religion in Rome, Italy and in the provinces: the role of the local council

The third element that has been put forward in the discussion about public religion, is the way Rome and local communities organised their cults.\textsuperscript{221} According to Rives, public cults were integrated in the socio-political structures of the town; they were part of the civic organisation and determined (partly) what it meant to be a citizen of that town.\textsuperscript{222} Furthermore, a connection between socio-political power and religious identity existed. Together, these formed the ‘civic model of official religion’, which varied per city (see above, section 4).\textsuperscript{223} It has been stated that in ‘official public cults priestly power was linked to the social and political order [i.e. the elite] and priestly duties were combined with other public offices.’\textsuperscript{224} As may be clear, this view excludes female priests, and is therefore too limited. The importance of the local elite in public religious life, however, is undisputed.\textsuperscript{225} Corbier writes that most public religious roles of women were reserved for members of the local elites.\textsuperscript{226} Often (though certainly not always!\textsuperscript{227}) this was the case indeed – which is unsurprising, as the same was true for men. Rank and standing were more important than gender.

It is an accepted opinion that municipal magistrates and the local council determined whether a deity was to receive public worship and had to be recorded in the official calendar.\textsuperscript{228} Public religion in the \textit{Lex Ursonensis} was controlled by the local political elite, i.e. the \textit{decuriones}.\textsuperscript{229} However, new cults could probably (also) be established by wealthy and influential individuals who had a particular

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{221} The control of public religion by the elite in Rome itself can best be shown by the introduction of what the Romans themselves called foreign deities. Performing the rites necessary for a proper introduction of foreign gods was the task of the \textit{quindecemviri}. However, it was the Senate that decided if a foreign deity was to receive a state cult. See also Ando (2003a) 197-198.

\textsuperscript{222} Rives (2007) 85, 113. The same can be said of the cults shared by the citizens of the Empire: because you were part of the Roman community, you took part in the ‘state cults’, Ando (2007) 444.

\textsuperscript{223} Gordon (1990c); Rives (1995) 9.

\textsuperscript{224} Savunen (1997) 119; Gordon (1990c).

\textsuperscript{225} Rüpke (2004) 193 writes: ‘(...) the élite were those most often present at religious rites, and public priesthoods were at the same time private banqueting circles offering a context for leading Romans to meet, to discuss, and to sacrifice on private grounds.’

\textsuperscript{226} Corbier (1998) vii.

\textsuperscript{227} For instance, several \textit{libertae} are known who acted as \textit{sacerdotes} (for examples see chapter 5, section 3.1) and the African priestesses of Ceres probably did not belong to the local élite (see chapter 3, section 3.4).

\textsuperscript{228} Rives (1995) 10, 96, 98; Derks (2002) 542. Cf. Woolf (1998) 220; Woolf (2001) 120, 122-123: Municipal and colonial charters show that the organisation and financing of the public cults were the responsibility of the civic authorities, supervised by the governor. However, it was impossible for the civic authorities to control all religious activity. About the \textit{decuriones} and their relationship to priesthoods in Late Antiquity, see: Horstkotte (1989) 166.

\textsuperscript{229} Rüpke (2006b) 22-23. This is different from the situation in Rome, where the priestly colleges mainly decided about ritual. Other differences between religion and Rome and the provinces include the importance of euergetistic priesthoods, a phenomenon especially linked to provincial towns, see chapter 5, section 4.1.
\end{footnotesize}
interest in them.\textsuperscript{230} In Africa, more temples were built by individuals than by public authorities.\textsuperscript{231} Therefore, personal interests of members of the local elites determined the selection of public cults.\textsuperscript{232} That the new cults had to be approved of by the ordo\textsuperscript{233} and a shrine had to be dedicated by a magistrate to be public\textsuperscript{234} was no obstacle of course, for the decuriones were the local elite. However, this implies that when a woman who – obviously – was no magistrate dedicated a shrine, it has to be considered as private.\textsuperscript{235} Rives writes that in Carthage some stage ‘in between’ existed: the ordo could recognize the dedication of a shrine without establishing a public cult for the deity in question. This resulted in the existence of ‘semi-public’ institutions and the lack of a clear distinction between public and private cults. In Thugga private shrines with a \textit{de facto} public status and function existed.\textsuperscript{236}

\textit{5.7: Financing public religion and the appointment of public priests}

Referring to Festus’s definition about \textit{sacra publica} quoted above, several modern scholars have stressed the importance of the way public cults were financed. Rüpke writes: ‘The public character of cults is not a matter of space, but of initiators and financing.’\textsuperscript{237} As the \textit{sacra publica} were organised on behalf of the \textit{civitas} as a whole, they were paid for by public means.\textsuperscript{238} Private cults on the other hand were funded by ‘sub-groups’ of the \textit{civitas}, for example \textit{pagi}, \textit{vici} or family groups.\textsuperscript{239} This implies that what these modern scholars call private cults could attract large numbers of people. This is in accordance with the view that some cults were confined to a town or small area but did nevertheless possess public rites, while others were popular but did not possess any public festivals, temples, cult associations or priests.\textsuperscript{240} The story Pliny the Younger tells us about the old and small (\textit{vetus sane et angusta}) sanctuary of Ceres on his estate near Comum illustrates this nicely. Once a year it attracted a great number of people from the surrounding area (\textit{magnus e regione tota coit populus}) who came to do their business and to make and fulfil many vows (\textit{multae res aguntur, multa vota suscipientur,}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[230] Compare this confusing situation with that of dedications: often it is impossible to distinguish between public and private dedications. Usually, fluent transitions are at stake. See: Eck (1989) 40.
\item[231] Rives (1995) 178. Of course, the ordo had to give its approval when a temple was to be built on public land.
\item[232] Rives (1995) 184. Therefore, public religion was ‘a purely local phenomenon’ and cults that fitted with local needs were labelled public, even though some general empire-wide cults existed, e.g., the emperor cult, which connected the cities where these cults were practised to the \textit{Urbs}, Rives (1995) 12-13, 51, 96.
\item[234] Cf. D. 1.8.9, see above, footnote 210. See also Stambaugh (1978) 559.
\item[237] Rüpke (2006a) 39. Cf. Rüpke (2006b) 22, who writes, based on the \textit{Lex Ursonensis}: ‘(...) the financing of the cult is the leitmotif that holds together the whole passage on religion.’
\end{footnotes}
multa redduntur). As the sanctuary was old and small, Pliny wanted to restore and enlarge it with a porticus – obviously of his own, i.e. private – money.\textsuperscript{241}

In practice though, the relation between the way a cult was financed and its public or private status is not as straightforward as it may seem, for it is often impossible with the available evidence to determine whether a cult was paid for by public money.

Another criterion that has been put forward as an important facet of Roman public religion is the way priests and priestesses were appointed. Generally, public sacerdotes are supposed to have been appointed by the local council. Savunen mentions three (other) possibilities: she writes that the priests and priestesses were either chosen by public assembly, from a list of candidates that was drawn up by the sacerdotes themselves, or that they acquired their religious office by way of co-option, and that the city council played a role in the process.\textsuperscript{242} Savunen further thinks that the priest(esse)s of non-public cults – often those with eastern roots – were chosen by the worshippers.\textsuperscript{243} Unfortunately, Savunen does not provide us with any references, so her statement remains doubtful.

Usually, the epigraphic material does not offer any clues to the way of appointment. Only when it was indicated that a priestess was appointed by decree of the decurions or was elected by the local council, we can more or less be sure that she was a ‘public priestess’, according to this criterion (see chapter 5, section 2.1). And the other way round: when a sacerdos or magistra was called sacerdos or magistra in familia, it is clear that she did not hold her religious office in the name of the whole civic community or a segment of it, but was chosen by the private ‘collegium’ of a grand household or a familia of slaves.\textsuperscript{244} Examples like these are rare and therefore, appointment cannot be, for the study of Roman priestesses at least, a decisive factor in determining whether a specific priestess was a ‘public’ religious official or not.

5.8: Summary

As may be clear, it is very difficult to give a satisfying definition of the terms public and private. One thing that can safely be stated, is that neither public and private, nor Roman and foreign, can be viewed as strict dichotomies; instead, a sliding scale that changed according to time and place, is, in my opinion, the most appropriate model to fit the two terms.\textsuperscript{245} The sharp distinction between public and private that is made in many ancient sources and modern works is not applicable to the situation in

\textsuperscript{241} Velim ergo emas quattuor marmoreas columnas (...), emas marmora quibus solum, quibus parietes excolantur. Erit etiam faciendum ipsius deae signum, quia antiquum illud e ligno quibusdam sui partibus utustate truncatum est, Pliny, Epist. 9.39. See also Eck (1989) 38. In Narbonese Gaul, many of such rural sanctuaries that were not reserved for a family or gens but for the rural population, can be found, Haeussler (2011) 422.

\textsuperscript{242} Savunen (1997) 119, 128.

\textsuperscript{243} Savunen (1997) 119. She states further that non-official cults were open to everyone, and that all worshippers were equal in theory. This is clearly too general an assumption, and not applicable to e.g. the cult of Mithras.

\textsuperscript{244} E.g. CIL 6, 9637; CIL 6, 9638 = CIL 6, 26807; CIL 6, 10138 = ILS 5248, all from Rome.

\textsuperscript{245} Cf. Lamphere (2005) 87, 89, 92.
the Roman world: cults, collegia246 and other (religous) phenomena could represent stages ‘in between’ and women – often perceived as only acting in the private sphere – acted in public as priestesses.247 Evidently, the Roman ideal that women were confined to the house differed a great deal from reality, which means that that the dichotomy between male and female was not simply exchangeable with that of public versus private.

To do justice to the practice in Roman daily life, in this thesis I will define ‘public’ as all social roles, places and activities open to people other than close friends and family members. As a consequence, a whole range of roles, places and activities can be categorized as ‘public.’ But public activities had one thing in common: to be able to carry out a public role, one had to ‘do’ something. This could for instance be taking part in elections, carrying out sacrifices for the community, paying summae honorariae or being initiated. A public role was not held because one acquired it automatically, as was the case with membership of family groups to which one belonged by birth (or as a consequence of enslavement).248

To refine this and to incorporate the model of the sliding scale, I will use the term ‘semi-public’ to indicate all roles, places and activities that were related to smaller, restricted groups of people other than the whole community, or to locations that were open to a limited number of people who were no family group.249 This implies that priestesses, magistreæ and ministreæ acting in collegia, are defined as ‘semi-public’, even though they have been classified as ‘private’ by some modern scholars.250

Private activities of women on the other hand are those conducted for herself or her family. A priestess who represented her own family and carried out rites with only her family members taking part I consider to be a private priestess (sacerdos in familia). This implies that the main thing I adopt from the literary sources is Festus’s definition of privata sacra (those practiced for individual men, families and gentes). This does not mean that the other criteria that have been put forward in the

248 Another example, but only applicable to men, are the privati (in the sense of citizens without magistracies). Every male citizen was automatically a privatus, unless he was elected as a magistrate and became a publicus.
249 Cf. Steurmgel (2004) 191, who makes a distinction between öffentlich and häuslich-familiär. Öffentlich can be divided into ‘official’, i.e. of the city, and collective, i.e. of collegia. Of course, one could argue that the term ‘semi-private’ would be equally appropriate as ‘semi-public’, and that ‘semi-public’ suggests that it is the exact middle between the poles ‘private’ and ‘public’, but this is not what I intend to say. The term ‘semi-public’ is unfixed, but for reasons of convenience, only this term – apart from ‘public’ and ‘private’ – will be used in this thesis.
250 Kloppenborg (1996) 16. That the members of collegia themselves saw their group not as private is shown by a bronze inscription, found in a house in Volsinii (CIL 11.2702 = ILS 7217). Here, a certain Ancharia Luperca, patroness of a collegium, is honoured with a statue, to be set up in the clubhouse of the collegium, ‘so that her devotion towards us [the members of the collegium] and our goodwill towards her will be visible for all in the public view ... – ut eius erga [a] nos pietas et nostra erga eam voluntas publica etiam visione [m] conspiciatur. Transl. by Hemelrijk (2008a). According to this inscription, what is considered ‘public’ is in fact the interior room of the clubhouse, showing that it was possible to consider a small community other than the whole civic community also as public.
literary sources and by modern scholars – location, organisation and authorisation by the local council, financing and appointment of sacerdotes – are unimportant, but simply that they are not applicable to the study of priestesses. With this in mind, I have excluded from this thesis all priesthoods and other religious offices held by women within a family. This means that I have included in the catalogue all inscriptions in which is not explicitly stated that the woman in question held her religious office in familia or from which contents it can be concluded that she was priestess of a family group.251 In the next section, attention will be paid to some general aspects of the inscriptions on which this thesis is based.

6: Epigraphy and the study of Roman priestesses

Even though women and children are underrepresented in the epigraphic record,252 inscriptions are our most direct source for the lives of individuals and of people who are hardly present in the literary sources, such as (non-imperial) women.253 Rives even explicitly states that the ‘importance of women in civic life is an (...) aspect of the ancient world that is known almost entirely from inscriptions (...)’.254 For instance, some religious offices held by women, are only known through inscriptions (see chapter 2).255 Furthermore, inscriptions are indispensable for the study of areas outside Rome, for most ancient literary texts focus on the City.256 Considering this, it is obvious that inscriptions are the main source material for the study of Roman priestesses in the towns and cities of Italy and the western provinces.257 Due to the fact that inscriptions have their own peculiarities, it is necessary to spend a few words on them. Firstly, I will discuss the reasons people could have had for erecting an inscription, a habit which is closely linked to Romanization. Secondly, I will pay attention to problems and limitations of the use of inscriptions and thirdly, some of the most important types of inscriptions will pass under review.

251 For instance, when a list of names of slaves and freedmen of one household is recorded.
252 Salomies (2001) 80. Though they are more clearly visible in inscriptions than in other sources, MacMullen (1986) 435.
253 Joshel (1992) 7, 9. Saller, (2001) 117. Cf. Keppie (1991) 9; Salomies (2001) 79. However, it needs to be kept in mind that even in inscriptions the image provided of women was a result of general views about their appropriate roles (and of epigraphic conventions). Nor should it be forgotten that the image of women on inscriptions reflected on her husband, Dixon (2001) 93, 99, 115. Cf. chapter 5, section 1.2.
255 Schultz (2006) 10, 70. Obviously, knowing the titles of certain religious offices does not necessarily mean that we know anything else about the women who held them. Some priesthoods are better documented than others, and the religious offices of priestesses are better known than those held by the ancillary staff.
256 Keppie (1991) 9. This is not to say that the Roman literary sources pay no attention to religious officials in ‘barbarian’ societies, but they do not discuss Romanised priestesses.
Erecting inscriptions was an important facet of city life, which was characteristic of Roman culture, and therefore spread gradually together with urbanisation.258 Of course, outside cities inscriptions can also be found, for instance those related to the military259 or those found in rural sanctuaries, but most stem from cities.260

Individuals could have several reasons when they decided to set up an inscription, though often these reasons are so closely linked they cannot be separated from each other. The first is showing or increasing one’s standing and wealth. Erecting an inscription was a public act; enumerating one’s offices, including the religious ones was for a great part meant to impress the onlooker. Therefore, inscriptions can help us to reconstruct the way individuals wanted to be perceived by their fellow citizens and their descendants, and which values they chose to display in public (see also chapter 5, section 1.2).261 The dedication of a monument with an accompanying inscription and sometimes elaborate carvings not only showed that the dedicator possessed sufficient money,262 but also that he or she wanted to make his or her name and titles public. And – last but not least – it showed that the dedicator had adopted (parts of) the Latin language and culture,263 which could be used to enhance the social standing of the dedicator.264 All this implies that inscriptions are not representative of the whole population, but represent mainly those who were wealthy and those who were considered worthy enough to receive an inscription (or erect one for oneself).265

A second reason people could have had to erect an inscription had to do with the importance of the written word and the relation between the dedicator, his or her community and the divine. The fact that the large majority of votive altars did not have images but did have text seems to indicate that in general the text was the most important.266 According to Mary Beard, writing played a central role in defining the nature of the relation between humans and gods. ‘Written records, with their insistence on naming, served as a marker of the individual’s permanent place in relation to the gods or a

258 Millar (1983) 124. Furthermore, the spread of Latin in relation to the adoption of Roman epigraphy is important, Benelli (2001) 8.
260 See e.g. Edmondson (2002) 45. Literacy in general was not confined to cities, see e.g., Derks and Roymans (2002).
263 From everywhere in the Roman Empire, inscriptions show that the persons who erected them were not native speakers of Latin, Parca (2001) 70.
265 Cherry (1997) 75; Haensch (2007) 176. Cf. Haensch (2007) 185, quite a small number of people was impregnated by the epigraphic habit.
particular god, as a symbol of active ‘membership’ of the pagan community.’267 The stress on
membership of a certain community can also be detected in other types of inscriptions which were
often meant to integrate the person who dedicated the monument into the community (a town, or a
collegium). 268 Both men and women stressed their special and much valued position in their local
society as patron or patroness, benefactor or benefactress and, of course, as priest or priestess. A good
example are the inscriptions erected by women who were priestess of a town (see chapter 2, section
2.3).

A third reason to erect an inscription was the wish to be commemorated or to remember
someone beloved.269 As naming was an essential aspect of all Roman inscriptions the purpose of
setting up monumental inscriptions in general was to preserve the name and reputation of the person(s)
whose name(s) was (were) inscribed. A ‘fear of oblivion’ was an important characteristic of Roman
society.270 The numerous epitaphs that have been unearthed, amongst which several that record
priestesses, show this clearly.

6.2: Problems and limitations of the use of inscriptions as historical source

Epigraphy has some very enthusiastic students; some have even maintained that inscriptions speak to
modern onlookers as they did to contemporaries.271 However, many reasons can be found which show
that this view is far too positive. The most obvious is, that the archaeological context – which is of
great importance for the interpretation of inscriptions 272 – is often lacking.273 Generally, the
inscriptions were not monuments in themselves, but were part of a larger object, like statues or
buildings that were brightly painted to draw attention. 274 Most inscriptions are not found in situ, and
therefore it is often impossible to combine epigraphic and archaeological data (see also chapter 2,
section 2.2). 275 Therefore, we have to consider what the inscriptions do not, or cannot, tell us276, and,
where possible, to combine inscriptions with other sources.

A second point that has to be mentioned is the availability of the epigraphic sources. Only a
small part – possibly about 5% – of the total number has been preserved277 and what is left (and can be
studied by us) is the result of various factors. The location of the archaeological site is especially
significant. For instance, excavations that have been carried out in the city centre provide relatively

273 Susini, 4-5, 34, 57, 60-61; Keppie, 134; Millar, 110; Gordon (1983) 13; Bodel (2001) 10, 25; Corbier (2005)

40
many inscriptions related to civic matters, while sites located far from the centre yield more funerary inscriptions.\textsuperscript{278} Generally speaking, most inscriptions have been preserved just by accident, for instance when they were re-used as building blocks. Moreover, not all surviving inscriptions have been published and thus remain unavailable for students.\textsuperscript{279}

In addition to the more or less accidental loss or survival of inscriptions, the epigraphic habit is another factor that can distort our conclusions about chronological and geographical distributions of certain types of inscriptions. The practice of inscribing on stone and other durable materials had its own development, independent of the phenomena of which it gives an account.\textsuperscript{280} In Italy, a gradual increase in the number of inscriptions can be detected, which started during the late Republican period and was quickened under the emperor Augustus.\textsuperscript{281} A peak – not confined to Italy – occurred in the second half of the second century AD, followed by a sharp decrease until the lowest point was reached in the later third century AD.\textsuperscript{282} However, this pattern varied per Italian region, and can be related to the urban density of the region (and to that of archaeological research!). Unsurprisingly, the areas around Rome have yielded more inscriptions than sites elsewhere on the peninsula.\textsuperscript{283} There is also a difference in the epigraphic density of provinces.\textsuperscript{284} Compared to other provinces, northern Africa has produced a very large quantity of inscriptions, but these are not evenly distributed between Africa Proconsularis, Numidia and Mauretania. This will be illustrated in the second chapter, where we see that most priesthoods held by women are attested in Africa (apart from Italy), mainly in Proconsularis and, to a lesser extent, in Numidia.

A possible explanation for the epigraphic habit has been sought in the process of Romanization, its accompanying spread of urbanisation and Roman citizenship, and the wish to commemorate the newly acquired status.\textsuperscript{285} Although the increase of the total number of inscriptions during the first and second centuries AD reflects the spread of certain Roman habits, the decrease of the third century does not.\textsuperscript{286} An explanation for this decrease that has been put forward is the crisis of the third century, but there is no consensus in this matter. Besides, Mouritsen argues convincingly that there was no universal epigraphic practice, and that one should not speak of one epigraphic habit, but of multiple local and social habits.\textsuperscript{287}

\textsuperscript{278} Patterson (2006) 121. Patterson also mentions the history of the site, 119.
\textsuperscript{279} Millar (1983) 82.
\textsuperscript{280} MacMullen (1982); Van Nijf (1997) 23. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the rise and decline of a certain phenomenon based on numbers only, MacMullen, paraphrased by Van Nijf (1996) 23.
\textsuperscript{281} Bodel (2001) 7. See also Feraudi-Gruénais (2010) 12.
\textsuperscript{283} Patterson (2006) 123.
\textsuperscript{284} Millar (1983) 82.
\textsuperscript{286} Bodel (2001) 7.
\textsuperscript{287} Mouritsen (2005) 39, 52, 62-63. In Pompeii for example, a changing pattern in self-representation of the elite is clearly visible. This pattern was different from that in Ostia. There is no reason to suppose that Mouritsen’s examples are exceptional, and therefore it can be assumed that similar patterns can be traced in the epigraphic
All factors mentioned so far resulted in an uneven distribution of inscriptions, which inevitably raises the question how representative the surviving inscriptions are of the original number of inscriptions and whether one can base any conclusions on the absence or presence of (a specific type of) inscription(s) in a certain place or period.\textsuperscript{288} Obviously, a quantitative analysis of inscriptions cannot lead towards statistics that are valid in detail; at best rough orders of magnitude and tendencies can be discovered.\textsuperscript{289} Accordingly, the discussion of the numerical, chronological and geographical spread of priesthoods open to women (chapter 2) will be rather general.

The factors mentioned above also lead to the existence of isolated documents and it is questionable whether it is possible to make any positive statements based on the presence of only a few inscriptions in one place or a small number related to a certain topic.\textsuperscript{290} These inscriptions are of limited use, even while they can be interesting.\textsuperscript{291} Millar rightly remarks that ‘(…) the historical value of relatively scattered inscriptions can only be indicative or illustrative.’\textsuperscript{292} This will be clearly visible in the fourth and fifth chapter of this dissertation, where sometimes single inscriptions are used to illustrate the many different aspects that could be part of the life of a priestess. Obviously, they do not say anything about the \textit{universality} of these aspects.

Another problem that needs to be mentioned here is the difficulty of dating inscriptions; in many cases this is impossible or very uncertain (e.g. when based on lettering).\textsuperscript{293} Often, inscriptions cannot even be dated in an indirect way (for example by using the context or related inscriptions).\textsuperscript{294} Sometimes however, when various inscriptions are erected in the same place, they can be dated to a wider period\textsuperscript{295} or relatively with respect to each other.\textsuperscript{296} Most inscriptions included in the catalogue, however, cannot be dated.

\textsuperscript{288} Patterson (2006) 124.
\textsuperscript{290} Patterson (2006) 124.
\textsuperscript{292} Millar (1983) 125.
\textsuperscript{294} Haensch (2007) 184
\textsuperscript{295} Individual inscriptions can sometimes roughly be dated as a results of certain \textit{formulae}. Inscriptions starting with \textit{Dis Manibus} can be dated to the period of the end of the 1st until the end of the 3rd century (see catalogue). When male names are mentioned, the period can sometimes be refined to the end of the 1st until the end of the 2nd century, because from the end of the 2nd century onwards, \textit{praenomina} were generally omitted. Furthermore, imperial names used by ordinary people can sometimes give information about the period they lived. For Roman names, see Salway (1994).
\textsuperscript{296} Savunen (1997) 9. For an example of two inscriptions that record priestesses and that can be dated relatively to each other, see: Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 108-110.
6.3: Types of Inscriptions

Many inscriptions have religious contents and record priesthoods: they mention individual priest(esses) and refer to their privileges and honours.\(^297\) I have collected inscriptions of several types that record priestesses: funerary, honorary, dedicatory, building inscriptions, and others, like a \textit{tabula patronatus}.\(^298\) The first three groups are the most frequently represented, and therefore some of their characteristics will be discussed here. However, it is often difficult to categorise an inscription in a certain group without knowledge of the archaeological context.\(^299\) Especially when the inscriptions are damaged, the distinction between honorary inscriptions and epitaphs is not always clear.

Epitaphs are the most common type of inscriptions: two thirds of \textit{all} Latin inscriptions are funerary.\(^300\) In my database, of a total number of about 296 of which 262 can more or less securely be categorised, 140 inscriptions are epitaphs; this is circa 47.3 \%, so slightly less than the general two-thirds.\(^301\) Nevertheless, the largest category of inscriptions recording priestesses are epitaphs and this fits with Bodel’s statement that funerary inscriptions are the best – qualitative and quantitative – source for discovering the lives of the lower strata of Roman society and the lives of women.\(^302\)

Funerary inscriptions usually contain the name of the deceased, sometimes an indication of her or his social rank and age and the name of the person who set up the inscription and his or her relation to the departed. A few lines could be added to describe the deceased. In the later second and third century often a laudatory epithet (e.g., \textit{dulcissimus, incomparabilis}) was included.\(^303\) In the fifth chapter (section 1.2), several of these epithets will be discussed. The relief that accompanied some funerary inscriptions was usually closely connected to the dead person.\(^304\) A grave monument of a priestess for example, could depict a veiled woman who carried sacrificial attributes. In most cases however, only the sacrificial instruments are depicted, or nothing at all.\(^305\)

In the catalogue, 34 inscriptions are honorary; this is circa 11.5 \% of the total. Honorary inscriptions were usually erected in honour of prestigious people who had proved themselves exceptionally useful for their local community, for instance by spending a large amount of money on civic benefactions or fulfilling an expensive priesthood. Honorary inscriptions are our most important

\(^{300}\) Bodel (2001) 30.
\(^{301}\) Perhaps this is a result from the fact that priestesses possessed a higher standing than other women, were wealthier than most and used their wealth for the public good, as a consequence of which the part of honorary inscriptions, building inscriptions and others that attested to the wealth of the women was higher. However, the 37 inscriptions that cannot be categorized with certainty are presumably either epitaphs or dedications. This means that the percentage of funerary inscriptions attesting to priestesses must have been higher than 46.8 \%.
\(^{302}\) Bodel (2001) 30, 40.
\(^{305}\) More about sacrificing and the sacrificial attributes carved on stone will be said in section 1.1 of chapter 4.
source for the system of euergetism and are as a consequence, very useful for the study of the public roles of women.\footnote{In chapter 5, especially section 4.2, honorific decrees for priestesses will figure regularly.} Votive inscriptions were the most common religious inscriptions.\footnote{At least 72 (24.3\%) inscriptions in the catalogue are dedicatory. Usually, dedications were inscribed on altars and were drawn up in a fixed formula that contained the name of the god, the name of the dedicator and a concluding sentence – generally indicating that the reason for the dedication of the altar was the fulfilment of a vow. Sometimes, the social rank of the donor was given.} Votive altars were often set up in large rows in sanctuaries ‘as testimonies to the power of the god’, so everybody who visited the temple could see them and understand their meaning, even if the person was illiterate. In addition, devices like \textit{v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)} made clear to everyone at what type of inscription they were looking. Votive altars were permanent symbols of the offering which was, after all, only a temporary act.\footnote{In chapter 4, more about the priestesses’ role in erecting dedications will be said.} 

\textit{Conclusions of this chapter}

As may be clear from this chapter, despite the wealth of available epigraphic evidence, a thorough study of women who acted as priestesses in the western part of the Roman Empire is still lacking. Most attention has been paid to priesthoods held by men in Rome. And when female religious roles are discussed, their priesthoods in the provinces are mostly neglected. This is for a great part due to the literary sources, which propagate an image of women, ideally labelled as chaste matronae, who possessed a secondary or marginal position in society. Nevertheless, many women could dispose of their own (often considerable) wealth, and held a relatively strong position in private law. As Roman law spread during the process of Romanization, in which the local elite played an important role, this meant that wealthy women in the provinces could enjoy the same advantages as the women in the City. Apart from law, other civic institutions spread as a result of Romanization, like the concept of religion. Yet, religion in the provinces was very much a local affair, in which the local elites were again influential; they held the main priesthoods and made decisions about the organisation of the cults. Modern scholars have often divided these cults into public and private ones, but this distinction is problematic. No strict dichotomy existed; instead we should think of public and private as terms posed on a sliding scale. For the present thesis this means that I exclude the inscriptions recording women


44
active in religious roles within families. However, this leaves enough other inscriptions – mainly epitaphs, honorary inscriptions and votives – for a study of female religious officials in the western part of the Roman Empire.
Chapter 2: Female priesthood: an overview

Introduction

In order to show the great variety of religious roles held by women, in this chapter I will provide a general overview of the inscriptions in the catalogue. The first section lists the most common religious titles of priestesses (in chapter 4 those of women with ancillary functions will be discussed). In the second section, I will deal with questions concerning the numbers of female religious officials who are attested on inscriptions, the place and time these inscriptions were erected, and how this relates to the epigraphic habit. This section also discusses the women whose religious titles do not clarify which deity they served. I will describe the tools than can be used to discover the possible cults in which these women held their offices.

The last section deals with the various gods and goddesses that were served by women: which divinities did women serve as priestesses? Where are these priestesses attested? Furthermore, the commonly held view that most deities were served by sacerdotes of their own sex will be checked: is it justified to link the gender of a deity to that of its religious personnel? We have seen in chapter 1 that it is incorrect to speak of ‘women’s goddesses’ because virtually all Roman deities were worshipped by both men and women, but was this also true for religious officials? With the answers to all these questions, I hope to reach a better understanding of the phenomenon of female religious officials. This provides us with a background to interpret the cult of Ceres that will be the subject of the next chapter, and the various aspects of (female) priesthoods that will be discussed in the last two chapters.

1: Religious titles

Various different religious titles were carried by women. Here, I will only mention the most important ones recorded in the catalogue. Usually, the greatest variety can be found in the additions to these titles, for example those used in the cult of Ceres (sacerdos Cereris, sacerdos Cерерум, sacerdos Cerialis etc., see chapter 3). I will not discuss these additions here. In Rome, the title sacerdos was often used for priest(esse)s of cults that were recognized by the state and were of Greek (or eastern) descent, like those of Ceres and Magna Mater. The title flamen was reserved for ancient Roman priesthoods. In the provinces, the situation was different, as the example of the imperial cult shows: priests could be called either flamen or sacerdos, depending on the time and the place where they

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1 Fishwick and Shaw (1987) 132. Yet the Vestals were also sacerdotes.
served. 2 Other cults could show the same divergence in priestly titles, for example the cult of Bacchus: the priests and priestesses of this god were called sacerdos, antistes or magister sacrorum. 3 It is likely that this variety of titles originated from local traditions, although this is hard to state with certainty, for little if anything is known about the survival of native priesthoods under Roman rule. However, when these indigenous priesthoods did not disappear, the priests were usually called sacerdotes, though Latin translations of indigenous priestly titles, like praefectus sacrorum in Lepcis Magna, were also used. 4 It is also likely that the status of the town where the priest(esse)s in question served, played a role: peregrine societies show a greater diversity of religious titles than coloniae and municipia, who had less freedom to organise their religious life. 5

1.1: Sacerdos and its variants

The title most frequently used for priestesses was sacerdos, the same word that was used for many of their male colleagues. 6 It can be found on inscriptions dating from the first century BC to the third century AD and erected in all main areas represented in the catalogue. According to Flobert, a sacerdos was the main agent in the process of sacrificing; he or she was the one who accomplished the sacra or the sacred ceremonies. 7 A local African variant of sacerdos was sacerda (see chapter 3), and the terms sacerdotalis and sacerdotia were also used. 8 Women called sacerdotalis are attested in Raetia and Pannonia Superior, while the sacerdotiae that are included is the catalogue, lived in Rome and Hispania Baetica. Spickermann suggests that, in case of CIL 13, 1754 from Lugdunum (not included in the catalogue for this woman likely served Magna Mater, as a taurobolium is recorded), the title sacerdotia may refer to a recently created office. 9 However, there is nothing in the other inscriptions recording sacerdotiae that supports the view that their priesthood was only recently created. A last variant of sacerdos is – possibly – sacetis. This title is recorded only once, in Cumae in Italy. Camodeca writes that sacetis was probably used to indicate an official in the cult of Ceres, which was important in Cumae (see chapter 3). 10

The title sacerdos (without the name of a deity added) has caused some controversies. Many examples can be found in the catalogue. For matters of convenience, I will refer to these priestesses as

3 Bruhl (1953) 90. Cf. the titles of the male priests of Ceres/the Cereres in Carthage, see: chapter 3 and Gasco (1978).
6 For an etymological discussion of the term sacerdos, see Guerra Gomez (1987) 28-30
8 Cat.no.258; 259 (sacerdotalis); 13; 243; 289 (sacerdotia).
9 Spickermann (1994a) 205.
10 Camodeca (2005) 175-177.
sacerdotes stricto sensu. It has been suggested that in some cases a sacerdos stricto sensu was not a priest(ess), but a worshipper with an active role.\textsuperscript{11} This is of special relevance to the African evidence, for in this area, many sacerdotes stricto sensu (both male and female) are attested. Rives writes that this suggests a difference between these sacerdotes and ordinary worshippers, but also that the position of sacerdos was easily obtainable. He thinks it is possible that the sacerdotes were no priests but initiates, or cult personnel with specific tasks, acting within a collegium.\textsuperscript{12}

However, in my opinion there are several reasons to state that at least in most cases sacerdotes stricto sensu were priest(esse)s. The first is that the general word for indicating a devotee or initiate was sacratus or sacrata.\textsuperscript{13} In addition, several inscriptions of sacerdotes stricto sensu record that the local ordo has granted something to the sacerdos (e.g. land for a public burial), and it is unlikely that it would do so for an ordinary worshipper.\textsuperscript{14} A third argument is the existence of sacerdotes publicae, perpetuae, primae, magnae etc. in whose title very often no indication is given of the deity served, implying that mentioning the name of a god or goddess in the title of a priest(ess) was not obligatory. Lastly, in some cases the inscriptions of sacerdotes are accompanied by reliefs on which priestesses are depicted, identifiable by their clothing and attributes.

1.2: Antistites and antistita

Two antistites and one antistita are recorded in the catalogue. There are two difficulties related to the title of antistes, the first being its exact meaning, and the second the cults in which it was used. Generally, it is assumed that the title antistes refers to a chief priestess or female overseer of a temple,\textsuperscript{15} and that it was mainly used in ‘foreign’ cults or in sacra peregrina.\textsuperscript{16} According to Flobert, the word antistes was close to its etymology of ‘chief’, and was less common than sacerdos as reference to a priest or priestess.\textsuperscript{17}

The three antistites recorded in the catalogue lived in the first and second century AD in Arelate in Gallia Narbonensis (one of the antistites and the antistita) and in Divodurum (Gallia Belgica). Spickermann suggests that the two antistites from Arelate served Cybele or Isis.\textsuperscript{18} Bona Dea is proposed as another option, because there is other evidence from Arelate of a female religious

\textsuperscript{11} Ladage (1971) 17; Savunen (1997) 142.
\textsuperscript{13} Much has also been speculated about another religious term related to sacerdos, i.e. that of sacratus/sacrata. Picard (1954) 162-163, suggests that sacrati were also priests, but of lower social ranks than sacerdotes. This is not backed by the evidence: inscriptions show that sacrati could have a distinguished political career. For example, a man from Thuburnica had been aedile, quaestor, duumvir, flamen and sacratu (CIL 8, 25702). See also chapter 4, footnote 124.
\textsuperscript{14} E.g., cat.no. 145; 114.
\textsuperscript{15} See e.g. Spickermann (1994b) 237.
\textsuperscript{17} Flobert (1988) 175.
\textsuperscript{18} Cat.no.252 from Arles (second century AD) records an antistita of Bona Dea, Cybele or Isis. The accompanying relief of cat.no.253 (Arles, first century AD) shows a priestess wearing a garland and carrying a burning torch in her right hand, Spickermann (1994b) 238.
official in the Bona Dea cult.\textsuperscript{19} There are, however, many examples of other cults in which (male) \textit{antistites} served, so in my opinion there is no reason to suppose that the female \textit{antistites} could not have served in one of those other cults.

One example of such a cult is especially interesting in relation to female priesthoods: that of Ceres. In Africa a priest of Ceres was called \textit{antistes}\textsuperscript{20}, and Valerius Maximus calls the priestess Calliphana, who is also mentioned by Cicero, an \textit{antistes} in service of Ceres (see also chapter 3).\textsuperscript{21} Cicero provides us with additional evidence. He describes ‘priestesses of Ceres, and female attendants of the temple [that of Ceres in Catena], women of great age, noble and of proved virtue’ (\textit{sacerdotes Cericis atque illius fani antistitae, maiores natu, probatae ac nobiles mulieres}).\textsuperscript{22} This shows that at least in Catena a difference was made between \textit{sacerdotes} and \textit{antistitae} – and accordingly, that the \textit{antistitae} were no priestesses, but overseers of the temple.\textsuperscript{23}

But there is evidence which shows that the word \textit{antistes} in other cases could be used as synonym for \textit{sacerdos}. In his \textit{Rudens}, Plautus generally uses the word \textit{sacerdos} to indicate the priestess of Venus,\textsuperscript{24} but once he refers to her as \textit{antistita}.\textsuperscript{25} Macrobius calls the \textit{sacerdotes} of Bona Dea in Rome \textit{antistes}, while Symmachus addresses a certain Primigenia as ‘\textit{apud Albam Vestalis antistes}.’ In Livy 1.20.3 the Roman Vestals are also called \textit{antistes}.\textsuperscript{26} Therefore, I think it can be concluded that the exact meaning of the term \textit{antistes} or \textit{antistita} varied between towns and cults, that it could mean priestess but also overseer of a temple, and that more convincing arguments are needed to be able to state that the \textit{antistes} from Arelate – and Divodurum – served M magna Mater, Isis or Bona Dea.

1.3: (Mater) Sacrorum

Apart from mothers of children, women could be called \textit{matres} in a different context:\textsuperscript{27} several \textit{matres sacrorum} (‘mothers of the sacred rites’) have been attested epigraphically.\textsuperscript{28} Two inscriptions stem

\begin{footnotes}
\item[19] Cat.no.251; Turcan (1972) 57; Spickermann (1994b) 237-238.
\item[20] \textit{ILAlg} 2.3.8000.
\item[21] Valerius Maximus, 1.1. In Narbonese Gaul, no evidence of male \textit{antistites} has been found, Spickermann (1994b) 240. In Philippi (Macedonia), a woman named Valeria Severa had been \textit{antistes Dianae Caszoriae} (\textit{CIL} 3, 14206, 13= \textit{AE} 1899, 48; not included in the catalogue).
\item[23] In Livy 23.24.12, also a distinction is made between \textit{sacerdotes} and \textit{antistitae} (male).
\item[24] E.g. in 330; 404 and 430; 440; 479; 655.
\item[25] 3.2.624.
\item[27] \textit{Matres} of cities and \textit{matres of collegia}, see: MacMullen (1980) 211; Hemelrijk (2010). Mothers of cities sometimes held priesthoods (in the imperial cult; the priestesses in my corpus were no \textit{matres coloniae or municipii}) - Hemelrijk (2010) 457. Mothers of \textit{collegia} did not hold priesthoods, Hemelrijk (2010) 462. Hemelrijk (2010) 456 note 8, suggests that the word ‘mother’ ‘as a term of respect may have been used for priestesses in daily practice.’ She refers to Plautus, \textit{Rudens} 263, where a \textit{sacerdos Veneris} is addressed as such (and again in 289). Admittedly, the play is a comedy and set in Cyrene, but I think the differences with reality in Rome cannot have been too great, because the acts and lines in the play should be comprehensible for the audience. This applies also to other parts of the play, see footnote 157; chapter 4, footnotes 60 and 170.
\end{footnotes}
from Tubusuctu and Carthage in North Africa, and two others were set up Gaul and Germania.\textsuperscript{29} These last two can be dated to the first century AD.\textsuperscript{30} Hemelrijk writes that the title \textit{mater sacrorum} ‘suggests some role in supervising religious rites, especially sacrifice, though her precise function is unknown.’\textsuperscript{31} Spickermann thinks, referring to a dedication to Mercurius by a \textit{mater sacrorum} from Bordeaux, that probably a priesthood of a local mystery cult is meant, comparable to that of \textit{pater sacrorum} of the Mithras cult.\textsuperscript{32} The other \textit{matres sacrorum} acted (also) in unknown cults, apart from those attested on the inscription from Carthage.\textsuperscript{33} These three women were \textit{matres sacrorum} of Jupiter Hammon Barbarus Silvanus (see also below). Their names are included in a list of \textit{sacerdotes}, which probably means that they were a specific kind of priestesses with specific tasks.\textsuperscript{34}

What can be concluded from this short discussion of priestly titles, is that \textit{sacerdos} was the most common, used in all parts of the Empire. It was used in a great variety of cults to indicate the main religious officials. Other titles – those of \textit{antistes} and \textit{mater sacrorum} – were much rarer, and in many cases it is unclear in which cults they were used, though it seems that they were not only reserved for local cults or cults in which one had to be initiated. The exact meaning of both \textit{antistes} and \textit{mater sacrorum} still remains unclear.

\textit{2: Distribution and Romanization}

The total number of inscriptions in the catalogue that record priestesses and other female cult officials in the western part of the Empire is 296. This number is more or less comparable to that of priestesses

\textsuperscript{28} Some women were addressed as \textit{sacrorum}; they seem to have been active in the cult of Isis (as devotees?), and are mostly attested in Rome. Therefore I have not included them in the catalogue. See: \textit{AE} 2005, 246; \textit{CIL} 6, 2245 = \textit{CIL} 6, 6058 = \textit{SIRIS} 435; \textit{CIL} 11, 574 = \textit{ILS} 4410 = \textit{SIRIS} 387; \textit{CIL} 12, 263 = \textit{ILN} 1, 16. Also men were called \textit{sacrorum Isisid}; \textit{CIL} 6, 2244 = \textit{ILS} 4408 = \textit{SIRIS} 436; \textit{CIL} 9, 6099 = \textit{ILS} 4178 = \textit{SIRIS} 467; \textit{CIL} 11, 819 = \textit{ILS} 4409 = \textit{SIRIS} 592.

\textsuperscript{29} In an inscription from Cologne (Cat.no.296), a woman is called \textit{mater nata et facta}, which may refer to a role in the cult of Dionysus, see: Spickermann (1994b) 143-144, 232.

\textsuperscript{30} Delgado Delgado (1998) 112-113, writes that the \textit{mater sacrorum} of Tubusuctu was either active in the cult of an indigenous divinity, served by mystery rites, or acted in a non-African cult. Tubusuctu was founded by Augustus with veterans coming from Narbonese Gaul, Macedonia, Galatia and Italia. The veterans from Narbonensis, the area where \textit{matres sacrorum} are attested, could have brought their own cults with them. Delgado Delgado links the inscription from Tubusuctu with the cult of the \textit{Matres} recorded on German inscriptions: he thinks the name of the priestess – Fabia Audicaena Turesis, to be read as Turicensis – indicates that she originated from Turicum in Germania Superior, the other area where \textit{matres sacrorum} are attested.

\textsuperscript{31} Hemelrijk (2009) 264. On an inscription from Teanum Sidicinum a \textit{ministra sacrorum publicorum} is recorded. This woman held her religious office in the cult of Juno Populona. Her title and the fact that in the same town two \textit{sacerdotes} of Juno Populona are attested, suggests that women with comparable titles to that of \textit{mater sacrorum} could hold ancillary religious offices, Cat.no. 130.

\textsuperscript{32} Cat.no.255; Spickermann (1994a) 127; Spickermann (1994b) 230.

\textsuperscript{33} Cat.no. 265; Spickermann (1994b) 230-231; \textit{CIL} 12.263 = \textit{ILN} nr. 16 (Fréjus, before Claudius; possibly cult of Isis, therefore excluded); Spickermann (1994b) 233. Cf. the \textit{mater nata et facta} of cat.no. 296. Cadotte (2007) 420, states that \textit{pater} and \textit{mater sacrorum} were local African titles.

\textsuperscript{34} Cat.no.163.
of the imperial cult.\textsuperscript{35} About 278 \emph{flaminicae} have been attested on inscriptions. This shows clearly that the imperial priesthood was the single most important religious office open to women, spread everywhere in the Empire, while the priesthoods of the deities in the catalogue were obviously installed according to local preferences or to specific regulations in colonial charters.\textsuperscript{36}

The number of 296 is about 15\% of the number of male priests and other male religious officials that I came across in the corpora and electronic databases during my search for priestesses (i.e. circa 2000 \emph{sacerdotes}, \emph{antisites} etc. in the Western part of the Empire, excluding priests of the imperial cult). As I have not looked systematically for male priests and have not included \emph{pontifices}, \emph{augures} and members of other priestly colleges that originated from Rome, I presume that many more priests are attested epigraphically than these 2000. Accordingly, there is likely to be an even higher ratio of priests to priestesses than is suggested by my sample.

In order to see whether this percentage (which is a ratio of circa 1:6.5) is in line with that of other public roles of women, it can be compared to the ratio of women to men who acted as benefactors and to that of priestesses to priests of the imperial cult. In Italy, northern Africa and Spain, circa one in five or six of the benefactors was female.\textsuperscript{37} This is roughly comparable to the ratio of priestesses to priests. Possibly the slightly higher number of benefactresses can be explained by the fact that everyone who possessed some wealth could give benefactions, while gaining a priesthood was limited to a smaller group of people (see also chapter 5). However, the numbers on which these ratios are based are relatively small, so the difference between them is negligible. The difference with the ratio of \emph{flaminicae} to \emph{flamines} on the other hand, is more striking. For every \emph{flaminica}, about 4.5 \emph{flamines} have been found, which means that in this group relatively more women are attested than in the group of priestesses in the catalogue to priests. It is possible that the more local character of the priesthoods held by the women in the catalogue compared to that of the imperial cult is the explanation for the difference.

Hemelrijk suggests that the divergence in numbers between \emph{flaminicae} and \emph{flamines} can be explained by the fact that the cult of the emperor was much more widespread than that of the empress and other women of the imperial family.\textsuperscript{38} The question is whether a similar explanation can be given for the ratio of 1: 6.5 of the other priestesses to priests.\textsuperscript{39} Indeed, some cults of which only male priests have been attested – like that of Jupiter Optimus Maximus – were empire-wide, but several of the divinities served by women were also worshipped in wide areas, like Venus. Therefore, I think that the explanation has to be sought in other factors. In the first place, women are underrepresented in the

\textsuperscript{35} See: Hemelrijk (2006b) 180.
\textsuperscript{36} E.g. Venus, who received an official cult in the \emph{Colonia Iulia Genetiva}, according to the \emph{Lex Ursonensis}. See also Crawford (1996).
\textsuperscript{37} Hemelrijk, forthcoming.
\textsuperscript{38} Hemelrijk (2006b) 188.
\textsuperscript{39} When the priestesses of Magna Mater and Isis – the two main groups I have excluded – are included in the calculation, the ratio of priestesses to priests hardly changes.
epigraphic record in general, as has been pointed out in the previous chapter. Secondly, the number of priesthoods open to men seems to have been much higher than that open to women – although we shall see in section 3 that priestesses acted in a wider range of cults than has often been thought. While priests have been attested for nearly all deities that were also served by priestesses, the reverse was not the case. Jupiter Optimus Maximus has already been mentioned, but many more examples can be found. To list but a few: Mars, Neptunus, Mens Bona, several local Genii and Sulis from Britain seem to have been served by men only. Of course, this could be a matter of survival of the evidence, but even if these deities would have had female sacerdotes, their number must have been very small.

A last factor is the limited number of provinces in which priestesses are attested epigraphically. Inscriptions recording male priests have been found in a much wider area, including provinces far from Rome. Obviously, the possibility that there were areas where female priesthoods existed, but were not documented, or of which no inscriptions survive, cannot be excluded. However, as the number of male priests also dwindles the further from Rome one goes, I think another explanation is needed than just a lack of sources. In my opinion the difference can be linked to the level of Romanization. Holding a Roman-style priesthood (and erecting an inscription) required a certain ‘level’ of Romanization of both the individual\textsuperscript{40} and his or her local community.\textsuperscript{41} And although we have seen in the first chapter that women did not by definition live outside the sphere of Romanization, I think that in the more remote and less urbanized areas they were slower than men in adapting Roman values – as Rothe’s discussion about dress in the Rhine-Moselle region has shown (see also chapter 1). Therefore, in the less Romanized areas only male priests have been attested, while relatively many inscriptions were erected by and for priestesses in the areas closer to Rome: ‘Die Beteiligung der Frauen an den Götterkulten in den einzelnen Provinzen entspricht damit dem “Süd-Nord-Gefälle”des Reiches. Nur im Mittelmeerraum bestanden wirtschaftliche, urbane und soziale Verhältnisse, die Denen in Italien ähnlich waren.’\textsuperscript{42} In the next section where the geographical spread of the priestesses will be discussed, this will be confirmed.

2.1: The geographical and chronological spread

In figure 1 below, the percentages of inscriptions recorded in the catalogue are shown, ordered by province. By far most inscriptions stem from Italy, Rome and Sicily (53%). As could be expected, northern Africa comes second. Africa Proconsularis provides 16%, Numidia and the Mauretanian provinces 17%. From Hispania – i.e. all Spanish provinces, but in practice this means mainly Baetica – stem only 6% of the inscriptions, while Gaul provides 4%, of which virtually all inscriptions were erected in Narbonensis. The remaining 4% stem from the Rhine and Danube area (Dalmatia, Moesia

\textsuperscript{40} Spickermann (1994a) 7.
\textsuperscript{41} Woolf (1998) 86, 88-89: about Gaul, but also applicable elsewhere.
\textsuperscript{42} Spickermann (1994a) 380, 381 (quotation).
inferior, Germania superior and inferior, from Pannonia superior and one last from Raetia) and an unknown province.⁴³

As has been mentioned, by far most inscriptions stem from Italy (47%) and Rome (6%). Most of the local Italian inscriptions were set up in the Augustan region 1 (Latium and Campania), followed by region 4 (Sannium). Figure 2 shows the density of inscriptions per Augustan region. It is clear – and unsurprising, for it follows the general epigraphic density – that the areas closest to Rome and in southern Italy have yielded most epigraphic material, while in the north (regions 8-11) very few priestesses are recorded on inscriptions.⁴⁴

Both the distribution per province and that per Italian region are largely compatible to the general spread of Latin inscriptions.⁴⁵ Therefore, I think it is unlikely that indigenous pre-Roman priesthoods that were open to women have influenced the spread of the inscriptions recording priestesses to a significant extent. Of course, this does not mean that in certain cases these native priesthoods will not have continued to exist – in a modified form – under Roman rule, as was the case with e.g. some priesthoods held by men in Tripolitania, or the religious offices in the Ceres cult(s) in North Africa, which had Punic, Greek and Roman roots (see the next chapter).⁴⁶ Greek roots were

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⁴³ This order is largely comparable to the list recording the epigraphic density, based on monumental inscriptions per square kilometre, provided by Harris (1989) 268.
⁴⁴ Region 10 (Venetia et Histria) is an exception, but this is the result of special archaeological circumstances: most inscriptions from this part come from the sanctuary of Bona Dea in Aquileia.
⁴⁶ Not much is known about pre-Roman priestly officials due to a lack of sources – and when sources are available that are proof for the existence of priestesses, the link with religion in the Roman period is not clear. Cf. Gordon (1990c) 242. References to druids from imperial times sometimes mention women, but these sources are
likely also present in other priesthoods held by women: various priestesses have been attested on Greek inscriptions from *Magna Graecia*, who served deities that had equivalents in the Roman pantheon, like Demeter and Hera.\textsuperscript{47} However, as the Latin inscriptions in general show the same pattern as those recording priestesses these Greek and indigenous roots are not needed to explain the spread.\textsuperscript{48}

![Figure 2: Distribution of inscriptions per Italian region (n=137)](image-url)

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the practice of inscribing on stone was largely a habit that spread under Roman rule and had had its own chronological development, independent of the phenomena it recorded. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to look a bit further into the epigraphic habit. Figure 3 shows how geography and chronology are linked in the inscriptions of the priestesses in the catalogue. This figure records the (absolute) number of inscriptions that record female religious officials per province in a certain period of time. Most inscriptions cannot be dated, or can only be assigned to ‘the imperial period’ in general. A few inscriptions were set up during the Republican

not clear and untrustworthy, Wightman (1986) 549. Allason-Jones (2011) 437 writes that Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.30, mentions female druids, but this is unconvincing. Furthermore, while there is no reference in the ancient sources to Celtiberian priests (Curchin (2004) 181) Roman *sacerdotes* in Spain, both male and female, were very common. And while Tacitus mentions prophetic priestesses in his *Germania* 8.2, only very few priestesses have been attested in the *Germaniae*: Priestesses in pre-Roman Italy: Livy writes that Etruscan women were active in religion, but they are not defined as priestesses, Livy, 1.34.9; Lundeen (2006) 35-36. Etruscan epigraphic evidence is not helpful, see: Lundeen (2006).

\textsuperscript{47} E.g. *IG* 14, 702 from Pompeii and *I.Napoli* 1.34 from Naples (priestesses of Demeter Thesmophoros); *IG* 14, 1285 from near Rome (priestess of Hera).

\textsuperscript{48} Hemelrijk, forthcoming 2013, links the distribution of *flaminicae* and benefactresses, two groups comparable to the priestesses of this thesis, to Romanization and the spread of urbanisation, Roman citizenship and economic prosperity. These factors may also have contributed to the geographical distribution of priestesses, who are also mainly attested in cities (Cf. Spickermann (1994b) 240), but it is hard to tell because for much of this (Romanization, the spread of citizenship, economic prosperity) we rely mainly on inscriptions, and these are not an independent variable. The epigraphic habit and the distribution of the priestesses were possibly two sides of the same coin.
period, or the early years of the reign of Augustus, mainly in Rome and Italy. This fits with the general gradual increase in the number of inscriptions that started during the late Republican period and quickened under Augustus. The peak of the second century is only visible in the African provinces. Interestingly, Rome, Italy, Hispania and the Gaulish provinces have yielded relatively many inscriptions dating from the first century AD. I have no explanation for this strange pattern.

![Figure 3: Chronological distribution per province (n=296)](image)

When all datable inscriptions recording priestesses are taken together and are divided according to the period in which they were erected, one gets the pattern that is shown in figure 4.

![Figure 4: The number of datable inscriptions per period (n=147)](image)
The most striking is the early peak of inscriptions in the first century AD (while generally, the number of inscriptions peaked at the end of the second century under the Severi). The peak of figure 4 is mainly the result of epigraphic material attesting to the ancient Italic priesthoods of Venus and Ceres; possibly, the prominence of these priesthoods can be linked to the religious policy of the emperor Augustus.

In sum, the geographical and chronological distribution of epigraphic material that records female religious officials is partly deviant from the normal pattern. Parts of the chronological distribution per province are unusual, just as the first century peak of inscriptions. However, as the number of datable inscriptions in total and that of the inscriptions from the areas with the deviating pattern are very small, we should not overemphasize these irregularities. Likely, they are the result of a more or less accidental loss or survival of inscriptions (see also chapter 1).

2.2: Sacerdotes stricto sensu

Now the geographical and chronological distributions of the inscriptions have been discussed, it is time to pay attention to the cults in which the women served. A little more than half of the priestesses in the catalogue (ca. 51%) are women in whose title no reference is made to the deity they served.\(^{49}\) They were simply called sacerdos or magistra, ministra etcetera. As I have already mentioned, I will refer to these women as sacerdotes stricto sensu.\(^{50}\) Sometimes an extra qualification was added, like publica, magna or perpetua. There are some controversies about these extra qualifications, because their meaning is not fully clear, though perpetual priesthoods have been contrasted to annual ones, and the word publica might stress to the role of the local community in providing the means necessary for the maintenance of the cult – public money – and the fact that the priestess represented this community (see chapter 1). All sacerdotes publicae and primae are attested in Italy, while the sacerdotes perpetuae and annuae have only been attested in Spain (Baetica and Tarraconensis respectively); this can probably be linked to the cult in which they served (see below, section 2.3).

In this section, I will explain the criteria I have used for determining the cults in which these sacerdotes stricto sensu may have served. The results are used in the next part of this chapter, where the various priesthoods held by women will pass under review. It has to be noted though, that in many cases the cult in which a sacerdos stricto sensu served, cannot be discovered.

\(^{49}\) Male sacerdotes stricto sensu are also abundant in the epigraphic material, and sometimes they had the same qualifications (perpetuus, publicus) as their female colleagues. Fiske (1900) 113, has supposed that all Spanish sacerdotes stricto sensu were priests of the imperial cult. In my opinion, his arguments are unconvincing.

\(^{50}\) In the catalogue I have not included those sacerdotes (magistrae etc.) stricto sensu who, regarding the criteria discussed below, served Isis and Magna Mater or were active in the imperial cult.
The text of the inscription

In several cases the text of the inscriptions provides some clues as to which deities were served by the *sacerdotes stricto sensu*.\(^5^1\) These indications can be the divinity invoked on dedications, cult specific rites or gifts which can be linked to a certain cult and were provided by the priestess or someone assisted by a priestess. To give two examples of the last option: a *sacerdos annua* who erected an inscription some time between AD 50 and 120, provided the town Castulo (Hispania Tarraconensis) with a gift that consisted of the area with statues in front of the temple of *Roma et Augustus*.\(^5^2\) This gift suggests that this woman whose name has not been preserved in the inscription, served in the cult of *Roma et Augustus*. Therefore, this inscription is not included in the catalogue. An inscription from Antium (region 1; AD 85) records a dedication in sacramento Ceres Antiatiinae by a certain Claudia Attica. She was assisted by the *sacerdos Iulia Procula*, who can therefore safely be regarded as a priestess of Ceres.\(^5^3\) The cult specific rites that are mentioned in some inscriptions of *sacerdotes stricto sensu* have generally led to the decision not to include these inscriptions in the catalogue. *Taurobolia* and *criobolia* are two rites virtually exclusively connected to Magna Mater.\(^5^4\) When they were executed by a *sacerdos stricto sensu* I regarded this *sacerdos* as priestess of Magna Mater and have therefore excluded the inscription from the catalogue.\(^5^5\)

More needs to be said about the relation between the deities that were invoked in the inscription and the *sacerdotes*. It is likely that priestesses, who made dedications to *other* gods than the ones they served, explicitly mentioned ‘their own’ deity in their inscription.\(^5^6\) *CIL* 8, 1140 from Carthage is a good example:\(^5^7\)

\textit{Junoni / Sallustiae M(arci) fil(iae) / Lupercæae sacerdot(i) Cer(esis/erum)}

“To Juno, from Sallustia Lupercia, daughter of Marcus, priestess of Ceres/the Cereres:”

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\(^5^1\) For an example of a male *sacerdos stricto sensu* from Rome whose cult can be discovered by looking at the archaeological context and the text of the inscription recording his name, see Brouwer (1989) 385.

\(^5^2\) *AE* 2004, 753 = *CIL* 2, 3279 = *CIL* 3.1, 105.

\(^5^3\) Cat.no. 24.

\(^5^4\) However, one reservation has to be made in relation to *taurobolia* and the cult of Magna Mater: the first *taurobolium* ever that is attested on an inscription from the western part of the Empire, was given in honour of Venus Caelestis in Puteoli in AD 134, *CIL* 10.1596; Dubois (1907) 162; Peterson (1919) 37, 156; Rutter (1968) 231. This inscription belongs to the group of inscriptions from the period between 135 BC - AD 159, a phase in which, according to Rutter, ‘the rite [the *taurobolium*] was not connected with any particular deity.’ Only in the second period (AD 159 - 290) the *taurobolium* was adopted into the cult of Magna Mater, and all inscriptions from AD 159 onwards can be linked to the worship of this goddess, Rutter (1968) 226. See also: Alvar (2008) 265, 266.

\(^5^5\) There are a few exceptions, all from Beneventum. In this town Magna Mater was worshipped in a cult together with Minerva Paracentia or Berecintia. Due to the presence of Minerva, I have decided to include the priestesses of this cult, all *sacerdotes stricto sensu*, in the catalogue.

\(^5^6\) Another option was to be indicated as *sacerdos eius: Augustae / Veneri sacrum / Fulvinia Helene / sacerdos eius / d(e) s(uo) p(ecunia) i(ecti), CIL* 3, 7254; modern Kato, Achaia, not included in the catalogue.

\(^5^7\) Other examples: e.g., *CIL* 2, 2416; *ILS* 6924 (Bracara Augusta, Hispania Tarraconensis). This last inscription is a dedication to Isis Augusta by a perpetual priestess of Roma and the *Augusti/-ae*. Also: *CIL* 2.5, 311 = *CIL* 2, 1611 (Igabrum, Baetica) and *CIL* 6, 512 = *ILS* 4154 = *SIRIS* 447 (Rome); none included.
In analogy with inscriptions like this, I take the deity in honour of whom the sacerdotes (or magistrate, canistriariae etc.) stricto sensu erected a dedication as the one in whose cult they served – unless other evidence indicates otherwise. This implies that I think that the woman in the following inscription, set up in Madauros (Numidia), was a priestess of Tellus Augusta:

\[ \text{Telluri Aug(ustae) / Iulia Mit/thia sace(rdos) / l(ibens) v(otum) s(olvit)} \]

“To Tellus Augusta; the priestess Iulia Mitthia solved her vow.”

If this Iulia Mitthia was no priestess of Tellus Augusta, it would be unclear to the onlookers in which cult she held her office, for there are no further indications as to which other deity she might have served. This example is but one of many cases. In several of these inscriptions, the name of the deity is mentioned after the religious office of the woman in question (very often that of magistra), and is followed by a statement about a vow solved or a gift given. Clark has discussed this ambiguity in phrasing in which the name of the deity can be both genitive and dative, when the name is a first or fifth group noun. She has rightly asked the question whether these women were magistriae of the god, or whether they made the dedication to the god. She states convincingly that this ambiguity may have been inserted on purpose to save space (and so money), and that both interpretations were true at the same time.

Local religious life

The second factor that can help to discover in which cults the sacerdotes stricto sensu served, is the religious life of the towns in which these women are attested. Sometimes there are other cults in which women acted as priestesses, which might – but: need not! – imply that the sacerdotes stricto sensu served in one of these cults. Alternatively, one can determine which cults were the most important in the towns of the priestesses. It is likely that in many cases recording only the fact that one was sacerdos (and especially: sacerdos publica) would be sufficient to link the priestess to the central cult.

This seems to have been the case in Pompeii, where the sacerdotes publicae are generally assumed to have served Venus, the main goddess and protectress of the town. In Pompeii the

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58 Cat.no.189. Cf. cat.no.246 probably mentioning a priestess of Fortuna Augusta. And cat.no.185 in which probably a priestess of Venus is recorded.
59 E.g., cat.no.31; 32; 71; 72.
60 Clark (2011) 355-358.
61 Sometimes there is evidence of more than one (important) cult in which women held religious offices, for example in Madauros in Africa Proconsularis, where several priestesses of Ceres/the Cereres, some sacerdotes Telluris, and a female sacerdos Liberi Patris are attested.
62 However, it is often very difficult to identify the main deities of a municipality. The number of inscriptions referring to a specific divinity only shows his or her popularity. See also Haeussler (2011) 393-394.
priesthood of Ceres was also ‘public’, but the titles of the priestesses of this goddess contained the word Ceresia. The best example to illustrate this, is the inscription that mentions Eumachia, sacerdos publica, Aquvia Quarta and the Heia Rufalai (?), the last three sacerdotes Ceresia publicae (see also the Epilogue).64 Another argument in favour of the supposition that the Pompeian sacerdotes publicae served the city goddess is the fact that Eumachia’s well-known statue and accompanying inscription on which she is again called sacerdos publica were placed in her own aedificium on the forum. As this location (the archaeological context, see below) does not clarify the priesthood mentioned on the inscription, it seems obvious that in Pompeii the ‘public’ priesthood was that of the main deity Venus Pompeiana, known to all. Likely, comparable situations can be found in other towns in which sacerdotes publicae are attested.

Reliefs
The reliefs that sometimes accompany the inscriptions of sacerdotes stricto sensu, can be depictions of cult-specific attributes, objects and animals. An example is the relief of a sacerdos magna, described in chapter 3, which suggests that this woman was priestess of Ceres. Other examples of reliefs related to the Ceres cult are mentioned in chapter 4, section 1.1. Sometimes though, carvings can be confusing, especially when the texts are also puzzling. On a dedication to Semele from Colonia Agrippinensium in Germania inferior reliefs that refer to the cult of Dionysus and Magna Mater are carved. In the text a certain Reginia Paterna is indicated as mater nata et facta, while a Seranius Catullus was pater. For the presence of this title of pater, links to a Mithraic community have been supposed.65 It has also been suggested that Reginia Paterna was mater in the cult of Magna Mater while the man was pater in the Mithras cult or alternatively in that of Magna Mater.66 Clearly, reliefs should be interpreted with great caution.

The archaeological context
Finally, the archaeological context of the inscriptions – i.e. mainly the location where they were erected – can help to discover the cults of the sacerdotes stricto sensu. When an inscription is found in a temple, it is likely that the deity to whom this temple was dedicated, was the same divinity as the one served by the priestess recorded on the inscription.67 Derks provides an example of a male flamen, in whose title no divinity is mentioned. The context of the sanctuary where the inscription was set up

64 Cat.no.94.
66 Vermaseren and Van Essen (1965) 122 (Mithras); Vermaseren (1974) II, 30 (Magna Mater). Griffith writes that a link to Mithras is not straightforward, and certainly not involves the woman, who probably neither was mater in a cult of Semele; Griffith (2006) 64-65. Regarding these uncertainties, this inscription is included in the catalogue in the category of uncertain cases.
67 However, when no central inscription has been discovered and no large number of dedications to one god, it is uncertain which deity was worshipped in a certain sanctuary, Haensch (2007) 185.
makes clear that Lenus Mars must have been the god served by the *flamen.* 68 Unfortunately though, in most cases concerning the inscriptions in the catalogue, very little is known of the archaeological context. Only votive inscriptions found *in situ* or together with other inscriptions that offer additional information, provide the necessary religious context. An altar from Glanum (modern Saint-Remy-de-Provence) in Gallia Narbonensis that records a *ministra strictu sensu*, is a good example. The inscription reads: *Auribus / Loreia Pia / ministra* (To the Ears, [given by] the *ministra* Loreia Pia). 69 Brouwer has pointed out that the altar resembles a dedication to Bona Dea from Arles, erected by the *ministra* Caiena Attica. 70 Furthermore, another altar from Glanum that mentions a *ministra* was erected in honour of ‘the Mistress’ (*Dominae*), 71 and it is known that Bona Dea was called *Domina* elsewhere. Finally, at the find spot of Loreia Pia’s altar which was called the ‘temple of Bona Dea’, other dedications to the goddess have been found. 72 For these reasons, Brouwer concluded that Loreia Pia must have been *ministra* of Bona Dea.

The criteria offered here for discovering the cult of the *sacerdotes stricto sensu* can best be used together. Unfortunately, this is often impossible and in many cases it remains unknown or at least highly uncertain in which cult these priestesses acted. Similar uncertainties concern the women who were addressed as ‘priestesses of a certain town.’ These *sacerdotes* and their cults will be discussed in the next section.

2.3: Priestesses of cities and perpetual priestesses

Various women served as priestess of a city – that is: they do not mention a specific cult but were called for instance *sacerdos Ilipensis,* 73 or *sacerdos coloniae Thaenitanae.* 74 It is not clear what this title exactly means, but it has many parallels in the titles of male priests, who can be found for example in the area around Rome. 75 Although by far most priestesses of cities are attested in Hispania Baetica, three examples stem from other places. The first priestess, a *sacerdos [-] Atiniatium* lived – obviously – in Atina in Italy (region 3), 76 while the second, the above mentioned *sacerdos coloniae Thaenitanae,* stemmed from Thaenae in Africa Proconsularis. The last one is more exceptional, as the

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69 Cat.no.256, Haeussler (2011) 404 compares the mysterious ‘Ears’ to the Celtic theonym *Roklosia,* which could mean: ‘hearing deities.’
70 Cat.no. 251.
71 Cat.no.257.
73 Cat.no.243.
74 Cat.no.216.
75 See: Wissowa (1915); Latte (1960) 404-407. See also chapter 4 about the *praesula Tusculanorum.*
76 Cat.no.37.
inscription of this woman was found in Tomis in Moesia Inferior (she was, unsurprisingly, called sacerdos Tomitanorum), a province from which only a few priestesses are known.77

While the Spanish provinces have yielded a reasonable but certainly no impressive amount of inscriptions that record priestesses, the number of female sacerdotes of cities from this area is relatively high. They are all attested in Baetica. Agria Iunaria, whose inscription was erected around the turn of the second century, was sacerdotia Iliensis.78 Iunia Rustica had been sacerdos perpetua et prima in municipio Cartimitano in the seventies of the first century AD.79 Licinia Rufina was priestess of no less than three towns in the late second or early third century; she was sacerdos perpetua in colonia Claritate Italia et in municipio Contribentusi Ipsecenti et in municipio Florentino Iliberritano.80

Like city priestesses, sacerdotes perpetuae like Licinia Rufina and Iunia Decima, are virtually all found in Baetica.

Both the Spanish priestesses of cities and the sacerdotes perpetuae, are generally supposed to have served in the imperial cult.81 With regards to the ‘perpetual’ priestesses, this is not unlikely, considering the fact that in the few cases in which the cult of a sacerdos perpetua is recorded, it is the imperial cult.82 Additionally, various flaminicae perpetuae have been attested epigraphically. An argument to back the view that city priestesses served also in the imperial cult is the similarity between the titles of women (and men) who certainly served in the imperial cult and those of the city priestesses mentioned above: both were called ‘priest in a certain municipium or colony’.83 Furthermore, the existence of these city priestesses in Baetica and the wide organisation of the imperial cult in this province make links between the two obvious.

However, for several reasons I think more evidence is needed to be able to maintain that all city priestesses and ‘perpetual’ priestesses served in the imperial cult, and only in the imperial cult. The first reason is that the old priesthoods of the cities around Rome, held by men (mentioned above), were certainly not related to the emperor worship. This implies that the title ‘sacerdos of a city’ does not necessarily refer to the imperial cult. Secondly, the Spanish women who certainly served in the imperial cult usually had the word augustae somewhere in their title and were sometimes called both sacerdos and flaminica.84 Finally, many priesthoods in the provinces were local (see also chapter 3 for examples), which makes it likely that there were not only small differences in religious titles, but also

77 Cat.no.262. No flaminicae are attested on inscriptions from Moesia Inferior, and the number of male priests is also small.
78 Cat.no.243.
79 Cat.no.283.
80 Cat.no.290.
82 E.g. Aelia Senilla (CIL 2, 1341 = ILER 1770; Ossigii Latonium, Baetica) was domus Augustae sacerdos prima et perpetua, and Pomponia Rosciana (IRPCadiz 541; Saepo, Baetica) was sacerdos perpetua divorum divarum.
84 Those who were definitely acting in the imperial cult were also called flaminica. CIL 2, 3278 = CILA 3.1, 104 = ILER 1662 (Castulo, Tarracoensis); AE 1983, 21 = AE 2001, 1185 = AE 1982, 521 = CILA 2.2, 358 (Italica, Baetica).
differences in the tasks and cults of the *sacerdotes*, who accordingly need not all have served in the imperial cult.

I think there are two possible ways to interpret the titles of the city priestesses and ‘perpetual’ priestesses. The first is that they may have had a wider function and acted as ‘general’ priestess for their town in all cults that did not have their own priest(ess) but that were part of the local calendar. Obviously, this could imply that they had to carry out priestly tasks in honour of the empress or other members of the imperial house, but it does not exclude tasks in other cults. The other possibility is that the priestesses, in analogy with *sacerdotes publicae*, served the most important deity of their town – which need not necessarily be the empress or one of her imperial relatives. Unfortunately, with the available evidence this problem cannot be solved.  

3: Deities served by female officials

Now the priestesses of whom it is unknown or uncertain in which cult they acted are discussed, and some criteria for determining the cults of the *sacerdotes stricto sensu* have been established, we turn to the deities that were served by female religious officials. In 1912 Henri Graillot wrote in his work on the *Magnum Mater* that in Roman society official participation of women was a religious necessity for cults concerned with female deities. Graillot was not the only one; there have been many other people who thought that the sex of the deity determined the sex of his or her priests and worshippers. In 1986 McMullen still held the same view. Even Schultz, who provided several exceptions to this ‘rule’, wrote in 2006: ‘For the most part, cults were maintained by only one gender or the other (...).’ (Cf. also chapter 1) Indeed, when new cults were created for members of the imperial house, the duties of the priests ‘seem to have been segregated according to gender.’ The question can be asked if the epigraphic material relating to other cults supports this view and if the provinces were much different from Rome in this respect. In this section I will therefore discuss which divinities were served by priestesses and women with other religious offices, and investigate to which extent the ‘gender rule’ was applied. I will also examine where the priestesses are attested and if they had male colleagues in order to gain a better understanding of the spread of female priesthooods of individual cults, of possible

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85 Cf. Fiske (1900) 120: *sacerdotes* who had served as priestesses in cities before the introduction of the imperial cult, had the imperial cult added to their tasks.  
86 Therefore, the perpetual priestesses and city priestesses are included in the catalogue, but in the group with uncertain cases.  
89 MacMullen (1986) 442: ‘Religion generally required female ministrants for female deities (...).’  
90 Schultz (2006) 87 (quotation), 92.  
differences between Rome and the provinces and of the diversity of the epigraphic – and in some cases: literary – evidence attesting to priestesses.

3.1: Goddesses

I will deal with the individual divinities served by female cult personnel according to their sex. It should first be noted though, that it is uncertain in how far – or even unlikely that – the cult of a deity with the same name was uniform in the Roman Empire. A deity could be honoured in different parts of the Empire under the same name, but there are no reasons to suppose that the social and political background of the worshippers or the way of worshipping were the same. Local gods were ‘transformed and integrated into the Roman pantheon’, and because they travelled across the Empire, the gods from Rome acquired new identities. Everywhere, they were subject to different syncretism and re-interpretation, which implies that the sphere of influence of individual deities was not limited to one aspect. This diversity was often expressed by different epithets. Versnel writes about this phenomenon: ‘gods bearing the same name but with different epithets may, but need not have been perceived self-evidently as different functional or local manifestations or aspects of one god.’ This depended on the context that triggered one of the believer’s various layers of perception.

Nevertheless, for reasons of convenience and to give an impression of the wide variety of deities women could serve as an official, I will briefly mention the main Roman-Italic characteristics of all the gods and goddesses served by women in the West. This section starts with the goddess whose priestesses are best attested: Ceres.

Ceres and her priestesses

Ceres was the goddess of fertility and agriculture, although she influenced many other aspects of life as well. She was identified with Terra or Tellus (the old Italic earth-mother) and therefore possessed

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92 Beard, North and Price (1998) 248. See also Haeussler (2011) 394 and 396: ‘The often postulated similarities across the Roman West are due to our evidence. The adoption of Latin epigraphy along with the adoption of Graeco-Roman anthropomorphized representations of deities cause our evidence to appear, at least superficially, similar across the Roman West.’


95 Bendlin (1997) 54.


97 Versnel (2011) 77.

98 Versnel (2011) 82-83.

a chthonic side. Furthermore, the goddess was linked to marriages and chastity and to the change from barbarism to civilization. At an early stage, the Italic Ceres and the Greek Demeter started to be equated; this process of Hellenization accelerated in the second half of the third century BC, and Ceres’s link to ripening grain became even stronger than before. This link was still important in the imperial period. Many imperial inscriptions from all over the Empire attest to existence of *aediles (plebis) cereals* and show that Ceres was protectress of the *frumentarii* (corn-dealers or, in the military: commissaries of the stores). Furthermore, Ceres is depicted on various coins that refer to imperial concern for the provision of grain to the Roman *plebs*. Several ‘imperial actions [like restoring a temple of the goddess, VG] were probably connected to agrarian crises (...).'

By far most inscriptions of the catalogue that can be assigned to a single cult (ca. 34.5%) have been set up for of by priestesses of Ceres. They are only attested in two areas: northern Africa and Italy, including Rome (for which also literary evidence is available, see chapter 3). This distribution reflects the popularity of Ceres in these regions, for dedications to this goddess stem mainly from these same areas. Compared to other deities who are attested on many more inscriptions from a wider geographical area, Ceres did not receive many dedications, except in the regions mentioned. This

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104 Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, 43.51.3.


106 *CIL* 14, 2; 409; *CIL* 3.3835; 10511; *CIL* 9.1545.

107 E.g., coins of Claudius with Antonia, Livia and Agrippina minor as Ceres show a link to grain supply. Seneca, *De Brevit. Vitae* 18.5 writes that at Claudius’ coronation there was a lack of grain in Rome, and accordingly, these coins possibly show that Claudius took great care of the grain supply in Rome, Foubert (2010) 144, 170. See also: Chirassi Colombo (1981) 424. Maybe for the same reason, Claudius wanted to introduce the Eleusinian mysteries in Rome and to intensify the worship of Ceres, Suet., *Claud.* 25; Simon (1990) 49-50.


109 There is an exception from Cularo in Gallia Narbonensis that records a male *servus* of Ceres and Mercurius, *CIL* 12, 2318 = *ILN* 5.2, 459. Additionally, some dedications to Ceres were erected in Baetica and other Spanish areas, and very few were erected in the Danube provinces. Alföldy (1989) 72-74: the number of dedications says something about the popularity of a cult.

110 Eck (1989) 43-44: In the Roman Empire most dedications were erected in honour of Jupiter, followed by Hercules, Apollo, Aesculapius, Diana, Fortuna, Silvanus, Magna Mater, Isis, Serapis and Mithras.

111 Savunen (1997) 122 writes that there is little evidence for the cult of Ceres in Campania, except the inscriptions of the *sacerdotes*. And indeed, these inscriptions make out the greatest part of the epigraphic
indicates that the worship of the goddess was mainly limited to these provinces, and therefore, a special explanation is needed to account for this spread.\footnote{112} I think three main factors played a role in this geographical spread of both the cult of Ceres and, accordingly, her priestesses: in the first place the production of grain, secondly Greek roots and thirdly – in case of Africa – Punic and Romano-Italic influences. Below, I will discuss how these factors may help to explain the distribution.

\textit{Italy}

In virtually all towns in Italy where priestesses of Ceres are attested on inscriptions, the production of grain seems to have been an important economic activity. Besides, many of the same towns had been influenced (or founded) by the Greeks (e.g. towns in the regions 3 and 7). The link to grain and a Greek past is most clearly illustrated by the evidence from Campania. Most Italian Ceres priestesses are attested in Campania (19 of the 46, excl. Sicily), a multicultural region where many Greeks lived who came from the south. Ceres was the main protectress of Campania.\footnote{113} The cult of Ceres was concentrated in the most fertile areas of Campania that produced large quantities of grain.\footnote{114} Many farmlands in Campania belonged to the ‘richest in all of Italy south of the Po valley,’ and produced three harvests of grain per year.\footnote{115} Simon writes that the Italian Ceres priestesses lived in cities from which grain for Rome was imported,\footnote{116} and indeed, several examples can be found, e.g. Naples and Capua.\footnote{117} Apart from producing cereals, Campania was important for the Roman grain supply in another way: grain from Sicily, Egypt and Africa came to the port of Puteoli to be transported to the \textit{Urbs}.\footnote{118} ‘Without the enormous quantities of grain imported regularly into Italy through this port, it is no exaggeration to say that masses of people at Rome would often have gone hungry.’\footnote{119} Considering this, it is unsurprising that this town has yielded no less than five priestesses of the grain goddess Ceres. The other Italian \textit{sacerdotes Ceres} held office mainly in region 4. Corfinium and Sulmo seem to have been ancient centres of the cult, as several pre-Roman inscriptions show (see chapters 3 and 5). The valleys around Sulmo and Corfinium were very fertile and this may explain the prominence of the

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\footnote{112} Priestesses of Venus and Juno have also only been attested in Italy and Africa, but in contrast to dedications to Ceres, votives to these goddesses can be found elsewhere as well. Therefore, the distribution of the priestesses of Venus and Juno seems simply the result of the fact that Italy and Africa have yielded most inscriptions in general, see Bodel (2001) 8.

\footnote{113} Ostrow (1985) 87-88; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 92. In chapter 3, more will be said about the special relation between Ceres and Campania.


\footnote{115} Ostrow (1985) 86.

\footnote{116} Simon (1990) 46.

\footnote{117} However, it is uncertain where exactly the largest part of the Campanian grain was produced; Arthur (1991) 86, thinks that it was probably the area between Capua and the sea. Peterson (1919) 318, writes that Capua was an agricultural town that mainly produced grain.

\footnote{118} Therefore the Julio-Claudian emperors paid much attention to Puteoli, Peterson (1919) 100; Steurnagel (1999) 182.

\footnote{119} Ostrow (1985) 86.
cult in the area. The same can be said about Aeclanum (region 2) where one *sacerdos Ceres* is attested. This town was an important producer of cereals.\(^{12\text{b}}\)

**North Africa**

In northern Africa 54 women were religious officials in the cult of Ceres or the *Cereres* – see also chapter 3. Half of them lived in Africa Proconsularis; slightly less in Numidia and only three in Mauretania.\(^{12\text{a}}\) Drine has stated that in general most priestesses lived in the part of northern Africa where the Punic roots were the strongest\(^{12\text{b}}\), but which was also influenced by Greek colonists and in later times used for the production of grain for Rome.\(^{12\text{c}}\) Indeed, in Africa Proconsularis, where most priestesses of Ceres are attested, concentrations of priestesses can be found in the grain-producing eastern part of the province around Bulla Regia, and in a fertile region located directly to the south of this town that included settlements like Ammaedara, Thala, Sufetula and Cilium.\(^{12\text{d}}\) This part was heavily influenced by Punic traditions.\(^{12\text{e}}\)

It is not surprising that Punic – and Greek – influences contributed to the popularity of Ceres/the *Cereres* in the region, for a connection between Punic religion, i.e. the goddess Tanit, and the worship of the Greek Demeter-Ceres is indeed attested in different areas (including northern Africa) of the western Mediterranean.\(^{12\text{f}}\) Until the end of the first century BC Punic culture (with its strong Greek component) remained dominant in Africa.\(^{12\text{g}}\) From then on, the elite started to use Latin next to Punic, the names of gods changed from Punic to Latin\(^{12\text{h}}\) and Ceres was influenced by the Romans.\(^{12\text{i}}\)

Like the Italian Ceres cult, that of northern Africa was linked to (the spread of) agriculture, mainly the production of grain. The popularity of the Ceres cult in Africa reflects the importance of agriculture for the African economy and society; Africa’s wealth was based on agricultural

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\(^{12\text{a}}\) Salmon (1967) 66.

\(^{12\text{b}}\) Although there are several examples of statues of Ceres from Caesarea in Mauretania (see Landwehr (1993) 56-58.), the number of inscriptions in which the goddess is mentioned, is very small (especially when those of the female religious officials are not counted).

\(^{12\text{c}}\) Drine (1994) 174, 179.


\(^{12\text{e}}\) Audollent (1912) 366; MacKendrick (1980) 36, 61; Cherry (1998) 146-147. In addition to these two main areas, a few female *sacerdotes Ceres* or *Cererae* can be found to the east of Thugga and in a couple of more isolated towns located in different parts of the province.

\(^{12\text{f}}\) Drine (1994) 179. Some priestesses are also attested in the Carthaginian *pertica*, for example in Belalis Maior. In this town many people from Italy lived, mainly stemming from Campania, who were attracted by the fertility of the surrounding area, Mahjoubi (1984) 64: ‘(...) notamment des Campaniens attirés par la richesse agricole de Beld Béja et les possibilités d’échanges.’ This might be an interesting point with relation to the Ceres cult.

\(^{12\text{g}}\) White (1967) 346-349. Cf. Audollent (1912) 372 and Cadotte (2007) 359, 360. White mentions (347) a funerary stele from Sidi Ali Madiouni, near Mactar, on which a priestess of the *Cereres* is depicted in a frontal pose, carrying, among other things, a *caduceus*. Usually, this was no attribute of Ceres, but - in Africa - of the Punic Tanit.

\(^{12\text{h}}\) It seems that during this time the indigenous kings played a role in the spread of the cult of Demeter-Ceres,Carcopino (1928) 6. Cf. Carcopino (1942) 21. Cf. Gesztelyi (1972) 79; Spaeth (1996) 17, about the role of king Massinissa in the spread of the Ceres cult.


\(^{12\text{b}}\) Audollent (1912) 369.
products.\footnote{130} And indeed, the ‘cult became especially significant under the Empire, when Africa served as one of Rome’s principal granaries.’\footnote{131} As early as the first century AD Africa provided two-thirds of the grain for Rome,\footnote{132} but already after the Second Punic War, Africa had probably acquired a position as \textit{provincia frumentaria}, together with Sicily (another area where the Ceres-Demeter cult was important!) and Sardinia.\footnote{133} This explains why the worship of the goddess was popular before the Roman conquest in places like Thugga\footnote{134} and why several inscriptions that attest to \textit{sacerdotes Ceres} date from the first century AD, which is early compared to the other African priestesses.

In contrast to Italy,\footnote{135} in northern Africa also male \textit{sacerdotes} of Ceres have been attested on inscriptions. Their existence might be a result from the Greek-Sicilian roots of the cult; in Gela and Syracuse, the Deinomenids were male priests who served Demeter and Kore (see chapter 3).\footnote{136} Although some male priests lived in towns that were independent from Carthage, most male priests are from the area around Carthage, its \textit{pertica}.\footnote{137} The \textit{pertica} included towns like Uchi Maius and Thugga.\footnote{138} Many male priests are attested in and around fertile Thugga, a town of which the inhabitants were citizens of Carthage – at least until AD 205 when it became a colony – and could pursue careers there, obviously including religious offices.\footnote{139} After the adoption of the cult in Carthage and its surrounding area, it spread to Numidia.\footnote{140} The number of Numidian male priests active in the Ceres cult is much smaller than that of both Numidian priestesses and of priests from Africa Proconsularis. This is due to the fact that so many inscriptions have been found in Carthage, where the Ceres cult was of special importance (see chapter 3).

In conclusion, the geographical spread of the \textit{sacerdotes} of the goddess Ceres can be linked to the production of grain, to Greek roots and to Punic influences. In Italy only priestesses are attested, while

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{130} Cherry (1998) 44; Rives (2007) 72.
\item \footnote{131} Spaeth (1996) 17. However, there is no proof of an active encouragement of agriculture by the Roman authorities, Cherry (1998)151.
\item \footnote{132} Rives (1995) 26. The coast of modern Tunisia is fertile and close to Italy, which makes it an ideal area for the production of grain for the \textit{Urbs}; Rives (1995) 17, 19.
\item \footnote{133} Erdkamp (2005) 209, 210.
\item \footnote{134} Foucher, \textit{tambourt.perso.sfr.fr/maghreb/FoucherPaganisme.doc}, 7.
\item \footnote{135} One possible exception, see chapter 3, section 3.2.
\item \footnote{136} As in Italy also male priests of Demeter have been attested on inscriptions, the question why there is no evidence for male Ceres priests in Italy seems to be more important than the question why male Ceres priests were present in Africa. After all, in northern Africa priests of a great variety of divinities are attested epigraphically. I think the absence of male Ceres priests in Italy might be a result from influences from the City, where the officials of the Greek Ceres cult were female, and from ancient Italic habits (e.g. in Sulmo and Corfinium), see chapter 3.
\item \footnote{137} Gascou (1987) 108, 109. Nothing is known about the Ceres temple in Carthage itself. There was, however, a temple of Tellus, built by a certain M. Caelius Phileros in 40 BC, Gesztelyi (1972) 79; Rives (1995) 48 note 66. Carcopino (1942) 19, writes that here possibly the \textit{Cereres} were worshipped.
\item \footnote{138} Rives (1995) 24. Thugga, Uchi Maius and the \textit{pagus Sittuensis} were part of the same administrative district, at least during the years 125-130, Fishwick and Shaw (1977) 375.
\item \footnote{139} Rives (1995) 101, 103, 104; Santangelo (2008) 463.
\item \footnote{140} Cadotte (2007) 347, 357.
\end{itemize}
in northern Africa also men served as sacerdotes. More about the cult of the goddess, including her religious personnel in Rome, will be said in chapter 3.

Venus, sacerdotes Veneris and sacerdotes Cereris et Veneris

Venus was an old Italic goddess, giving prosperity and abundance and promoting the fertility of plants, animals and human beings. As a result from her relation to powers of growing and ever renewing life, Venus developed into a goddess of love, as the Greek Aphrodite.¹⁴¹ Despite her seniority and the fact that Livy writes that Venus belonged to the twelve classical gods, she had no flamen in Rome like Ceres or Flora, and she had no place in the ancient Roman calendar.¹⁴² From the year 295 onwards a public Venus cult can be identified in Rome.¹⁴³ In the third century BC two new Venus-types were introduced in the City: Venus Verticordia and Venus Erycina.¹⁴⁴ Venus of Eryx was an old Mediterranean fertility goddess. After the Greek colonization she was identified with Aphrodite and later with the Carthaginian Tanit; she became a Hellenized goddess with Asian traits. A temple was built for Venus Erycina on the Capitol in 217 BC after Rome’s loss at Trasimene, but the sanctuary at Eryx was already under the authority and protection of the senate from 249 BC onwards, when the Romans had conquered Mount Eryx.¹⁴⁵

In early times in Rome, Venus had never been a major goddess but she became more popular under Caesar, who built a temple for Venus Genetrix on his new forum.¹⁴⁶ Pompeius in his turn built one on his forum in honour of Venus Victrix.¹⁴⁷ Elsewhere in Italy the worship of Venus was certainly as important as in Rome. Her cult existed in Campania and southern Italy before the Roman colonisation.¹⁴⁸ Although the cults in several Campanian towns were influenced by the Venus of Eryx,¹⁴⁹ generally in Campania, Venus was the patron of gardens and of marshes.¹⁵⁰ She was worshipped in Herculanenum as the Oscar Herentas,¹⁵¹ near Casinum,¹⁵² in Ardea, Lavinium¹⁵³, Alba and Gabii.¹⁵⁴ Venus was the city goddess of Pompeii, and her cult was promoted by Sulla.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴² Livy, 22.10.9; Turcan (1988) 10; Schilling (1954) 9; Neue Pauly, s. v. Venus, 17.
¹⁴⁴ Schilling (1954) 225, 228, 229; Beard, North and Price (1998) 80, 83.
¹⁴⁷ Beard, North and Price (1998) 122, 144; Stamper (2005) 88. Furthermore, Hadrian erected a temple of Venus and Rome near the forum Romanum: this was the largest temple in the whole city. After a fire it was restored by the emperor Maxentius, Beard, North and Price (1998) 257, 260; Stamper (2005) 212.
¹⁴⁹ Peterson (1919) 7.
¹⁵⁰ In Rome the garden cult did not become important, Koch (1955a) 828; Schilling (1954) 24, 27, 30.
¹⁵¹ Peterson (1919) 19, 285. See also Koch (1955b) 6-7; Latte (1960) 183; Torelli (1996) 172.
¹⁵³ Also: Simon (1990) 219.
¹⁵⁴ Peterson (1919) 6 note 6.
¹⁵⁵ Rives (1994b) 302. Perhaps the Venus cult was also important in the little town of Abellinum in Campania, where a sacerdos of an unknown cult has been attested, cat.no.16. Abellinum was named Colonia Veneria Livia Augusta Alexandriana Abellinatum. Rives writes: ‘Although this title suggests some involvement by Augustus

68
Priestesses of Venus

With a possible 42 inscriptions, religious officials of Venus and of Ceres and Venus together in a joint cult are the second best attested group in the catalogue.\(^{156}\) The literary sources do not mention priestesses of Venus in the City,\(^{157}\) and the findspot of the only inscription that may record a *sacerdos Veneris* from Rome is uncertain.\(^{158}\) There is, however, some epigraphic evidence that attest to several men who were involved in the cult of Venus in the City in one way or another, though not as *sacerdotes*. A certain Cerdo was *aedimus Veneris*,\(^ {159}\) while another *aeditus* of the temple of Venus Felix\(^ {160}\) – Publius Aelius Epaphus, imperial freedman – is known from a grave monument.\(^ {161}\) Caius Stiminius Heracula had been *sortilegus ab Venere Erycina* (soothsayer of Venus Erycina) in post-Augustan times.\(^ {162}\) Furthermore, several *magistri* and a *minister aliae Veneris*,\(^ {163}\) who was, according to Rüpke, possibly *aeditus* in the temple of Venus of the Horti Sallustiani, are attested on inscriptions.\(^ {164}\) In this same temple, women could be *Veneriae*.\(^ {165}\) It has often been thought that *Veneriae* were temple prostitutes, but nothing in the inscription points to this. Kunz writes explicitly that a *Veneria* was not necessarily a temple prostitute; she ‘kann auch andere Aufgaben erfüllt haben.’\(^ {166}\) More about *servae Veneris* and sacred prostitution will be said in chapter 4, section 2.2.

In the rest of Italy, both men and women who were active in the Venus cult have left their traces in the epigraphic record, though it seems that the most prestigious religious office (that of *sacerdos*) was reserved for women. There are two inscriptions that seem exceptions to this, but I think they are referring to a different Venus than the one served by the female *sacerdotes*. In Puteoli, the first *taurobolium* attested epigraphically, paid for by a woman on command of the goddess, was carried out in honour of Venus Caelestis by a certain Tiberius Claudius Felix, *sacerdos*.\(^ {167}\) Another man from Baiae, a Turrenius Caelerinus, describes his office as *pastor sacris deae Veneris Caelestis et cultor decorum* (herder of the goddess Venus Caelestis and worshipper of the gods).\(^ {168}\) As the name in the foundation of the town, there is no reason to connect the epithet "Veneria" with the Caesarian cult. Since the cult of Venus had a long history in Campania, it is more likely that the title of Abellinum, as that of Pompeii (*Colonia Veneria Cornelia Pompeianorum*), referred to a traditional local cult'.

\(^{156}\) Apart from Latin inscriptions there is also evidence of a priestess (*pristafalacia*) of Venus on a Pelignian inscription, see: Vetter 213 in the appendix; Guerra Gomez (1987) 283.

\(^ {157}\) Plautus, *Rudens*, passim, mentions a *sacerdos Veneris* in Cyrene, see also footnote 27.

\(^{158}\) Cat.no.39; Rüpke (2005) 630, 728. It is also possible that the inscription stems from Atina.

\(^{159}\) CIL 6, 4327.

\(^ {160}\) Unfortunately, there is very little evidence for a cult of this goddess, only a medallion and some inscriptions, none predating the second century. Rives writes that there is no proof that Sulla established a cult of Venus Felix, nor that he had built her a temple, Rives (1994b) 298.

\(^ {161}\) CIL 6, 8710.

\(^ {162}\) CIL 6, 2274; Kunz (2006) 308.

\(^ {163}\) About this *minister* and *Venus alna*, see Koch (1955b) 34.


\(^ {165}\) Cat.no. 140.


\(^ {167}\) *CIL* 10, 1596 = *ILS* 4271.

\(^ {168}\) *AE* 1932, 77.
Venus Caelestis suggests, this goddess was not simply the Roman or Italic Venus. Vermaseren, referring to the first inscription, writes that Venus Caelestis was equated with Cybele. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* 11.2 though, Venus Caelestis seems to have been another form of Isis. As several male priests of both Cybele and Isis are attested on inscriptions, and also many priests of Caelestis alone the religious offices of Tiberius Claudius Felix and Turrenius Caelerinus are not surprising.

In sum, men in Rome and Italy could be religious officials in the Venus cult, but no priests. They carried out the more practical tasks held in lower esteem. As women held the highest positions, it appears that the goddess Venus was perceived to have a special connection to women – though calling her a ‘women’s goddess’ is exaggerated.

The (female) *sacerdotes Veneris* that are attested on inscriptions held their offices mainly in the central Italian regions 1 and 4, which have generated most Italian inscriptions in the catalogue. Six out of forty-two women in service of Venus – mainly *libertae* – were *magistrae Veneris*. Interestingly, they held office in towns in which no *sacerdotes Veneris* have been attested, or in towns that were located in region 5, an area where no priestesses of the goddess at all have left traces in the epigraphic record. This may be due to coincidence, but it could also show that *magistrae* carried out the priestly tasks that in other places were the responsibility of the *sacerdotes*. In chapter 4, section 1.5 more will be said about the role of *magistrae*.

Northern Africa is the only other area where *sacerdotes* serving Venus have been attested epigraphically, even though many inscriptions from all over the western part of the Roman Empire attest to the worship of Venus. The goddess was worshipped in Mauretania and in Numidia, but also in Africa Proconsularis in originally Punic regions where she was identified with Astarte. Cadotte has shown that the goddess was especially popular in north Numidia but I have found no epigraphic evidence for priestesses or priests from this region, despite the fact that in Cirta a temple was dedicated to Venus. The only Numidian inscription that attests to *sacerdotes* of Venus I have found, records the names of two male priests who had taken care of erecting a *cella* in honour of Venus.

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169 Vermaseren (1977) 102.
170 E.g.: *ILA* 1, 3000; *ILA* 2.1, 807; *ILS* 9294; *CIL* 6, 2242; *CIL* 8, 1360; *CIL* 8, 16918.
171 Possibly two others served as *magistrae* in Hispania Tarraconensis (cat.no.239) and in Salona in Dalmatia (cat.no.295). Other inscriptions from Salona record a *collegium Veneris*. *CIL* 3, 1981 = *CIL* 11, 642a6 = *AE* 1983, 735; *CIL* 3, 2106; *CIL* 3, 2108. Regarding the epigraphic evidence, Venus seems to have been very popular in Salona and in the Danube area as a whole.
172 Furthermore, a female *sacerdos Augustae Veneris* has been recorded on an inscription from modern Kato in Greece (*CIL* 3, 7254; not included in the catalogue).
175 *CIL* 8, 6965 = *ILA* 2.1, 531 = *ILS* 3181.
Erycina Augusta in Madauros. As was the case with the cult of Ceres, in northern Africa the priesthood of Venus was not reserved for women.

Apart from an inscription from Mazuc that does not offer any information about the gender of the sacerdos, in Africa Proconsularis possibly two female sacerdotes Veneris have been recorded on inscriptions, both found in Mactar. Sicca Veneria was a major cult centre of Venus. In this town several people – men and women – acted in various religious offices in service of the goddess: a male sacerdos, an actor Veneris and a serva, a servus and a libertus of Venus have been recorded. Possible (female) slaves of the goddess have also been attested in Spain.

In contrast to the cults of Ceres and Venus alone, priestesses – no priests – of the joint cult of Ceres and Venus have only been found in Italy. This priesthood of Ceres and Venus has been attested eight times in the regions 1, 4 and 7. Five of these priestesses were called sacerdos Cereris et Veneris, two were sacerdos publica Veneris et Cereris and one was sacerdos Veneris et Cereris – without the addition publica. Various explanations for the existence of the combined priesthood have been proposed, but none is convincing.

In sum, both men and women served the goddess Venus in a variety of functions, though the priesthood was mainly held by women, certainly in case of the combined priesthood of Venus and Ceres. The evidence stems mostly from central Italy, though inscriptions attesting to (lower) (fe)male religious officials have also been found in other areas (northern Africa and Spain), reflecting the popularity of the goddess that was certainly not limited to the Italian peninsula.

Sacerdotes lunonis
Like their colleagues who served Ceres and Venus, female sacerdotes lunonis are attested only in northern in Italy and North Africa. The cult(s) of Juno, who was worshipped in many different forms, originated in Latium. Likely, she was served by priestesses in this area. Vergil describes how Allecto disguised herself as an old priestess of Juno in the town of Ardea, and Ovid mentions Faliscan sacerdotes (male or female?) who prepared a festival during which a cow was sacrificed in honour of

176 ILAlg 1, 2069.
177 In Pannonia superior, men seem to have been priest of Venus as well, see CIL 3, 4152 = ILS 7119 from Savaria (modern Szombathely).
178 CIL 8, 12068 (not included in the catalogue).
179 Cat.no 183 and 185.
180 Cat.no. 287 and 288.
182 See e.g. Schilling (1954) 20, who thinks that a link between Venus and Liber may explain the existence of the combined priesthood. See also Koch (1955b) 24.
183 Otto (1905) 176.
184 Vergil, Aen. 7.419: fit Calybe lunonis anus templique sacerdos.
Juno. In Rome, Juno belonged to the Capitoline triad; she was either served by the *flaminica Dialis* or by the *rex and regina sacrorum*, but seems to have had her own priests as well: Servius mentions a *sacerdos Iunonis* (gender unspecified), and in Severan times the priesthood of the goddess was held by Publius Alfius Maximus Numerius Avitus, a man of senatorial rank who had held several political offices.

Like most other Roman divinities, Juno had many different epithets and spheres of influence, often related to the lives of women. However, it is clear that she was not only the patron of the fortune of women, but also of that of men, especially of young warriors, whose protectress she was. In 396 BC, Juno Regina was imported in Rome from Veii, where the image of the goddess ‘was one that according to Etruscan practice none but a priest (*sacerdos*) of a certain family was wont to touch.’ The title Regina presents the goddess as a political deity and links her to sovereignty. It is noteworthy that in this quality she was worshipped – mainly – by women, who were supervised by the *decemviri sacris faciundis*.

Only one inscription – found near Beneventum (region 2) – records a priestess of Juno Regina. Three other Italian inscriptions, erected in Teanum Sidicinum (region 1), record two priestesses and a *ministria* of another form of Juno: Juno Populona. Torelli describes this goddess as ‘an extremely ancient divinity.’ Apart from Teanum, she was worshipped in Luceria, Aescernium and Rome. The last Italian woman who served Juno is attested in Grumentum (region 3). The *magistra Pietas* had erected a dedication to Juno and paid for an arch (*arcus*) and a *candelabrum*. In addition to the women mentioned above, some men held religious offices in the cult of Juno in Italy. In Falerni (region 7) Quintus Tullius Cincius Priscus had been *pontifex sacraei Iunonis Quiritis* and a priest originating from Tarraco in Spain had held the priesthood of Juno in an unknown place close to Rome during the Antonine period.

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185 Ovid, *Am. 3.13.2*: *Casta sacerdotes Iunoni festa parabant et celebres Judos indigenamque bovem.*
188 *CIL* 6, 41176 = *CIL* 6, 1474.
191 (*..*) *id signum more Etrusco nisi certae gentis sacerdos attracture non esset solius*, Livy, 5.22.5, transl. by B.O. Foster. Cf. Taylor (1923) 35. According to Taylor (1923) 33, Juno Regina was the main goddess of Veii.
194 Cat.no.46. Her priesthood is mentioned even before her own name, which was not unique, but very uncommon, cf. e.g. *AE* 2006, 1041.
196 Cat.no.79. See also Clark (2011) 365.
197 *CIL* 11, 3125 = *ILS* 3111. Latte(1960) 167, writes about this priesthood: ‘Die Verwendung eines Mannes für dieses Amt an Stelle einer Priesterin im Gegensatz zu dem sonst im Junokult üblichen zeigt, daß die ganze Gemeinde, nicht nur die Frauen, unter der Obhut der Göttin standen.’ As women could represent the whole community as a priestess, this statement can be dismissed as redundant.
Again, North Africa is the only other area apart from Italy in which female sacerdotes Iunonis are attested on inscriptions. Cirta in Numidia provides us with the names of two female sacerdotes Iunonis, and Vegesela, also in Numidia, with one.\textsuperscript{199} In Castellum Biracsaccarensium (Africa Proconsularis) a woman is attested who was possibly a religious slave in service of the goddess (see chapter 4).\textsuperscript{200} I have found only one African man who had been priest of Juno; he served the goddess with Aesculapius in a joint cult.\textsuperscript{201} The other western provinces have not yielded many other (male) sacerdotes Iunonis apart from a man from Graena (Baetica)\textsuperscript{202} and some men who served Juno as part of the Capitoline Triad. This is unsurprising, given the fact that the cult of Juno alone was rare in general; usually she was worshipped together with Jupiter or in the Capitolian triad.\textsuperscript{203}

As may be clear, several forms of Juno could be served by both male and female priests, who are attested in various provinces, though the evidence for female sacerdotes – which is rather limited – stems only from Italy and Numidia. Inscriptions attesting to other members of the cult personnel is also rather scarce.

**Sacerdotes Caelestitis**

Together with Saturn, Caelestis was the most important African deity,\textsuperscript{204} but only a few sanctuaries of the goddess have been found.\textsuperscript{205} The cult of Caelestis was reintroduced in Carthage in the second century AD; at the end of this century, she had become the most important goddess of the city.\textsuperscript{206} Her cult was mainly concentrated in the area around Carthage and in Thuburbo Maius, of which town she was protectress.\textsuperscript{207} According to the *Vita* of Macrinus in the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, a woman

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\textsuperscript{199} An epitaph and accompanying relief from Tebessa (AD 160-180), may have been – according to Wrede (1981) 114 – from a priestess of Juno; *AE* 1957, 182. However, regarding the reliefs that include torches, corn ears and a pig, this Aelia Leporina, may also have been priestess of Ceres. As the inscription does not offer any information as to a possible religious office of Aelia Leporina, it is not included in the catalogue.

\textsuperscript{200} Cat.no.279.

\textsuperscript{201} *AE* 1952, 41= Cadotte 216.

\textsuperscript{202} *Hep* 2, 1990, 403. This Juno may have been the same as Juno Caelestis, consort of Baal-Hammon-Melkart, Delgado Delgado (1998) 23-24. This man was father of a priest of Hercules, mentioned in the same inscription. Delgado Delgado (1998) 23, 27, also writes that Iulia, wife of the sacerdos Iunonis and mother of the priest of Hercules, may have been a priestess (of an unknown deity), but this is highly uncertain and therefore this inscription is not included in the catalogue.


\textsuperscript{205} In Thugga and in Chemtou, Eingartner (2003) 606. However, Wurnig (1999) 33-34 writes that in the Roman period many sanctuaries for the goddess were built. A sanctuary of Juno Caelestis in Lambaesis, Mikocki (1995) 70.

\textsuperscript{206} Rives (2007) 73. Interestingly, Carthage was called *colonia Iunonia*, Whittaker (1997) 143.

\textsuperscript{207} Wurnig (1999) 34. This area expanded in the mid second century, Rives (1995) 91; Cadotte (2007) 73, 104, 201, 251, 252.
acted as prophetess (vates) of the goddess in Carthage.208 Already from the beginning of the imperial period onwards, Caelестis was also worshipped in Rome, as epigraphic and archaeological evidence attest. She was built a temple on the Arx Capitolina in AD 259. In the second and third centuries, the cult spread to Italy, Britannia and Dacia; it flourished mainly under the Severi.209

Two inscriptions from Rome record sacerdotes of Caelestis, a male and a female.210 The woman is called a honorifica femina, a title without a parallel. Rives writes that the inscription, which contains many mistakes and in which sacratas and canistrarisis (sic) are also mentioned, is ‘the record not of an official cult, but of some private association of freedwomen for the worship of Caelestis.’ Therefore, it is possible that the cult in which this woman served was limited to freedmen and -women from African descent, and would therefore be of ‘semi-public’ status (cf. chapter 1).211 From northern Africa however, ‘public’ sacerdotes of Caelestis are known, e.g. Marcus Cornelius Laetus from Mustis, who had been sacerdos Caelestis et Aesculapii publicus212 and Caius Orfius Luciscus, sacerdos publicus of the same two deities, from modern El Ust.213 Other African priests and priestesses of Caelestis were not explicitly called publicus or publica.

It has been remarked above that the cult of Caelestis is mainly attested in and around Carthage, but the geographical spread of the (male and female) sacerdotes provides a slightly different picture. Most priests and the two only priestesses, whose inscriptions were erected in Hadrumentum and Simithus, held office in Africa Proconsularis and often near Carthage indeed, but several other male sacerdotes are attested in Numidia, in Cirta and towns to the east of this city.214 No inscription recording a sacerdos Caelestis has been found in Thuburbo Maius, the goddess’s other cult main centre. No conclusions can be drawn as to possible explanations of the spread of the sacerdotes Caelestis, as the number of inscriptions is too small. The only thing that can safely be stated is that both women and – mostly – men served the goddess as sacerdotes.

Sacerdotes Dianae
Diana was an ancient Italic goddess. She was worshipped in two major sanctuaries in Aricia and at Mount Tifata near Capua.215 According to legend, in Aricia her priesthood was held by a fugitive slave, called the Rex Nemorensis.216 In his recent book about the cult in Aricia, Green mentions also

208 HA Macr. 3.1-2. Cf. HA Pert. 4.2 and Picard (1959).
210 Resp. CIL 6.2242 and cat.no.13, from AD 259.
214 In Cirta a male sacerdos Caelestis Sittianae loci primi is recorded, whose title implies that in this town the cult of Caelestis had a hierarchical organisation, ILS 9409; Rives (1995) 166. An inscription from Carthage may attest to female canistrarisis of Caelestis, but this is uncertain, cat.no.162.
216 Latte (1960) 171; Green (2007) 147-184 provides an extensive discussion of this rather mysterious priesthood.
priestesses, but unfortunately he does not provide us with evidence for these women. 217 In Rome, Diana was also worshipped; in a story about an extraordinary heifer, bred in Sabinum, Livy mentions a (male) antistes fani Dianae. 218 In the City, no priestesses of Diana have been attested, neither epigraphically, nor in the literary sources. 219 However, there might be some iconographic evidence for sacerdotes of the goddess in Rome. On an altar presumably from the Urbs, a relief depicts a veiled woman who is sprinkling incense on an altar. She is assisted by two people who carry a basket and a knife. An ox and a deer complete the scene, and because of the deer this relief can probably be linked to the cult of Diana. Schörner writes about the depicted woman that she may have ordered the dedication of the altar and could have been a priestess of the goddess. 220

In the provinces the evidence for sacerdotes Dianae and other religious personnel of the goddess is more abundant, and in contrast to many other priesthoods, it is not limited to North Africa and Italy. 221 Apart from a few men who may have been priests of Diana in the Danube region and in Africa, 222 all other sacerdotes seem to have been women. They are attested in Italy, Gallia Narbonensis and Hispania. In Italy, where the goddess was linked to fertility and giving birth and was therefore especially honoured by women, (possible) magistriae of Diana have left their traces in the epigraphic record. 223 They are attested in Aquinum (region 1) and in Pollentia (region 9). 224 Besides, in Allifae (Samnium, region 4) a collegium capulorum sacerdotum Dianae (college of those who decanted the wine of the priests/priestesses of Diana) existed. 225

One of the Spanish priestesses of Diana held office in Arucci in Baetica, the other two in Emporiae. 226 Emporiae was a former Greek city, founded by the Phokaians; the earliest temple of the town was probably dedicated to Artemis of Ephesus. 227 According to Strabo (3.4.8), Artemis Ephesia was the patron deity of the town, which could imply that the priestesses of Diana served in an ancient

218 Livy 1.45.
219 Cicero, Verr. 2.3.21 mentions a (male) magister ad despoliandum Dianae templum. Furthermore, aeditui of Diana Planciana are attested on inscriptions from Rome, AE 1971, 31 and 32.
221 There is abundant evidence of Diana in the Eastern part of the empire, no doubt as a result of Greek roots: Artemis was often served by priestesses, for example in Perge, where the well-known Plancia Magna held the priesthood of this goddess, FOS 609; Raepsaat-Charlier (2005) 199. In Patrae in Achaia, a certain Aequina Musa had been sacerdos Dianae Augustae Lapthiae et sacerdos Augusti at the beginning of the first century AD, CIL 3, 510 = Patras 5 (not included in the catalogue). In another inscription from Patrae, CIL 3, 499 = Patras 4, a woman is honoured with the sacerdotal ornaments of Diana Laphria. The cult of Diana (or Artemis) Lapthria involved animal sacrifice, survived by a priestess, according to Pausanias 7.18.11-13; Henig (1984) 63.
222 CIL 3, 13368; (possibly) CIL 8, 23419 = ILTun 541.
223 Simon (1990) 51.
224 CIL 10, 4263 from Capua (region 1) records a liberta of Diana, cat.no.57. In the same town magistri fani Dianae are attested epigraphically: CIL 10, 3918 = ILS 6304; CIL 10, 3924 = ILS 6305. A vilicus Dianae in CIL 10, 8217 = ILS 3523.
225 CIL 9, 2336 = ILS 7298.
226 Cat.no.240 (this woman may have served in other cults as well, see section 2.3); no.241; no.286 may have been a priest because no name has been preserved.
and important cult, even though the inscriptions of the priestesses were erected, which makes direct links questionable. However, there is other evidence that may point to Phokaian roots of the priesthood of Diana held by women in former Greek colonies. The Gaulish *sacerdotes Dianae* lived in Antipolis. This city was founded by Massalia which in its turn was a colony of Phokaia, just like Emporiae in Hispania.²²⁸ Strabo writes about the foundation of Massalia (my italics):²²⁹

“They say that when the Phocæans were about to quit their country, an oracle commanded them to take from Diana of Ephesus a conductor for their voyage. On arriving at Ephesus they therefore inquired how they might be able to obtain from the goddess what was enjoined them. The goddess appeared in a dream to Aristarcha, one of the most honourable women of the city, and commanded her to accompany the Phocæans, and to take with her a plan of the temple and statues. These things being performed, and the colony being settled, the Phocæans built a temple, and *evinced their great respect for Aristarcha by making her priestess. All the colonies [sent out from Marseilles] hold this goddess in peculiar reverence, preserving both the shape of the image [of the goddess], and also *every rite observed in the metropolis.*”

This quotation by Strabo could explain why both in Emporiae and in Antipolis female *sacerdotes Dianae* are attested on inscriptions. Graham writes that the story about Aristarcha may have represented the historical reality, ‘because the Greeks seem regularly to have preserved the names of people who introduced new cults (…).’²³⁰ One of the priestesses from Antipolis served Diana Thucolis or Diocolis. Thucolis is a name of Greek origin, likely showing the Greek roots of the priesthood.²³¹ Unfortunately, the character of Diana Thucolis is unknown.²³² The other Antipolan priestess served both Diana and Minerva, which also may have been a remnant of the Greek past, for in Phokaia Athena was worshipped as well, as the remains of a temple of the goddess show.²³³ The combination

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²²⁹ Transl. by Bell (1903). Strabo 4.1.4: ἀσκέρονοι γὰρ τοῖς Φοκαίσι τοῖς οἰκεῖοι λόγον ἐκπεσέν πολεμίαν ἠγείρον τὴν θεότητα τοῦ πλοίου παρὰ τῆς Ἐφεσίας Ἀρτέμιδος λαβοῦσιν: τοὺς μὲν δὲ προσαρθέντας τῇ Ἐφεσίῳ θεῷ πρόσκαιντο τὸ προστατεύει. Ἀρισταρχή δὲ τῶν ἐντίμων φῳδρία γυναικῶν παραστήματι κατ’ οὖρην τὴν θεόν καὶ κέλευεν συναπαρεῖν τοῖς Φοκαίσι τοιούτους ἀφθορίαν τοῖς θεοῖς λαβοῦσιν: γεγονός δὲ τοῦτος καὶ τῆς ἀποκαλύτης λαβοῦσις τόλμην, τὸ τέρας ἱδρύσασθαι καὶ τὴν Ἀρισταρχὴν τιμῆσαι διαφορίαν ἱέρων ἀποδεῖσθαι, ἐν τε ταῖς ἀπόφοις πώλεσε πανταχοῦ τιμᾶν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ταύτην τὴν θεόν καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν τὴν ἀδήμονα καὶ τὰ μέλλων φυλάσσειν πάντα ἄξιον ἐν τῇ μητροπόλει γενόμεναν.
²³⁰ Graham (1984) 303. See also Graham (1995) 13: Very few individual Greek colonists from the Archaic period are known to us by name, but two of these were women. Both were priestesses, and this shows the need for Greek women amongst the colonists: they had to ensure a proper relationship with the gods.
²³¹ See also Robert (1966) 745-746.
²³² Spickermann (1994b) 195 nr. 5. It is also possible that the woman was *flaminica sacerdos* in the imperial cult and dedicated something to Diana Thucolis.
²³³ Van Andringa (2002) 139, writes that in Gaul Minerva did not have indigenous origins, though she resembled local deities, which explains her popularity.
of Diana and Minerva on a single Latin inscription is uncommon, unless they are included in a list of deities.\textsuperscript{234}

In short, \textit{sacerdotes Dianae}, who mostly seem to have been female, are attested in places in which the cult of the goddess had Greek (or Italic) roots. Evidence for ancillary officials is scarce.

\textit{Sacerdotes Minervae}

The goddess Minerva was of Italic or Etruscan origin. She was protectress of artisans and musicians, but she also possessed a political-military side.\textsuperscript{235} Furthermore, she was a goddess of children\textsuperscript{236} and was, in some area’s linked to women.\textsuperscript{237} Apart from the \textit{sacerdos Minervae et Dianae} from Antipolis in Gallia Narbonensis, mentioned above, all other priestesses of Minerva held office in Italy.\textsuperscript{238} In northern Africa, a few male \textit{sacerdotes Minervae} are attested epigraphically.\textsuperscript{239} Two female \textit{sacerdotes Minervae} lived in Butuntum (region 2) and Ticinium (region 11). In Beneventum (region 2), various women who served Magna Mater may have been priestesses of the local Minerva Berecynthia as well.\textsuperscript{240}

The fact that no \textit{sacerdotes Minervae} have been attested in central Italy (mainly the regions 1 and 4), where so many other priestesses are recorded on inscriptions, is in accordance with the sparseness of the worship of the goddess in Latium and central Italy.\textsuperscript{241} In Etruria on the other hand, Minerva was considered more important.\textsuperscript{242} Only one woman who presumably had been \textit{ministra} of the goddess has left a short dedicatory inscription in Sutrium in Etruria, so the popularity of the goddess is not reflected in the preserved number of religious officials.\textsuperscript{243} Possibly, the priesthoods of Minerva were not so much priesthoods of the Italic-Etruscan goddess, but rather of the Greek Athena, who was often served by female religious officials.

\textit{Sacerdotes Telluris}

We have already seen above that Tellus was the old Italic earth mother, closely linked to Ceres because of the relation of both goddesses to agricultural fertility.\textsuperscript{244} The cult of Tellus (or: Terra Mater)

\textsuperscript{234} On an inscription from Philippi in Macedonia (\textit{Philippi} 519 = \textit{AE} 1924, 50) Diana Minervia is invoked and a \textit{sacerdos} is mentioned. It may be indicative that this inscription was erected in a Greek part of the Empire.

\textsuperscript{235} Latte (1960) 164-165; Girard (1981) 206, 207, 222, 224, 228.

\textsuperscript{236} Girard (1981) 227.

\textsuperscript{237} In Glanum for example, she was honoured with a dedication by a group of women, Spickermann (1994a) 43.

\textsuperscript{238} In Diensis in Macedonia, a woman named Mestria Aquilina had also been \textit{sacerdos Minervae} (\textit{AE} 2000, 1295; not included in the catalogue). Cf. \textit{CIL} 3, 593, recording the same priestess.

\textsuperscript{239} E.g., \textit{AE} 1993, 1721.

\textsuperscript{240} Cat.no.49; 133; 41-44 (Beneventum).

\textsuperscript{241} Evans (1939) 163.

\textsuperscript{242} Evans (1939) 163-164. For example, the sacred area of Portonaccio near Veii seems to have belonged to Minerva, Glinister (2006) 98.

\textsuperscript{243} Cat.no.127.

did not possess a central position in Roman religion, and she did not have her own "flamen" in Rome.\(^{245}\) She had her own temple though, in which one of Varro’s friends served as "aedimus.\(^{246}\) Outside Italy, the cult has been attested in two main areas: the valley of the Danube and northern Africa.\(^{247}\) In the Danube region, no (female) sacerdotes of Tellus have been recorded epigraphically (though possibly a *ministra Terrae Matris* from Brigetio in Pannonia superior\(^{248}\)) and only one temple.\(^{249}\) All sacerdotes *Telluris* lived in North Africa. I have collected ten inscriptions that record nine\(^{250}\) female priests of Tellus, and one male.\(^{251}\)

Tellus’s presence in Africa may be explained by her strong links to Ceres and the worship of the goddess may have spread as a result of agricultural-economic reasons. Most inscriptions, on which Tellus is mentioned, were erected in the fertile middle of Africa Proconsularis near Thugga.\(^{252}\) Gesztelyi writes that people who were Romanised at an early stage\(^{253}\) were the most fervent worshippers of the goddess:\(^{254}\) many dedicators had the *nomen* Iulius or Iulia.\(^{255}\) Three of the nine female African sacerdotes *Telluris* had indeed the name Iulia, which supports Gesztelyi’s view.

Gesztelyi has stated that the Tellus cult mainly spread along the important east-west route from Carthage\(^{256}\), but for unknown reasons, the inscriptions of the sacerdotes do not show the same pattern. With the exception of Iulia Prima, whose epitaph was erected in or near Gillium close to Uchi Maius in Africa Proconsularis, all nine sacerdotes *Telluris* are attested in Numidia and Mauretania. No fewer than (possibly) four\(^{257}\) women served Tellus in Madauros. Here, another four women – probably also held religious offices in the Ceres cult. Therefore it is likely that the cults of both agricultural deities belonged to the most important of the town, although priests of various other cults have also left their traces in the epigraphic record.\(^{258}\) Furthermore, two epitaphs of female sacerdotes *Telluris*

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246 Varro, *RR* 1.2.2.

247 Cf. Gesztelyi (1972) 75. A few exceptions are: *CIL* 2, 2526 (Aquae Flaviae, Hispania Citerior); *AE* 1975, 705 (Intercisa, Pannonia inferior); possibly *CIL* 3, 607 = *AE* 1947, 204 = *AE* 2004, 1315 (Dyrrachium, Macedonia). Terra Mater however, is often attested epigraphically in the Danubian provinces, mainly in Dacia. Also some, be it very little, evidence comes from Germania, Gallia and Lusitania.

248 Cat.no.293. According to Gesztelyi (1972) 82, Terra Mater was a ‘more recent’ deity than Tellus (she was for the first time mentioned in 17 BC), and eventually replaced Tellus.

249 See also Gesztelyi (1972) 83-84.

250 It is not certain whether the sacerdos mentioned in cat.no.189 indeed served Tellus, for she is a *sacerdos stricto sensu*. Her dedication however, was made in honour of Tellus Augusta.

251 The only male sacerdos *Telluris*: *CIL* 8, 5305 = *ILAlg* 1, 232 = *ILS* 3958 = *AE* 1983, 944 = Cadotte (2007) nr. 361 (Calama, Numidia). This man erected a dedication for Tellus Gilva Augusta. Gilva (modern Mersat Madar) was a town in Mauretania. Whittaker (1996) 614 writes that Gilva was a local deity.

252 Gesztelyi (1972) 75, 84. Fertile region near Thugga: Golffeto (1961) 18; Gesztelyi (1972) 82; Rives (1995) 101: probably grain was being produced here.

253 Before 17 BC. See also Golffeto (1961) 19.

254 Gesztelyi (1972) 84. The Tellus inscriptions were set up both in important provincial towns and in small villages, Gesztelyi (1972) 79.

255 Gesztelyi (1972) 82-83.

256 Gesztelyi (1972) 79.

257 Cat.no.187; 188 and 191 are definitely inscriptions of Tellus priestesses from Madauros. Cat.no.189 is from Madauros, but only possibly records priestesses of Tellus.

258 E.g. of: Caelestis: *CIL* 8, 4673; *CIL* 8, 4674; of Liber Pater: *CIL* 8, 4681; *CIL* 8, 4682; *ILAlg* 1, 2131; *ILAlg* 1, 2228; of Pluto: *CIL* 8, 4680; *CIL* 8, 4683; *CIL* 8, 4687; *ILAlg* 1, 2224; of Jupiter: *CIL* 8, 16875; *ILAlg* 1,
have been found in Thubursicu Numidarum, a town located between Madauros and Calama – in this last town the only inscription of a male priest of Tellus has been discovered.\(^{259}\)

In contrast to Ceres and most other goddesses, *sacerdotes* of Tellus have not been attested in Italy, but only in northern Africa, especially Numidia, which is mainly the result from the large number found in Madauros. Men could also hold the priesthood of this goddess, but the evidence is rather limited.

**Bona Dea and her religious personnel**

The next goddess served by women was Bona Dea. Her cult focused on the promotion and protection of both agricultural and female fertility.\(^{260}\) Bona Dea possessed healing powers and was a prophetic deity as well.\(^{261}\) Men were excluded from her temple in Rome, to which possibly a healing shrine was attached.\(^{262}\) Propertius calls her *Feminea Dea* and Plutarch a γυναικεία θεότητι.\(^{263}\) In the city of Rome, the December rites in honour of the goddess were reserved for women and conducted in the house of the highest magistrate.\(^{264}\) It was a festival *pro populo*, for the wellbeing of the people.\(^{265}\) From the epigraphic sources however, can be concluded that not only aristocratic matrons worshipped the goddess, but slaves and freedwomen as well – and even men.\(^{266}\) Nevertheless, in general women played the most important role in the cult.\(^{267}\)

The tasks of the wife of the magistrate in whose house the December rites for the goddess were performed are unknown.\(^{268}\) Schulz thinks that she was not a priestess.\(^{269}\) The Vestals were probably the ones who performed the ritual; we know at least that they were present.\(^{270}\) Yet specific priestesses for Bona Dea existed; according to Festus, they were sometimes called *damiatrix*.\(^{271}\) Macrobius tells us about *antisites* who were attached to the temple in Rome and organized the festival

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2216; *ILA* 1, 2223; of Mercury: *ILA* 1, 2212; of Saturn: *ILA* 1, 2215; *ILA* 1, 2222. Besides, several inscriptions attest to male *sacerdotes stricto sensu*.

259 Cat.no 229; 230.


262 Macrobius, *Sat*. 1.12.26. Besides, men were not allowed to know her name, as Cicero writes, Cicero, *De Har. Resp.* 17.37; Brouwer (1982) 186.


270 Cicero, *De Har. Resp.* 17.37, *Ad Att.* 1.12.3, 1.13.3; *Pro Mil.* 27.72; *De Leg.* 2.9.21; Plutarch, Cicero, 19.3, Caesar, 9; Cassius Dio 37.45.1; Brouwer (1982) 288; Staples (1998) 6, 30, 42.

in honour of the goddess on the first of May. Propertius mentions an old priestess of Bona Dea (alma sacerdos, later in the text also called anus). This priestess was in charge of rites in which only women or girls (puellae) took part. Brouwer has discussed the geographical spread of the cult of Bona Dea, and has concluded that the goddess was worshipped most intensively in Rome and Latium. Aquileia was the other important centre of the cult; in this city, there may have existed even two collegia Bonae Deae and more than one sanctuary. Brouwer links the spread of the cult in Italy to Roman expansionism and a subsequent implementation of the official Bona Dea cult in the lands of the Paeligni (around Laverna) in the second half of the first century BC.

Two (female) sacerdotes Bonae Deae from the city of Rome are known to us by name. Besides, in either Cuma or Rome another sacerdos Bonae Deae is attested and in Tusculum a fourth. Brouwer thinks that these last two women were attached to the temple in Rome, because the title sacerdos was rarely used outside the City, in contrast to that of magistra or ministra, which has been found frequently in areas far away from Rome. Additionally, he thinks that it is unlikely that the small shrines in the countryside had their own sacerdotes. As most of these priestesses were freedwomen (just like many of the other religious officials involved in the cult), Brouwer thinks that they probably did not celebrate the second festival for Bona Dea – the one on the first of May – pro populo.

Although, according to the ancient literary sources, men were excluded from the rites, a possible two male priest of the goddess are recorded epigraphically. One was a libertus of Claudius or Nero, and the other was a boy of seven. The inscriptions were found in Puteoli and Rome respectively, and were erected in AD 62 and in possibly the third century AD. The existence of male priests of Bona Dea might be supported by Ovid, who writes in his Ars Amatoria that men were forbidden to enter the temple of the Goddess, except the ones she asks to come there – though this could refer to worshippers rather than priests.

Twenty-four magistræ and ministrae (no men!) of the cult have been recorded, who were mostly of freed rank. Apart from three ministrae from Narbonese Gaul, all others held office in Italy.

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272 Sat.1.12.26; their role is not clear, according to Brouwer (1989) 371.
277 Cat.no. 8 and 9. And one male: CIL 6.2240 = Brouwer 36. Besides, three (possible) magistræ of Bona Dea from Rome are known, cat.no. 2; 10 and 267.
278 Cat.no.68; Brouwer (1982) 238, and cat.no. 135; Brouwer (1982) 297. Brouwer (1989) 378 writes about the sacerdos from Frascati that she may have been retired from her office in Rome and gone to her family in the country and died there.
281 Tibullus, 1.6.22; Propertius, Elegies, 5.9.26; 53-60; Ovid, Ars Am. 3.637; Fasti 5.153.
282 Furthermore, men could possibly be members of collegia Bonae Deae, Brouwer (1989) 381.
283 Brouwer 79 and 31 respectively. Number 31 is a Greek inscription. Brouwer (1989) 280, 281.
284 Ovid, Ars Amatoria, 3.637-638: Cum fuget a templis oculos Bona Diva virorum, præterquam siquos illa venire iubet.
mostly in region 1 (Latium) and in region 10, in Aquileia. Besides, several others are attested in Umbria and Etruria; one magistra left an inscription in Lucera in Apulia (region 2). When the distribution of the religious personnel of Bona Dea is compared to that of the other goddesses in the catalogue, it is striking that so many officials have been attested in Rome, in Gaul and in region 10 of Italy. It seems that the cult of Bona Dea spread according to its own rules, as has been pointed out by Brouwer. A second important difference with the other female officials in the catalogue is the presence of so many magistrae and ministrae, and only a few sacerdotes. This may be a consequence from the fact that Bona Dea seems to have been worshipped mainly by collegia, whereas the other deities had town-wide cults. The last notable difference is the virtually total absence of male religious officials, which has been discussed above.

Sacerdotes Fortunae

Fortuna was no indigenous Roman deity. Different aspects of her character were worshipped, sometimes even as separate goddesses, e.g. Fortuna Muliebris and Fortuna Primigenia.\(^{285}\) In many ways, Fortuna was a goddess related to women.\(^{286}\) Fortuna Primigenia, for example, was a goddess of female fecundity, a protectress of the newly born, of young mothers and of child-bearing women.\(^{287}\) Furthermore, Fortuna played a role in marriage and accordingly, took care of the multiplication of the Roman people as a whole.\(^{288}\) In the literary sources priestesses of Fortuna Muliebris are mentioned. According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus the priestesses of Fortuna Muliebris had to be univirae, women legitimately wed to their first husband.\(^{289}\) Besides, in Rome at the place of a sanctuary of Fortuna, a statue of presumably a priestess of the goddess has been found, dating from 100-110 AD.\(^{290}\) However, the epigraphic evidence from Rome and its surrounding area (all region 1) only provides us with men who held religious offices in the goddess’ cult: two served Fortuna Primigenia as sacerdotes;\(^{291}\) and another had been manceps aedis (keeper of the sanctuary) of the same goddess in Praeneste (region 1), together with three cellarii (stewards).\(^{292}\) Also in Praeneste, a male sortilegus Fortunae Primigeniae (soothsayer of Fortuna Primigenia) has left an inscription, apart from a group of magistri of Fortuna Primigenia.\(^{293}\) Two aeditui from Rome – both imperial freedmen – served Fortuna

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291 CIL 14, 3003; Fasolo and Gullini (1953) no. 31, p.286-287; Champeaux (1982) 71.
292 CIL 14, 2864= ILS 3688a; Champeaux (1982) 72.
293 CIL 14.2989; sortilegus dating from the imperial period, Champeaux (1982) 71. CIL 14, 2882 = CIL 1, 1454: magistri.
Redux and Fortuna Tulliana. Suessa Aurunca has provided us with the name of a male sacerdos of the goddess. In Pompeii several ministri Fortunae Augustae are attested and in Ficulea two magistri.

In Italy the cult of Fortuna was widely spread. There were sanctuaries in Campania along the Via Latina and along the Via Campania and the cult seems to have been important in Capua. Elsewhere in the Empire, the goddess was also popular; many temples in her honour were built. Despite Fortuna’s popularity, a mere three priestesses and one magistra have been attested epigraphically, and interestingly, they did not serve Fortuna Muliebris like the women from Rome, or Fortuna Primigenia, but Fortuna Melior, Fortuna Augusta and Fortuna Redux.

The last two epithets of Fortuna were her most common during the imperial period; they are recorded on dedications in Italy, the Danube provinces and Africa. The cult of Fortuna Redux was founded in Rome to honour the emperor Augustus when he returned to the City from the East in October of the year 19 BC. The altar of Fortuna Redux was the first of several imperial altars meant to promote the emperor and his well-being. The epitaph of the imperial freedman Tiberius Iulius Limen Stabilianus, aeditus Fortunae Reducis, shows that there was a temple of Fortuna Redux in Rome at least in Tiberian times. Later emperors also took interest in the cult of this goddess who remained an ‘important symbol of victorious Rome and the emperor. The only known priestess of Fortuna Redux is attested in Veii, close to Rome, in the middle of the third century AD. In Veii, hardly any other epigraphic evidence for the worship of Fortuna has been found.

Fortuna Augusta was obviously also closely linked to the emperor. She became very popular after her first appearance in a privately dedicated temple. In Rome from AD 3 onwards, a board of four ministri served in the temple of this goddess. No ministrae of Fortuna Augusta have been attested epigraphically, but an inscription from Baetica (now lost) records a priestess of this goddess. Fortuna Melior was mainly worshipped in Umbria (region 6; e.g., in Spoletium and

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294 CIL 6, 8705 en 8706.
295 AE 1919, 71 and AE 1940, 48.
296 CIL 10, 824; CIL 10, 826-28.
298 Strabo, 5.4.11; Simon (1990) 66.
299 Peterson (1919) 7.
300 Simon (1990) 59. She was protectress of for example Arelate, Spickermann (1994a) 51. In some areas most of her worshippers were male. In Germania superior for example, she was mainly worshipped by soldiers and in Germania inferior, only one dedication was made by a woman, Spickermann (1994a) 255 (sup.), 312 (inf.).
303 CIL 6, 8705 = ILMN 1, 109; Arya (2002) 325; De Capraris (2005) 133.
305 Cat.no. 136. Caesia Sabina was of decurial rank and left two inscriptions behind in which her various benefactions are recorded (see also chapters 4 and 5).
307 Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2007) 220. They were required to dedicate statues in the cella upon the accession of a new emperor. They held meetings and communal meals.
308 Cat.no.246.
Interamna Nahars). From Ameria in the same area stems the inscription of a *magistra Fortunae Melioris*, who seems to have been an important woman in her town.\(^{309}\)

In sum, the various forms of Fortuna could be served by *sacerdotes* of both sexes. Close to or in Rome, men seem to have held the priesthood of Fortuna Primigenia, or other religious offices in her cult. Elsewhere in Italy and Spain, there is only sparse epigraphic evidence for women who were priestesses of a form of Fortuna who had close links to the imperial house. The reputation of Fortuna as a ‘women’s goddess’ is therefore not backed by the surviving epigraphic evidence.

*Salus, Spes and Tutela Augustae*

The number of epigraphic references to religious officials – both men and women – of Salus (Health) is small\(^{310}\) even though Salus was an ancient goddess who received a temple in Rome at the end of the fourth century BC, dedicated by C. Junius Babulus.\(^{311}\) The first inscription is the epitaph of the *ministra* Plaetoria Secunda, who held her office in Amiternum at the beginning of the first century AD. Remarkably, this is the only evidence of the worship of Salus in this area, while she was popular elsewhere in Italy.\(^{312}\) In Gabii (region 1), a *sacerdos Spei et Salutis Augustis* was an important woman in her local community, as the inscription (erected in AD 138-140) shows that accompanied her statue, which was placed on publicly given land, (see also chapter 5). *Spes et Salus Augusta* were personifications obviously closely linked to the imperial house.\(^{313}\)

Like Salus, Spes (Hope) was already worshipped in the early Republic.\(^{314}\) Mainly during the principate Spes was associated with Salus; both goddesses were protectresses of the imperial family.\(^{315}\) In Carthage a group of *sacerdotes stricto sensu* who dedicated something to *Spes*, and therefore may have been involved in the goddess’ cult, is attested; their gender is unknown.\(^{316}\) In Ferentinum (region 1) an inscription may record a *minister* of the goddess.\(^{317}\) A third personification that was linked to the emperor was Tutela Augusta (Augustan Protection). An inscription from Ossigi Latonium (Hispania Baetica) mentions the freedwoman Vibia Felicula, who had been *ministra* of the goddess. Tutela Augusta was worshipped in several places in Hispania,\(^{318}\) but inscriptions recording this goddess have also been erected in for instance Achaia. I have found no inscriptions of male religious officials of the

\(^{309}\) Cat.no.21.

\(^{310}\) In other areas than those included in the catalogue, more examples of priestesses involved in the cult of Salus can be found, e.g. in Corinth (Achaia), see: *AE* 1923, 8 = *AE* 1971, 442.

\(^{311}\) Livy 9.43.25. See also Moralee (2004) 23.

\(^{312}\) Evans (1939) 170. In Rome, a temple dedicated to Salus was built on the Quirinal, Cicero, *Ad Att.* 4.1.4; 12.45.3; Evans (1939) 171.


\(^{314}\) For a discussion of the history of the worship of *Spes* in Rome, see: Clark (1983). *CIL* 10, 3775 is one of the famous Republican inscriptions from Capua that record local *magistri*, in this case those of Spes, while *AE* 1934, 249 is a similar one from Minturnae.

\(^{315}\) Clark (1983) 82.

\(^{316}\) *AE* 1999, 1835 = *AE* 2007, 1721.

\(^{317}\) *AE* 1998, 336.

\(^{318}\) For a discussion of the Spanish inscriptions with *Tutela*, see: Pena (1981). In Gaul, Tutela was often worshipped without any connections to the imperial house, see: Van Andringa (2002) 198.
goddess in the western part of the Empire.\textsuperscript{319} The small number of female religious officials of the three personifications mentioned in this section suffices to show that women could act as priestesses or \textit{ministrae} in their cults, but not much more.

\textit{Other goddesses: Mater Matuta, the Matres Magnae and Angitia}

There are a few other female deities that were served by priestesses, though the evidence – both epigraphic and other – is even scarcer than that of the personifications discussed above. Of Mater Matuta, the goddess of dawn, spring, birth and fertility who was worshipped in central Italy (Satricum, Cales, Cora, Praeneste, Pisauro and probably Pyrgi as well), a few \textit{magistrae} have left their traces in the epigraphic record.\textsuperscript{320} They all lived in region 1 in Italy; two in Praeneste, the other in Cora, perceived by Halberstadt as ancient places of worship.\textsuperscript{321} As far as I know, no men are attested as religious officials of Mater Matuta.

Other ‘mother’ goddesses are recorded on an inscription from Dalmatia. A certain Safinius Filucinus erected a dedication to the \textit{Matres Magnae} in Salona.\textsuperscript{322}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Matri(bris) Mag(nis) / sacrum P(ublius) Safinius Filuci/nus Terentiae sacerdotes (ilius) / aram supstituit(!) idem ampl(iavat) / sibi et cognatio[ni suae] / permissu C(ai) Clodi Grac(ilis)}
\end{quote}

“Dedicated to the Great Mothers. Publius Safinius Filucinus, son of the priestess Terentia, replaced the altar and enlarged it, for himself and his relative, by permission of Caius Clodius Gracilis.”

Publius Safinius Filucinus did not mention the name of his father, but recorded that of his mother, probably because she was a priestess of the \textit{Matres Magnae}. It is not clear who these goddesses were. Their name obviously refers to Magna Mater who was very popular in Salona, but also to the \textit{Matres}.\textsuperscript{323} The cult of the \textit{Matres} is mainly attested in Gaul and Britain.\textsuperscript{324} Šašel Kos writes that possibly the \textit{Matres Magnae} had a partly Celtic character, originating from contacts between Dalmatia and Aquileia and other North Italian cities. They might be compared to the \textit{Matres Pannoniorum} and

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\textsuperscript{319} Elsewhere male priests are attested, e.g. in \textit{Corinth} 8, 3, 194 from Corinth.

\textsuperscript{320} Taylor (1923) 126; Halberstadt (1934) 67. For a discussion of the cult of Mater Matuta in Rome and Satricum, a major cult center; some characteristics of the goddess and her links with Fortuna, see: Smith (2000).

\textsuperscript{321} Cat.no.105; 106 (Praeneste); 60 (Cora). Halberstadt (1934) 48-49. See also Schultz (2006) 72 and endnote 87 about \textit{magistrae} in Cora.

\textsuperscript{322} Cat.no.261.

\textsuperscript{323} As these goddesses cannot simply be identified with Magna Mater, the inscription is included in the catalogue. Cult of Magna Mater important in Salona: Šašel Kos (2010) 251.

\textsuperscript{324} The \textit{Matronae}, often confused with the \textit{Matres}, were worshipped mostly in the Rhineland and northern Italy, Garman (2008) 19. Garman, p. 29-34, 85-86, argues that the \textit{Matres} were not the same goddesses as the \textit{Matronae}. For a discussion of the character of the goddesses, see Garman (2008) chapter 3.
Delmatarum recorded on ILS 4794 from Lugdunum.\textsuperscript{325} No wonder that of such a local cult that seems to have been unique for Salona, only one priestess has been attested (although it is remarkable that there is no epigraphic evidence for priest(esse)s of other Matres, whose cult is so widely attested).

Although again only a single inscription (possibly) refers to one of her religious officials, the goddess Angitia is better known than the Matres Magnae. Angitia is mentioned in some literary sources and various inscriptions, all from Samnium.\textsuperscript{326} She was an Italic deity who was worshipped in central Italy, especially in the area around lake Fucinus in the territory of the Marsians and Marruvians. She was a snake and healing goddess, and was related to the Greek Medea and to Circe.\textsuperscript{327} In Virgil’s Aeneid, a Marruvian named Umbro was sacerdos of the goddess; he tried to heal snake-bites with herbs.\textsuperscript{328} According to the Historia Augusta the emperor Elegabalis ordered Marsian sacerdotes (their sex is unspecified) to collect snakes and let them loose onto the crowd that was gathered to watch games.\textsuperscript{329} Based on literary sources reporting Marsian endogamy, Dench suggests that the priesthood of Angitia may have been hereditary; the evidence however, is not very convincing.\textsuperscript{330} On an inscription from Sulmo a magistra stricto sensu who dedicated something to the Angitiae is recorded.\textsuperscript{331}

It may be clear that the evidence for female cult officials who served goddesses is on the one hand rather limited, but on the other hand quite wide. Of only a few goddesses more than five inscriptions record priestesses or women holding ancillary functions, but at the same time the epigraphic evidence shows that women served a wide variety of female deities. Most of these goddesses, who were often linked to fertility, could also be served by male cult officials, but in some cases evidence for priests is much smaller, and limited to northern Africa, most notably in the cults of Venus and Ceres.

3.2: Gods

Although the list of male deities which were served by women is much shorter than that of the goddesses, it shows a considerable variety and extends to divinities often perceived to be ‘men’s gods’. As usual, Italy and northern Africa provide most epigraphic evidence.

\textsuperscript{325} Cf. Šašel Kos (2010) 252. Šašel Kos (1999) 89 on the other hand writes: ‘There is no doubt that the Matres Magnae are native Dalmatian deities (…).’

\textsuperscript{326} AE 1964, 15; AE 1996, 514; AE 1999, 568; CIL 1, 1763; CIL 9, 3885 = ILS 4024; AE 1975, 347.

\textsuperscript{327} Salyer (1947) 411; Dench (1995) 195, 164. Dench writes that the Paelignian inscriptions that mention anaceta cerria link the goddess Anagitia to agricultural production, Dench (1995) 164. In chapter 3 we will see that other interpretations of these inscriptions are also possible.

\textsuperscript{328} Virgil, Aen. 7.750-760.

\textsuperscript{329} HA Heliogab. 23.2.

\textsuperscript{330} Dench (1995) 165.

\textsuperscript{331} Cat.no.118. Dench (1995) 164 supposes that the fact that a plural version of the goddess’s name was used shows that ‘some sort of family of deities was associated with her.’ However, plural forms of divine names were quite common (Polluces, Cereres; Castores).
Sacerdotes of Liber and Bacchus

Liber and Bacchus were often identified with each other, and therefore I will discuss their priestesses in one section. Liber was an ancient Italic and Roman god, part of a couple with Libera. Both were deities related to agriculture and fertility, and became linked to wine and wine production. As a result Liber-Bacchus developed into the wine god who became the centre of the famous Bacchanal mysteries. Priestesses of Liber in Rome are mentioned by Varro: during the festival of the Liberalia, old priestesses of Liber, crowned with ivy, sacrificed honey cakes, paid for by passengers-by.

Female sacerdotes Liberi are only attested on inscriptions from Italy and northern Africa, though the evidence is meagre. Only one – or possibly two – served in Italy, i.e. in Aquinum (region 1). Three priestesses of Liber held their religious office in Numidia (two in Thubursicu Numidarium, the other in Madauros). In North Africa, where Liber was probably a native god identified with the Roman Liber, he was often called Liber Pater and was very popular. Both men and women are attested epigraphically as sacerdotes of the god in Africa – sometimes in the same city, for instance in Thubursicu Numidarium. Generally though, more men seem to have held the priesthood. By far most male sacerdotes Liberi served in North Africa. Others are attested in Italy and the Danube area.

An Etruscan god called Fufluns resembled those two deities and was worshipped in Etruria, Lundeon (2006) 47. Fufluns may have been served by priestesses, according to Thomson de Grummond (2006) 38.

333 Dionysus was the Greek version. Generally, women played a significant role in Dionysiac groups, Wilson (1996) 11. Priestesses of Dionysus on Greek inscriptions from Rome: IG 14.977; Rüpke (2005) 631, 746, 1015, 1070, 1180 (2nd or 3rd cent. AD). Priestesses of Dionysiac groups (Greek inscriptions, not included in the catalogue): IGUR 160.1; 160. IA14; 160. IA15; Rüpke (2005) 631, 1127, 1216. The mater nata et facta who has been recorded on an inscription from modern Cologne (cat.no.296) may have held an office in a mystery cult of Dionysus Spickermann (1994b) 143-144. But as we have seen above, other interpretations are also possible.

334 RE s.v. Liber Pater, 68, 73, 75; Neue Pauly, s.v. Liber, Liberalia, 136; Neue Pauly, s.v. Libera, 140; Simon (1990) 126.

Augustine, De Civ. Dei 6.9; 7.3; 7.21; RE s.v. Liber Pater, 68, 69, 75; Bruhl (1953) 14, 17; 18, 19, 24; Le Bonniec (1958) 300; Neue Pauly, s.v. Libera, 140; Staples (1998) 87.


Besides, in Aesernia (region 4) a sacerdos Cerialis Dea Libera held a religious office, cat.no.19. See chapter 3.

The first had been sacerdos Liberi publica Aquinatis (cat.no.34) while the other was sacerdos publica (cat.no.33). In analogy with the sacerdotes in Pompeii, (see section 2.2) this could also be an indication that these women served in different cults.

340 Cat.no.227; 228 (Thubursicu Numidarium); 280 (Madauros).
342 Augustinus, Epis. 17.4 about the cult of Liber in Madauros.
343 See also RE s.v. Liber Pater, 74. In Africa, these men were often from the local elite and held a flaminate, Foucher, tabbouret.perso.str.fr/maghreb/FoucherPaganisme.doc, 11. Example of a male sacerdos of Liber from Cumae (region 1): CIL 10.3705. From Luna (region 7) stems an inscription that records a group of sacerdotes Liber Pater, their sex is unknown (CIL 11, 1335). See also Taylor (1923) 229.
344 E.g., CIL 8, 4681; CIL 8, 4682; CIL 8, 20145; ILAlg 1, 2131; ILAlg 1, 2228; ILAlg 2.3, 7663; ILAlg 2.3, 7750; ILAlg 2.3, 8002; CIL 8, 4887; ILAlg 1, 1301; ILAlg 1, 1371.
The cult of Bacchus was originally a cult for women, according to Livy at least. Matronae used to be priestesses of the god. Varro also stressed the fact that the Bacchus cult was reserved for women. However, the scandal of 186 BC and the following senatusconsultum, show that this had changed in the years before 186, and that men could become priests as well. After the issuing of the senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus, men – but not women! – were prohibited to become sacerdotes in the cult. However, despite the senatusconsultum, in later times in Rome and in Moesia Inferior men seem to have been priests of Bacchus.

The epigraphic evidence that attests to priestesses of Bacchus is even scarcer than the evidence for female religious officials of Liber, and uncertain at that. In Arusio a certain Geminia Titulla had been mater sacrorum; she died in Vesontio in Germania Superior. She may have served Bacchus, but the Matres or an initiation cult is also possible, according to Spickermann. A woman from Rome had been sacerdos of Bacchus and pastophorus of the goddess of the Nile. Therefore, it seems that this priestess served in a Near-Eastern cult and that the Bacchus of the inscription was Osiris, as has been suggested by Heyob. Accordingly, this inscription is not included in the catalogue.

In sum, even though women were allowed to hold the priesthood of Bacchus, epigraphic evidence for priestesses of the god hardly existing. While men were officially prohibited to be priests of Bacchus, a few are attested as sacerdotes. The cult of the god Liber has yielded much more epigraphic evidence for priests and priestesses, though the number of female cult officials is small and limited to the usual areas (Italy and Africa). It is possible that the female priesthood of Liber and Bacchus, mentioned in the literary sources, was a Republican phenomenon that gradually disappeared in the imperial period.

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345 AE 1899, 142; CIL 10, 3705; CIL 14, 4328. Rome: CIL 6, 41331. CIL 10.158 and 1584 from Puteoli record priests of Liber Pater.
346 AE 1995, 1362 (Moes. inf); CIL 3, 2931 (Dalmatia).
349 Furthermore, in the imperial period there many different Bacchic mysteries throughout the Mediterranean world, developed from the Greek mysteries, in which both men and women were initiated, Kahló (2002) 78-9.
351 CIL 6, 32459 records a man who had been sacerdos Bacchi in Rome, and CIL 3, 6150 records a collegium devoted to Bacchus; a man is listed as priest.
352 Cat.no.265. Spickermann (1994) 230-31 nr.2.
353 CIL 6, 32458; Heyob (1975) 89. The Latin text is followed by the same text in Greek.
**Saturn**

Only one female *sacerdos* of Saturnus has been attested on an inscription,\(^{354}\) found in Thibilis (Numidia) in northern Africa, where the cult of Saturn was very popular. The African Saturn was only loosely linked to the Roman Saturn; generally, he was identified with Baal-Hammon.\(^{355}\) Therefore, in Africa Saturn was a sky god and also the protector of fertility. He was especially venerated by the ‘middle classes’ (see for the use of this term chapter 3, section 3.4).\(^{356}\) Saturn possessed two major cult centres, one near Thignica and the other at modern Djebel bou Kourmein. Other shrines can be found in Theveste, Uchi Maius and near Thugga.\(^{357}\) It seems Licinia Monula did not live in the main area of Saturn worship – and indeed, no traces of other (male) priests of the god have been found in Thibilis, though it has to be noted that only a few *sacerdotes* in general have been attested epigraphically in this town. In other North African places though, many male *sacerdotes Saturni* are recorded on inscriptions.

**Jupiter and Silvanus**

Women who held religious offices in service of Jupiter were rare, but they existed. Cassius Dio writes that the emperor Caligula called himself Jupiter Latialis and made his wife Caesonia his priest, together with himself, his horse and some wealthy people who had to pay a large amount of money for the ‘honour’.\(^{358}\) As Dio told this story presumably to illustrate Caligula’s wickedness and weirdness, and Caesonia was likely appointed as priestess only because she was Caligula’s wife, this passage shows that the woman only acquired her religious office – which she did not hold for long – because of exceptional circumstances.\(^{359}\)

Sempronia Salsula and Valeria Paulina are two individual women known to us by name who held a religious office in the cult of Jupiter, a god usually served by men.\(^{360}\) These women lived in Carthage and were *sacerdotes* of a *collegium* devoted to Jupiter Hammon (and?) Barbarus Silvanus –

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354 Delgado Delgado (1998) 113-114, mentions another inscription (CIL 8, 20592= ILS 4475, Thamallula, Mauretania Caesariensis; not included in the catalogue) that may record a woman who served Saturn in a religious function, but this is rather uncertain. Mulleia Saturnina was *nuntrix Frugiferi*, which could mean *sacerdos Nutricis Frugiferi*, with Frugifer being identified with Saturn. *Nuntrix* (without *sacerdos*) could also be a religious title, similar to that of *mater*, according to Delgado Delgado. However, Delgado Delgado favours the view that Mulleia Saturnina was a devotee and no priestess, as the word *nuntrix* seems a likely term for the devotee of a fertility god like Frugifer.


358 Cassius Dio 59.28.5.

359 For a discussion of this cult of Caligula alias Jupiter Latialis, see Barrett (2001) 146-148.

360 On an inscription from Rome, a woman is recorded as *sacerdos* of Jupiter Dolichenus. Jupiter Dolichenus was a soldier-god, who was especially associated with the *Severi*, Henig (1984) 120. The god, who originated from Kammagena (therefore, the inscription in not included in the catalogue) and who received a more of less official cult in the course of the imperial period, had many female worshippers, Merlat (1960) 1, 26-27, 192. Memmia Florida was the only female *sacerdos or candidata*. She was part of a group of *sacerdotes et candidati* from Rome, CIL 6, 409= CIL 6, 10292 = CCID 382. Croom (2000) 113 mentions a tomb from modern Mainz that depicts a woman of whom Croom thinks that she may have been priestess of Jupiter. As Croom does not provide a photo or inventory number, this suggestion cannot be checked.
which makes them also two of the small number of women attested as religious officials in the cult of Silvanus.\textsuperscript{361} Jupiter Hammon was an African deity\textsuperscript{362}, related to Ammon from Lybia. The character of Silvanus Barbarus is less clear. Silvanus was god of woods, trees, orchards and hunting and the word Barbarus may refer to the Berbers, to the Punic race or to Silvanus’ unruly character. Silvanus Barbarus was likely the result of Silvanus’ identification with a Punic or Berber deity.\textsuperscript{363} The Carthaginian collegium of the two divinities consisted of fourteen or fifteen men with the tria nomina and the two women. According to Dorcey, it is likely that outside Africa, women had no official religious role in the cult of Silvanus although they were by no means excluded from it. However, the inclusion of the women in the collegium was unique. Dorcey also thinks this African inscription is no hard evidence for a female priesthood of Silvanus.\textsuperscript{364} The names of Sempronia Salsula and Valeria Paulina are included in the list of sacerdotes, but they are further specified as matres sacrorum.\textsuperscript{365} This seems to imply that a mater sacrorum had a special position, or had to carry out special tasks, but which is unknown.

Most collegia devoted to Silvanus can be found in Italy, some in the provinces. There is little evidence for an organised priesthood of the god, apart from the sacerdotes mentioned on the Carthaginian inscription and a few male priests from Rome who have left their traces in the epigraphic record.\textsuperscript{366} The evidence for the worship of Silvanus is concentrated in Italy, but the cult is also widely attested in Pannonia, Dacia and Dalmatia. In Belgica Silvanus was not popular,\textsuperscript{367} and therefore it is noteworthy that an inscription from this region might mention a female cult official. In Divodurum (modern Metz) an antistita stricto sensu erected a dedication to Silvanus and the Nymphs of the place on account of a dream.\textsuperscript{368} As may be clear, it is uncertain whether this last inscription is proof of a woman with an official function in the cult of Silvanus. This makes the total number of inscriptions of priestesses of this god very small, though it has to be admitted that the number of male priests of Silvanus was neither extensive – in contrast to that of men serving Jupiter. The religious personnel of this last god seem to have been virtually exclusively male, although it is of course questionable if

\textsuperscript{361} Cat.no.163.

\textsuperscript{362} Silvanus was only rarely linked to Jupiter Hammon (see e.g. CIL 6, 278 = ILS 4426; Várhelyi (2010) 33), though often with Jupiter Optimus Maximus, Dorcey (1992) 82, 83.


\textsuperscript{364} Dorcey (1989) 150; Dorcey (1992) 65-66. Apart from Sempronia and Sallustia, no other female college-members have been attested, Dorcey (1992) 87.

\textsuperscript{365} Dorcey (1992) 89-90.

\textsuperscript{366} Some were organised like other collegia, including a patron and offices like magister and quaestor. Most adherents originated from the lower strata of society, Dorcey (1992) 85, 86, 89, 90. The number of sanctuaries on the other hand, suggests that more people must have held a religious office in the cult of the god.

\textsuperscript{367} Dorcey (1992) 79.

\textsuperscript{368} Cat.no.264. In Divodurum various deities have been attested on inscriptions, most record the goddess Icovellauna. See also Van Andringa (2002) 235. As was the case in Belgica, Silvanus was no important divinity in the Spanish provinces. However, from Ilipa in Baetica stems an inscription, erected at the end of the second or the early third century AD, that records a sacerdotia ilipensis making a dedication to Silvanus Augustus. I think that this woman did not serve in the cult of one specific deity (i.c. Silvanus), but was rather a priestess in all cults of Ilipa that did not have their own sacerdotes – see also section 2.3, cat.no.243.
absence of evidence is evidence of absence and women were indeed everywhere excluded from his priesthood.

*Dis Pater*

Dis Pater was the god of the Underworld, bestower of agricultural fertility and consort of Proserpina, daughter of Ceres. There are only a few references to *sacerdotes* of the god. One of these is the epitaph of a woman from Rome. Her name has partly been lost. In the City two sanctuaries of Dis Pater have been traced; one was possibly located on the Aventine near the Circus Maximus and the other, the famous *ara Ditis Patris et Proserpinae*, in the extreme north-western part of the *Campus Martius*. It is unknown whether the woman served at one of these shrines. There is no male priest of the god attested in Rome, and I have found only one elsewhere. This man was *sacerdos dei Ditis* and lived in modern Sidi el Titouhi in Africa Proconsularis.

*Mercury*

Below the church of Santa Maria di Civita Falconara in ancient Arpinum (region 1) the dedication of a small group of *magistri* of Mercury Lanarius (Mercury of the clothiers) was found. It contains the names of two men and possibly one woman, Teipa, slave of Precia. She is one of the three women who might have held a religious office in the cult of the god of (grain) trade, who was related to the Etruscan Turms and the Greek Hermes. Numerous inscriptions attest to exclusively male *magistri* and *ministri* in colleges of religious officials devoted to Mercury, the *Mercuriales*. Male *sacerdotes* of the god can be found in Noricum and – for the greatest part, in northern Africa, though their number is not extensive.

The second female religious official of Mercurius – that is, if she did indeed serve in his cult, which is uncertain – is attested in Burdigala (modern Bordeaux) in Gallia Aquitania. Mercury’s popularity in Gaul is mentioned by Caesar, who writes that the Gauls ‘worship as their divinity, Mercury in particular, and have many images of him, and regard him as the inventor of all arts, they

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369 Cat.no.11.
372 Besides, a *collegium of cultores* of Dis Pater and Proserpina has left an inscription in modern Potzneusiedl in Noricum, see: *AE* 1982, 791b = *AE* 1988, 914.
373 *CIL* 8, 16406 = *ILS* 4471 = *IL Tun* 1564. This limited number of priests in Africa, the area that has yielded so many other *sacerdotes* might be explained by the identification of Dis Pater with Pluto, a deity who seems to have been popular in Africa. Several (male) priests of Pluto have left their traces in the epigraphic record. Rives (2007) 72 writes that the African Pluto seems to have been a pre-Roman deity of agriculture.
374 Leoni (2008) 137.
375 Cat.no.272. Teipa may also have been a man.
378 Cat.no.255. From Burdigala stem several dedications to the Mercury (Augustus). Furthermore, on the relief, probably from Cologne, that accompanied a dedication to Mercury, three women, clothed as matrons, are depicted in a sacrificial scene near an altar, Spickermann (1994a) 312-313; *CIL* 13.8234.
consider him the guide of their journeys and marches, and believe him to have great influence over the acquisition of gain and mercantile transactions." Pompeia Thelegusa had been *mater sacrorum* and solved a vow to Mercury.

The last women serving Mercury, or rather: a divinity that might have been identified with Mercury, lived in Masculula, close to modern Kef in Africa Proconsularis. She wore the puzzling title of *sacerdos Mathamodis*. The god of this inscription may have been related to Motmanius, perhaps an indigenous African deity who is attested on an inscription from Lambaesis from the second or beginning of the third century AD. This Motmanius was possibly associated with Mercury.

In sum, women are attested as religious officials of various different gods – be it much less frequent than they are attested in service of goddesses, and often in very small numbers. However, in many cases, of these same gods also only a few men are recorded are priests. Accordingly, it cannot simply be concluded that the deities of which hardly any female cult officials have left their traces in the epigraphic record, will have mainly been served by men. As a consequence of the limited number of inscriptions, there is no pattern visible in the spread of priestesses serving gods. In some cases, their existence might be explained by local customs.

*Conclusions of this chapter*

The picture that emerges is one of diversity on the one side, and broad patterns on the other, both in titles, in the spread of priesthoods and in the cults in which women served. Priestesses could carry various titles, of which the exact meaning is not always clear. The most common was that of *sacerdos*, found everywhere in the western part of the Empire. According to local preferences, this title could be slightly changed (to *sacerda* in Africa) or specific qualifications could be added, like *publica* or *magna*. Sometimes, a woman was called ‘priestess of a city’. In these cases, it is not clear whether she served in a specific cult (the imperial cult, or the main cult of the city), or whether she served as ‘general’ priestess, which I think is the most likely option. Very often, priestesses were simply referred to as *sacerdotes*. In some of these cases, the cult in which they served can be traced by looking at the text of the inscription, accompanying reliefs, local religious life and the archaeological context.

The distribution of the priestesses roughly fits the general pattern of inscriptions and reflects the spread of Romanization. By far, most are attested in Italy – mainly in Campania – and northern Africa. In Rome though, the number of priestesses attested epigraphically is relatively small; this is

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380 Cat.no.195.

made up for by the literary sources that provide evidence of some priesthoads – but not many – held by women in the City. Deviations from the epigraphic habit, both chronological and geographical, can usually be explained by exceptional (archaeological or other) circumstances. In case of the Ceres cult, the distribution of priestesses seems to reflect the popularity of the cult, which in its turn was linked to the production of grain, Greek and Punic roots and Romano-Italic influences.

Many examples show the falsity of the presupposition that women only served goddesses and men served gods.\(^{382}\) Women could worship male deities and hold religious offices in their cults and men could serve female divinities in an official function.\(^{383}\) This confirms Flemming’s statement that in Roman religion: ‘Exclusion and incapacity had to be actively imposed (…)’.\(^{384}\) The impression the evidence provides, is that women living in the provinces – certainly those in North Africa – could serve a great variety of deities in a religious office, just like men. However, the range of priesthoads held by men was much wider than those held by women, and the number of priests attested epigraphically is about 6.5 times as high as that of priestesses.\(^{385}\) Men served as priests in virtually all cults of which female sacerdotes or other religious officials are attested, but the opposite was not the case; female priesthoads were mostly, though certainly not exclusively, limited to goddesses concerned with fertility. Only when individual cults – e.g. that of Bona Dea – or areas – e.g. Italy, where only women held the priesthooth of Ceres – are examined, does it become apparent that in some cases women were clearly preferred over men as the best choice for the religious offices available. To call these cults ‘women’s cults’ and the divinities ‘women’s goddesses’ is exaggerated though, for the exclusion of men as priests did certainly not apply to all places and times, and men were always part of the worshipping community.

\(^{382}\) And much more evidence can be found: in Rome the Flaminica Dialis had to serve Jupiter and the Fratres Arvales served Dea Dia. Likely, the Salian virgins served the same (male) deities as their colleagues, the Salii, Glinister (2011) 128. Furthermore, even the Augustales, generally perceived to be all-male groups had female sacerdotes, see footnote 25. Not only in the division of priesthoads the distinction is not strict, but neither in the gender of the worshippers: dedications from women to Mars, Hercules, Silvanus and even Mithras, and from men to Dea Dia, Mater Matuta and Ceres, have been found, to mention but a few, cf. Schultz (2006) 69. See also Flemming (2007) 90-91, about women in the cults of Hercules and Silvanus. Their exclusion from Hercules at the Ara Maxima and the worship of Mars-Silvanus was an exception, just as the exclusion of men from the December festival of Bona Dea.


\(^{385}\) Cf. Culham (2004) 144: ‘Women tended to be associated with the worship of deities conceived of as female, yet most of those same deities had male priests. Few of the temples or observances that featured one gender actually excluded the other.’
Chapter 3: Religious officials in the cult of Ceres

Introduction

Apart from the imperial cult, the cult of Ceres is the one that provides us with the most epigraphic evidence for priestesses. I have found 102 inscriptions from Rome, Italy and North Africa which record the names of women serving in the Ceres cult. Approximately half of them lived in North Africa where the cult was popular and widespread (see also chapter 2). With the exception of North Africa, this prominence of priestesses of Ceres is not reflected in the number of Italian dedications to Ceres and in other inscriptions that mention the goddess. Ceres is not even included in Eck’s list of popular gods, which is based on dedications. The relatively few inscriptions of the early Empire that mention the goddess Ceres were mostly erected by people involved in the grain trade. Other inscriptions were set up by persons from both sexes and from various social ranks.

As there were several differences between the Roman, Italian and the African Ceres cults, I will deal with the priestesses of these three areas in separate sections (sections 1, 2 and 3). In order to gain a better understanding of the women who held the priesthood and of the variations between the cults, attention will be paid to local preferences and peculiarities, which can at least partly be explained by indigenous elements, Greek influences, and Romanization. Furthermore, I will discuss the rank and social standing of the priestesses, as this is a field in which the Italian and African sacerdotes can fruitfully be compared. Since the goddess Tellus had close ties to Ceres, and her priestesses show some similarities to those of Ceres in northern Africa, this chapter finishes with a section devoted to the sacerdotes Telluris.

1: The Ceres cult in Rome

In the previous chapter I have mentioned the connection between Ceres, agriculture and the production of grain. I have also referred to links between Ceres and Demeter. In this section about Ceres in Rome, these two connections will figure prominently, regarding both the worship of the goddess and her religious officials.

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2 Despite the fact we would expect Ceres to have been a central deity in a world in which agriculture was so important to most people. Cf. Henig (1984) 173.
3 Eck (1989) 43-44; see also chapter 4.
1.1: Ceres in early Rome: the Aventine triad and the Greek cult

In 496 BC the Sibylline books advised Rome to honour Demeter, Dionysus and Korè together in one cult in order to avert a famine.5 The origins of this triad – either Greek or Italic, for Demeter, Dionysus and Korè were equated with Ceres, Liber and Libera6 – are still debated.7 All three divinities were connected to agriculture. After its introduction into the City, the triad was built a new temple, dedicated in 493 BC.8 Its building was ordered by the dictator Postumius, who expected an abundant grain harvest from the goddess.9 As we have seen in the first chapter, its exact location is unknown. The so-called Aventine Triad had special links to the plebeians.10 Ceres herself was a plebeian goddess and even in the imperial period, her aerarium was still managed by an aedilis plebis, as is clear from many inscriptions.11

We have seen in the previous chapter that after the regal period a process of Hellenization influenced the character of the Roman Ceres, who was still being worshipped separately from the Aventine triad. The Roman Ceres-Demeter cult acquired new ceremonies, conducted Graeco riti12 and introduced between 249 and 216 BC, the year the first sacrum anniversarium Cereris was celebrated.13 This ‘Greek cult’ was less confined to plebeian worshippers than that of the Aventine triad. In the ‘Greek’ cult that probably resembled the Thesmophoria, Ceres was worshipped together with her daughter Proserpina in a cult for women and organized by priestesses (see below).14 Despite their secluded nocturnal character – by some called a mystery cult because one had to be initiated – the rites

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5 Livy, 2.34.3; Tacitus, Annals, 2.49; Dion. Halic. 6.17.2-4; 6.17.94; 1974; Peterson (1919) 26; RE s.v. Liber Pater, 69; Bruhl (1953) 30; Spaeth (1996) 7; Neue Pauly, s.v. Ceres, 1071; Simon (1990) 45.
11 For example: CIL 6, 91 = ILS 153; CIL 6, 1822 = ILS 1893; CIL 6, 30905; CIL 6, 1095 = CIL 6, 31239 = CIL 9, 407,01 = CIL 13, 58 = ILS 503; CIL 6, 1345; CIL 6, 1570; CIL 6, 41229 = AE 1929, 158 = AE 1930, 76 = AE 1933, 1 = AE 1995, 124 = AE 1995, 762 = AE 2000, 656. Le Bonniec (1958) 112, 278; Bruhl (1953) 41.
12 The ritus Graecus was in fact a typically Roman construct, Scheid (1995) 19, 28. It was not used in the cults of all Greek gods, but only in those of Hercules, Saturn, Apollo and Ceres, Scheid (1995) 20.
14 Le Bonniec (1958) 379-380, 388, 391-392, 400; Chirass Colombo (1981) 421; Spaeth (1996) 11, 103; Beard, North and Price (1998) 70; Bendlin (2002) 67; Orlin (2010) 105-106. Livy 22.56.4 mentions matrons who should have been celebrating the sacrum anniversarium, but did not because they were mourning after the Battle of Canusium.
of the Graeca sacra were pro popolo.\textsuperscript{15} Bendlin writes that these rites took place near the mundus of Ceres (see also below).\textsuperscript{16}

The Graeca sacra or sacram anniversarium Ceres was involved groups of matrons and girls in procession, singing and offering gifts to the goddesses. As the participation of separate groups of women was uncommon, this was a ‘real change in the religious life of Rome’, according to Beard, North and Price.\textsuperscript{17} However, the acceptance of the Graeca sacra Ceres fits into a pattern of adoption of foreign religious practices and the Hellenization of various cults.\textsuperscript{18}

1.2: Priestly officials in the Roman Ceres cult

The priestly responsibilities in the Ceres cult in Rome were shared by different religious officials, and changed over time.\textsuperscript{19} A flamen Cerialis existed long before a female sacerdos of Ceres was introduced.\textsuperscript{20} The flaminia of Ceres was one of the oldest public priesthoods in Rome that were created, according to legend, by king Numa.\textsuperscript{21} There is no evidence for the flamen Cerialis that dates from the period after the end of the first century AD. The flamen Cerialis belonged to the flamines minores.\textsuperscript{22} These flamines minores, who were plebeians and seem to have been less prestigious than the flamines maiores, had their own internal ranking of importance. The flamen Cerialis belonged to the first group of six of the twelve minores, which leads to the conclusion that Ceres was a relatively prominent divinity.\textsuperscript{23} The flamen Cerialis sacrificed to Ceres and to Tellus because Tellus did not have her own priest. Likely, he celebrated the sacram Cereale, an agrarian festival.\textsuperscript{24} The only flamen Cerialis attested epigraphically was a certain Sextus Caesius Propertianus, who had held several equestrian offices in the early imperial period, both military and administrative. His inscription was erected in Mevania (region 6).\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{15} Cicero, De Leg. 2.35-37. Spaeth (1996) 13. Cf. Graf (2003) 142: parallel with the Thesmophoria. Bendlin (2002) and Wagenvoort (1980) have discussed the sacram anniversarium Ceres and other rites in honour of Ceres (the initia Ceres, mentioned by Varro, RR 2.4.9; 3.1.5; see also Spaeth (1996) 60). The precise contents of these rites are not relevant for this thesis, so I will not expand on them.


\textsuperscript{17} Beard, North and Price (1998) 70-71; quotation: 71.


\textsuperscript{19} Cf. Edlund-Berry (1994) 29.

\textsuperscript{20} Although the flamines are often considered to be linked to one deity only, they could also play a role in the rites of other deities, Vanggaard (1988) 105, 113-114.

\textsuperscript{21} CIL 11.5028, from the first century AD; CIL 10.5422 = ILS 3353; Le Bonneix (1958) 113, 343, 456; Bruhl (1953) 122; Vanggaard (1988) 21, 46, 48; Spaeth (1996) 4, 34; Neue Pauly, s.v. Ceres, 1071.

\textsuperscript{22} Of the fifteen flamines, three were flamines maiores (the Dialis, Martialis and Quirinalis) and the others, amongst which the Cerialis, the flamines minores. The minores were originally plebeians, the maiores were patricians. In the imperial period the minores were equestrians, Vanggaard (1988) 24, 46, 48, 73.


\textsuperscript{25} CIL 11, 5028 = ILS 1447 = AE 1892, 3. See also: Chirassi Colombo (1981) 427-428. Kunz (2006) 179-180, mentions a Sicilian inscription recording a flamen Cerialis, but as the inscription (CIL 10, 7146 = EE 8.1, 679) is very fragmentary, this cannot be stated with certainty.
A plebeian aedilis probably acted as priest for Demeter, Liber and Kore of the Aventine triad and celebrated the Cerialia, while priestesses celebrated the Hellenised cult of Ceres and Proserpina. These priestesses were supervised by the (quin)decemviri. These (quin)decemviri played an important role in the cult of Ceres, which illustrates the foreign character of the Hellenised cult. Cicero’s oration against Verres provides evidence for the role of the quindecimviri in the Ceres cult, dating from about a century after the introduction of the Graeca sacra. He writes that some time after the death of Tiberius Gracchus (around 130-120 BC) the Sibylline books explained the way to ward off a disaster that was predicted by various prodigies. It was said that the most ancient Ceres ought to be appeased (ex quibus inventum est Cereum antiquissimam placari oportere). Accordingly, priests – sacerdotes populi Romani selected from the college of the decimviri – went as far as Enna on Sicily to find a way to do as the books had told, even though there was already a magnificent temple of Ceres in Rome (by which he presumably meant the one on the Aventine hill). Enna was a place with a reputation for holiness and in the local temple of Demeter an impressive statue of the goddess – and one of Libera – was displayed. This statue was the occasion for Cicero’s speech, for Verres, who had been governor of Sicily, had ordered to steal it.

Cicero’s oration stressed the (supposed) universality of the worship of Ceres in the Roman Empire and the relationship between the Sicilian and the Roman cults. The journey to Enna showed that this town was perceived to be the place of origin of the goddess – note in this context the inscription from Rome in which a priestess of Ceres is called Sicula (see below). However, Hinz writes that there is evidence which shows that the cult in Enna became important at a relatively late moment. Therefore, Cicero’s statement that the cult was very ancient is likely an exaggeration to enlarge its respectability in order to aggravate Verres’s crime. According to Šterbenc Erker, Cicero mentioned the link to Sicily because the island was politically important for Rome: Sicily was the first Roman province and provided a great deal of grain for the Urbs. Orlin also links the mission to political factors: after the unsuccessful slave revolt of Eunous (135-132 BC) the Romans may have wanted to demonstrate their renewed power over the island and their control of the sanctuary.

Be that as it may, the priestesses of the Hellenised Ceres in Rome who were supervised by the (quin)decemviri had to be of Greek descent and came mostly from Velia and Naples, as Cicero

27 Le Bonniec (1958) 398, 454, 457.
31 Hinz (1998) 122; Kunz (2006) 61, writes that the cult of Demeter and Kore on Sicily was not any older than the Demeter cults in other areas, colonized by the Greeks.
33 Orlin (2010) 193; he offers other explanations as well.
writes.34 They acquired civic status,35 according to Cicero to be able to serve the goddess on behalf of the Roman people.36

Sacra Cereris, iudices, summa maiores nostri religione confici caerimonialque voluerunt; quae cum essent adipxeca Graecia, et per Graecas curata sunt semper sacerdotes et Graeca omnino nominata. sed illam quae Graecum illud sacrum monstraret et faceret ex Graecia deligerent, tamen sacra pro civibus civem facere voluerunt, ut deos immortalis scientia peregrina et externa, mente domestica et civili precaretur. has sacerdotes video fere aut Neapolitanas aut Veliensis fuisse, foederatarum sine dubio civitatum. Mitto vetera; proxime dico ante civitatem Veliensibus datum de senatu sententia C. Valerium Flaccum, praetorem urbanum, nominatim ad populum de Calliphana Veliense, ut ea civis Romana esset, tulisse.

“Our ancestors, O judges, ordained that the sacred rites of Ceres should be performed with the very strictest religious reverence and the greatest solemnity; which, as they had been originally derived from the Greeks, had always been conducted by Greek priestesses, and were called Greek rites. But when they were selecting a priestess from Greece to teach us that Greek sacred ceremony, and to perform it, still they thought it right that it should be a citizen who was sacrificing for citizens, in order that she might pray to the immortal gods with knowledge, indeed, derived from a distant and foreign source but with feelings belonging to one of our own people and citizens. I see that these priestesses were for the most part Neapolitans or Velians, and those are well known to be federate cities. I am not speaking of any ancient cases, I am only mentioning things that have happened lately, as, for instance, that before the freedom of the city was conferred on the Velians, Caius Valerius Flaccus being the city praetor, did, in accordance with a resolution passed by the senate, submit a motion to the people concerning a woman of Velia, called Calliphana, mentioning her expressly by name, for the purpose of making her a Roman citizen.”

34 Šterbene Erker (2006-2007) 127; Orlin (2010) 27. Therefore, modern scholars think that in early times there was no clear link between Rome and Enna, but between Rome and Naples and Velia instead.
35 To Flemming (2007) 108, this citizenship was crucial about the Roman sacerdos Ceres: she was not foreign, but a Roman citizen. Isayev (2011) 375, 385-386 on the other hand stresses the necessary ‘foreigness’ of the priestesses, which was created through their gender and their Greek roots. Orlin (2010) 107-110 thinks that the grant of citizenship should not be underestimated and that it was a way to show the ‘centrality of women, in their proper place, to the success of the Roman state.’ Furthermore, incorporating Graeca sacra can be seen as a propagation of Romanness, that shared the main ideas about the proper place of priestesses in society with the Greeks.
36 Cicero, Pro Balbo, 55 (transl. by A. Clark); Bruhl (1953) 39; Le Bonniec (1958) 397; Spaeth (1996) 12-13, 104; Neue Pauly, s.v. Ceres, 1072; Hänninen (1998) 121; Beard, North and Price (1998) 70; Scheid (2003a) 143; Schultz (2006) 72. These Roman female sacerdotes Ceres were, according to Scheid, a new conception of religious offices for women, because they did not depend on their husband for their office. However, this was neither the case with the Vestals as he admits, Scheid (2003a) 145.
As a consequence of the Greek character of Naples and Velia,\(^{37}\) the priestesses were able to carry out the requested rites in the proper way. However, it may be clear that the choice of priestesses from both towns was not only based on religious arguments, but also on political considerations: Velia and Naples were federate cities, relatively close to Rome.\(^{38}\) That religious considerations were not the only reason for the choice is supported by the fact that Velia was a trading town where the cult of Demeter was not really important: the importance of the Demeter cult, although explicitly mentioned by Cicero, cannot be traced in the archaeological remains from Velia.\(^{39}\) However, in Naples a thesmophoric cult presumably existed in the first century AD, as the elaborate honorary inscription of the priestess Tettia Casta suggests. Generally, she is perceived to have been priestess of Demeter Thesmophoros, as the cult of Demeter was the only one in Naples with such a high standing that prestigious women like Tettia could hold its priesthood.\(^{40}\) It is even possible that Tettia became priestess in the Roman Ceres cult, but there is no evidence to support this.\(^{41}\) It is noteworthy to mention that Tettia was priestess of a ‘house of women’ (ἱστεία τοῦ …? …] τῶν γυναικῶν οίκου). It is uncertain what was meant by this, but it might point to a secluded group of women serving the goddess.

The Greek women from Naples and Velia who came to Rome were ‘public’ priestesses in the sense that they had to carry out rites on behalf of the citizens of Rome.\(^{42}\) This public character is also shown by the titles of the only two priestesses attested on inscriptions from the Urbs. Casponia Maxima, daughter of Publius, had been sacerdos publica populi Romani and Favonia, daughter of Marcus, had been sacerdos publica populi Romani Quiritum.\(^{43}\) Both lived in the early imperial period.

Unfortunately, these two inscriptions do not provide any information about the priestesses, except that Casponia originated from Sicily as is indicated by the word Sicula, inscribed after her title. This is of some interest, for we know that on Sicily the cult of Ceres was important (see below), and because it confirms Cicero’s statement that the Roman priestesses of Ceres had to be ‘Greek’ and from a ‘federate’ state. After all, Sicily, which had been colonized by the Greeks, had become a Roman province in 227 BC. The names of both priestesses though, are thoroughly Romanised and show the Roman citizenship that they had to possess – which is not surprising, considering the time in which they lived.

\(^{38}\) See also Glinister (2006) 101.
\(^{40}\) Bendlin (2002) 61.
\(^{42}\) Flemming (2007) 104, writes: ‘(...) the [Roman] sacerdos Ceres addressed the gods on exactly the same basis as any other public religious official, her authority came from her own, properly arrived at, position in the Roman constitution; but she communicated in, as it were, a different language, in the Greek mode rather than the Roman one.’
\(^{43}\) Casponia: cat.no.4; Favonia: cat.no.5. Le Bonniec (1958) 388. It is remarkable that in Velia, one of the towns where the priestesses came from, men also played a role in the Demeter cult, see Hinz, (1998) 181.
The priestesses of Ceres were the only public priestesses (in the sense that they represented the whole community) in Rome apart from the Vestals and the Salian virgins. This must have implied that they possessed a lot of prestige,⁴⁴ although Scheid, perhaps because he stresses the fact that the priestesses were ‘foreign’, writes that they were of lower social status than other priests.⁴⁵ Schultz, on the other hand, thinks that the priestesses stemmed mainly from prominent families, and Spaeth, who refers to Cicero, Verr. 2.4.99 (see below), writes that just like the priestesses of the goddess on Sicily, the Roman sacerdotes Cereris were of respectable descent and reputation.⁴⁶ As we do not know anything about the social origins of the two priestesses Casponia and Favonia, except that both women were free-born,⁴⁷ we cannot agree or disagree with either of these views. Nevertheless, the fact that most (but certainly not all!) priestesses of Ceres in the rest of Italy were of a fairly high rank and standing, seems to indicate that the view of Schultz and Spaeth is more convincing than the one held by Scheid.

As I have mentioned above, several scholars think that the Graeca sacra were meant only for women in contrast to the earlier Ceres cults that were open to both sexes.⁴⁸ An exclusion of men was also part of the cult of the goddess on Sicily; Cicero writes about the shrine of Ceres in Catena:

*Aditus enim in id sacrarium non est viris; sacra per mulieres ac virgines confici solent.*

“For the entrance into that shrine does not belong to men; the sacred ceremonies are accustomed to be performed by women and virgins.”

It is interesting that Cicero in the same oration writes that the goddess is worshipped nearly everywhere in the same way and that the nature of the shrine was comparable to that in Rome (*eadem religione qua Romae*).⁵⁰ However, I think we should not attach too much value to these words,

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⁴⁴ Isayev (2011) 380-381 stresses the unique position of the priestesses and their (supposed) status and authority. She also writes, based on Cicero, *Leg.* 2.21, that the priestesses had the right to initiate members, though in this passage of Cicero nothing is said about the role of priestesses in initiation rites of Ceres in Rome. Isayev (p. 384) further thinks that the priestesses were ‘inspirational’ rather than ‘specialist’ (arbiters in problematic cases), as the other Roman priests were. They mediated between human and divine by praying. The priestess’s role was anticipatory. The evidence for this statement is rather limited, though. But if it is true, the priestesses’ role seems to be comparable to that of the priest(esse)s of individual gods in the provinces.


⁴⁷ See also Scheid (1995) 23-4.


⁴⁹ Cicero, *Verr.* 2.4.99. The sentences following this quote show that Cicero is not talking about women in general, but about priestesses – see chapter 4, section 2.1. Cf. Lactantius, *Div. Instit.*, 3.20.3-4: men were prohibited from entering the temples of Vesta, Bona Dea and Ceres. As may be clear, this is not true for the temple of the Aventine, were the aedilis was priest, Brouwer (1989) 418.

⁵⁰ Cicero, *Verr.* 4.99: *Sacrarium Ceresiris est apud Catinensis eadem religione qua Romae, qua in ceteris locis, qua prope in toto orbe terrarum.* “There is a shrine of Ceres among the Catenans of the same holy nature as the one in Rome, of the ones in other places, and of the same nature as in almost every country in the world.” Transl. Loeb Classical Library.
because Cicero wanted to convince the judges that Verres had committed a grave crime by stealing the statue of Ceres, and the less ‘foreign’ the cult would seem, the better his listeners could identify themselves with the victims and the more likely they would be willing to punish Verres. Nevertheless, certain similarities between the Graeca sacra and the Sicilian cult will certainly have been present, and fit into the existing pattern of continuous influences from Magna Graecia on Roman culture.

2: The Ceres cults in Italy

We have seen in chapter 2 that priestesses of Ceres have only been attested in Italy and northern Africa. In Italy, they were concentrated in Campania and other parts of mid and southern Italy, while in North Africa they are mainly attested in Numidia and Africa Proconsularis. In the following section, various aspects of the Italian Ceres cult(s) and its priestesses will be discussed. As virtually nothing can be said about the daily organisation of the cults for a lack of evidence, we have to turn to other topics. The first deals with origins: as both the Italic Ceres cults and the Demeter cults from Greater Greece lay at the foundations of the cults in which the sacerdotes Ceres is of the imperial period served, I start with a section about the Italic Ceres cults. This is followed by a discussion of the worship of Demeter in southern Italy. Like so many other aspects of religion, the spread of the cult of Demeter shows the impact of the process of Hellenization on the societies of central Italy. Secondly, the various titles of the priestesses will be discussed, as these illustrate some interesting aspects of the Italian Ceres cults. Thirdly, the priestesses who served other deities besides Ceres will pass under review, and finally, I will pay attention to the social rank and standing of the sacerdotes, because in this respect the Italian priestesses can fruitfully be compared to their African colleagues.\footnote{More about the social rank of all priestesses in the catalogue will be said in chapter 5, section 3.1.}

2.1: The Italian Ceres cults

The goddess Ceres has been attested on an early Faliscan inscription in which she is linked to grain. This very old text from the south-eastern edge of Etruria is called the Ceres inscription. It dates from around 600 BC.\footnote{Vetter 241. Watkins (1995) 45; Spaeth (1996) 1. For a detailed discussion of this inscription, see Bakkum, Vol. 2 (2009) 393-406} Further evidence of the Italic worship of Ceres is of much later date, but is important in a discussion of priestesses of the goddess. From Lavinium (Latium) stem the fragments of a third century BC stips votive, containing the following words: Cerereauliquoquibus/ Vespernam por(t).\footnote{CIL 1, 2847 = AE 1953, 131 = AE 1954, 26 = AE 1955, 78 = AE 1962, 35 = AE 1962, 297 = AE 1963, 203 = AE 1976, 110.} Weinstock thinks these words are part of a lex sacra ‘probably formulated by the priestess of the temple and attached to the table of offerings.’\footnote{Weinstock (1952) 34.} No Lavinian Ceres priestess has been attested, however, so her supposed existence remains just speculation. There are many other uncertainties

\begin{itemize}
\item[51] More about the social rank of all priestesses in the catalogue will be said in chapter 5, section 3.1.
\item[54] Weinstock (1952) 34.
\end{itemize}
concerning this inscription, but based on etymology, Weinstock concludes that ‘an Italic goddess of
food seems to have been worshipped in the temple of Ceres at Laviniun (…). Simon on the other
hand thinks that the ‘Vesperna’ mentioned on the inscription was the same as Venus. This is
interesting with regard to the joint cult of the two goddesses, mentioned in the previous chapter.

In Agona (in the modern region Molise) a third century Oscan sanctuary of Ceres has been
excavated. On an inscription from this sanctuary, found in 1848 in Capracotta and dated to the second
century BC, Ceres is mentioned. She is connected to rites in a sacred grove (hûrz), but what these
rites encompassed, remains a mystery. From the same century stem several inscriptions recording
Oscan priestesses of the goddess ‘Cer(r)ia’ or ‘Cerfum,’ likely the same as Ceres – or the Cereres (see
section 3.2). These inscriptions, recorded in the Pelignian dialect, refer to the priestess as
‘anaceta/ancta/anacta/anecta’ or ‘sacracrix/sacracrix.’ In the first century BC, the Pelignian disappeared
and the Latin words sacerdos Ceres were used. The priestesses called ‘anaceta’ or one of its
variants all lived in Sulmo, while those called ‘sacracrix’ are attested in Interpromium, Corfinium and
Teate Marrucinorum or Teatina (all in the later Augustan region 4). Schultz writes that these
inscriptions were dedications, but in my opinion this is very unconvincing as they are found in
tombs. All inscriptions are short and do not give any other information than the names of the
priestesses and short funerary formula’s (see the appendix).

The only inscription that records a priestess of Ceres-Cerfum (instead of Cer(r)ia) is the well-
known one from Corfinium, called the ‘Herentas inscription.’ It is the epitaph of the priestess Prima
Pettiedia, inscribed on a square travertine pedestal. According to Vetter the inscription dates from the
mid first century BC. Prima Pettiedia is described as Cerfum sacracrix semunu. Lindsay offers
‘priestess of the Cerfí Semones’ as a translation, but according to Poccetti and Spaeth these words
mean Cererum sacerdos semonum, by which possibly a priestess of the Ceres and deities of sowing

55 Weinstock (1952) 36.
57 Vetter 147. The inscription starts with the words: statius pús ser hûrtn/ kerriûn vezkei statif, meaning: stati
dies) qui sunt in loco Ceriali. This is followed by a list of agricultural divinities that had their own place and
festival day in the grove.
could be a garden, or a sacred grove or sanctuary; De Cazanove (2007) 52.
60 Poccetti (1982) 171.
61 Dates according to Buonocore and Poccetti (1985) 51. There is no consensus about the exact translation of the
word ‘anaceta’; it has been stated that is does not mean ‘priestess’, but is part of the name of the goddess, see
Radke (1988) 365; Schultz (2006) 51. See also Poccetti (1982) 172 who contradicts the view that the name of the
goddess Angitia was meant. Adams (2007) 48 seems to reject this view too. Cf. chapter 2, footnote 327.
62 Corfinium and Sulmo also provide evidence for priestesses living in the first century AD, which shows the
long-lasting importance of the Italic Ceres cult in this area.
64 Vetter (1953) no. 213, p. 145-149; Peruzzi (1995) 5. See the appendix for the text.
65 Lindsay (1893) 333.
is meant. A parallel can be seen in CIL 1, 3215 = Vetter 204, in which the name of an anaceta ceria et aisis santo is recorded, which Pocci translates as ‘sacerdotessa di Cerere e delle divinità dei seminati’.67

In contrast to Pocci, Spaeth thinks that the Cereres of the Herentas inscription were not Ceres and Proserpina (or Demeter and Kore, like the African Cereres, see section 3.2),68 but Ceres and Venus instead, because of the existence of other Pelignan inscriptions that mention priestesses of Ceres and of Venus.69 In my opinion, this suggestion is not very convincing for these Pelignan inscriptions all attest to either priestesses of Venus, or to priestesses of Ceres, and not to a combined priesthood of both goddesses. It is much more likely to view the Cereres as Ceres and Proserpina, regarding the link between these two goddesses, the Greek influences in Italy and the African parallel. Besides, it has been noted several times that the ‘Herentas inscription’ displays ‘the influence of Greek forms of expression’, so Greek influences on its religious contents are likely.70

Another argument for regarding the Cereres as the equivalent of the Greek Thesmophores is the possibility that in the inscription a reference is made to a temporary separation of the priestess from her husband. Peruzzi thinks that the priestess had two names (see chapter 4) that were used because of the woman lived (temporarily) apart from her husband.71 As we shall see in the chapter 4, temporary chastity may have been part of the African cult of the Cereres that was based on Greek roots, and of the cult in Rome, although the evidence is rather inconclusive.

2.2: The cults of Demeter in Italy

Apart from the indigenous Italic Ceres, the Greek Demeter72 was also worshipped in Italy. As we have seen above, the cult of this goddess was imported in Rome from Sicily,73 where the cult of Demeter and Persephone was very popular, like in the rest of southern Italy.74 In Latium and Campania, close to Rome, some early evidence of the cult of Demeter can be found. In Veii and Capena – the second

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66 Spaeth (1996) 3. In the refrain of the fratres Arvales the Semones are mentioned, representing ‘divine forces which in some way preside over the sowing and prosperity of the crops,’ Evans (1939) 172. The association of Cerus and Semo was ‘fairly common to central Italy’, Evans (1939) 174.
68 Pocci (1985) 60.
72 This goddess was often served by priestesses, for example in Thebe, near Theophras, on Kos, in Mantinea. Cf. Herodotus. 5.72; RE, s.v. Demeter, passim.
73 On the other hand, Peterson writes that the influences from Campania on the Roman Ceres cult were possibly more important than the Sicilian influences: Campania was much closer to Rome, there was a connection between the Sybillian books and Cumae, and other cults from Cumae were also imported in Rome. The fact that the Roman priestesses had to come from Naples and Velia supports this view, Peterson (1919) 26-27. However, it is virtually impossible to quantify and compare religious influences, so Peterson’s view cannot be checked.
town providing evidence of Ceres priestesses in later times – depictions dating to the fifth century BC show women and men together with pigs, torches, baskets and fruit, all common objects in the Demeter cult. In Teano in Campania, a complex with votive offerings has been excavated, and although it is difficult to determine which deities were honoured here, it is possible that the place was influenced by the Demeter cult from Tarentum. Besides, in Pompeii a priestess of the *Thesmophores* is attested, though her inscription is from much later date.

Possibly as a result of a resemblance to the cult of Demeter, the Ceres cult became very popular in Campania, where it was mainly concentrated in the most fertile parts of the area – a region where grain was one of the main agricultural products (see chapter 2). According to Pliny the Elder, Ceres was protectress of Campania, together with Liber Pater. No wonder that Frederiksen suggests that the federal cult of Campania, mentioned by Livy, was probably that of Ceres in Hamae (later in Liternum). While the cult of Demeter finally disappeared in many places in *Magna Graecia*, sometimes to be replaced by the worship of Ceres, it remained important on Sicily, where Demeter was perceived to be closely connected. Syracuse provides the best epigraphic sources, though the only concrete evidence for a sanctuary is found in Cicero (*Verr. 4.119*). Some Greek inscriptions from Enna dating from the end of the fourth and the beginning of the third century BC mention male priests of Demeter. The existence of male priests of Demeter in the Greek world was not uncommon.

In addition to Sicily and the towns of Velia and Paestum on the Italian mainland where some priestesses of the goddess have been attested. Cumae was another important centre of the Demeter cult. In this town, being a priestess of the goddess was considered a high honour, if we may believe

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75 Hinz (1998) 223, 226. In addition, the Campetti sanctuary, containing votive heads from late 6th or the 5th century BC, was perhaps dedicated to Demeter, Glinister (2006) 91.
77 IG 14.702: Ταραντία Παραμόνη Ίρεια / Δημήτριος Θεσμοφόρος.
78 Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 93. However, there is little evidence for the cult of Ceres, the inscriptions of the *sacerdotes* form the main part of the evidence, Savunen (1997) 122.
81 Pliny NH 3.60; De Cazanove (1990) 384 note 33.
82 Livy 23.35.3; Frederiksen (1984) 33. He also suggests that the federal Ceres was served by a priestess, but there is no evidence to supports this.
83 Hinz (1998) 231. However, in contrast to the many available inscriptions, there is no archaeological evidence for a continuity of the Greek Demeter cult on Sicily. Kunz (2006) 24, 61, 67.
84 Wood 2000, 79; Kunz (2006) 371. Nowhere else in the classical period, so many sanctuaries of Demeter were built in such a small area as on Sicily, Kunz (2006) 100.
88 Hinz, 1998, 180 with epigraphic references.
Plutarch. As Demeter was one of the dii patri of Cumae (as she was in Naples, a sub-colony of Cumae) and the protectress of the town, it is unsurprising that this was a high honour indeed. However, the status of the cult in Roman times is unknown; perhaps the cult had even ceased to exist until it was restored by the Luceei in AD 7, as the following inscription seems to suggest:

\[ Cn(aeus) Cn(aeus) Luceei[us --- pater] et filius pr(aetor?) \] / sacra Demet[ros res]tituerunt / Lucecia Cn(aei) f(ilia) Polla qui --- et Luc[ceia Cn(aei) f(ilia)] Tertulla Pia Galli / aedem Demetrios et quae circa [eam aedem su]nt et porticus p(ecunia) s(ua) restituerunt

“Cnaeus Cnaeus Luceius, father and son, prætor?, restored the sacred rites of Demeter. Lucecia Polla, daughter of Cnaeus and Lucecia Tertulla Pia, daughter of Cnaeus, wife of Gallus restored the sanctuary of Demeter and the things that are around this sanctuary and the colonnade with their own money.

It is also possible that there was no discontinuity in worship, but that the women paid for the restoration of the temple, while the men provided funding for the sacra. The temple of Demeter was probably located outside the city walls at the Tempio dei Giganti, to the east of the Akropolis. Although Cumae was relatively small, its Demeter cult was considered important by the Romans. In the words of Peterson: ‘The importance of Cumae in the field of ancient religion is greater than the size or intrinsic worth of the place at any time would suggest.’

Naples, located in a grain and wine producing area that was Hellenised from the mid-fifth century onwards and that retained the Greek language and institutions for a very long time after the Roman conquest, was another important centre of the Demeter cult. However, the location of the temple is unknown. Both Demeter Thesmophoros (attested on an inscription mentioning a priestess)

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80 Plut. Mul. Virt. 262D: τιμών δὲ καὶ δωρεῶν μεγάλων τῇ Ξενοκρίτῃ προτεινομένων ἐώσασα πάσας ἐν ἡττήσατο, θάψα τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἀριστοδήμου καὶ τοῦτον ἐδόσαν αὐτῇ καὶ δῆμωρος ἀρέσειν αὐτῇ εἴλοντο, ὥς ἦτον οἰόμενον τῷ θεῷ κορασιμένῳ ἢ πρέαυσαν ἑκείνῃ τιμήν ἐξόσθαι - Honours and great gifts were tendered to Xenoctere, but she would have none of them; one request only she made, to bury the body of Aristodemus, and this they granted her, and chose her to be priestess of Demeter, feeling that the honour would be no less pleasing to the goddess than appropriate for Xenoctere. Transl. by F. Cole Babbit. Peterson (1919) 64; Frederiksen (1984) 76, 173 note 54; Savunen (1997) 135; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 111.
81 Statius, Silv. 4.8.45-51. Dubois (1907) 134; Peterson (1919) 64; De Cazanove (1990) 384 note 33.
84 Peterson (1919) 65; Frederiksen (1984) 76.
85 De Cazanove (1990) 384. Frederiksen (1984) 76, thinks the cult was a mystery cult.
86 Peterson (1919) 47.
88 Peterson (1919) 187. Neapolitan women served also in other cults as priestesses, e.g. a priestess of Leucotheta: NS1898, 226; Savunen (1997) 142.
89 IG 14,702.
and Demeter Actaea\textsuperscript{99} were worshipped in Naples.\textsuperscript{100} There are few archaeological traces, but what has been found shows that the Thesmophoric Neapolitan cult was influenced by that of Sicily,\textsuperscript{101} while Demeter Actaea was adopted from Cumae. After the decline of Cumae, Naples became important in the spread of the Demeter cult.\textsuperscript{102} As we have seen above, the Neapolitan influences reached as far as Rome.\textsuperscript{103}

The Campanian Ceres-Demeter cult spread also to other parts of the Empire. For instance, it influenced the cult of Demeter in some cities in Greece. The ‘religious orientation’ of the Demeter cult in Corinth changed at the beginning of the Roman period; the goddess’ chthonic side (see chapter 2) became more important. The same happened in Isthmia and in Knossos, where Roman colonists arrived from Campania in 36 BC and a new stage in Demeter worship started.\textsuperscript{104} As we shall see below, there may have been Campanian influences on the Ceres cults in certain places in North Africa as well. Nevertheless, many differences between the cults of Demeter-Ceres in the various parts of the Roman Empire remained, even within the same area. Even though the causes for the differences may have been forgotten as Greek elements had blended with Italic ones and Roman with native, local peculiarities continued to exist, or were more recently be created. Some are reflected in the variety of titles carried by the Italian priestesses, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.3: Priestly titles and local peculiarities

In Italy (including Rome), the title most often used was \textit{sacerdos Cereris}; it is attested twenty-seven times.\textsuperscript{105} In Pinna Vestina (region 4)\textsuperscript{106} and in Aeclanum (region 2) the priestesses were called \textit{sacerdos Cerin}.\textsuperscript{107} It is noteworthy that the word \textit{Cerin} has been attested on only two other inscriptions, as far as I know. These inscriptions were found in Aquileia. One is a dedication to Bona Dea who was called \textit{Augusta Bona Dea Cereris}, and the other is a dedication to Magna Mater who was addressed with the same epithet.\textsuperscript{108} Probably, in Aquileia, which was a centre of grain production and import, Bona Dea and Magna Mater were endowed with Ceres’s links to grain and agriculture, as Brouwer suggests.\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{99} Statius, \textit{Silv}: 4.8.45-51.
\textsuperscript{100} Lomas (1993) 128.
\textsuperscript{102} Peterson (1919) 185, 186; Frederiksen (1984) 91.
\textsuperscript{103} Cf. De Cazanove (1990) 398.
\textsuperscript{104} DeMars (1995) 107-8, 109, 113. Apart from their place of origin, the social background of the colonists played a role, DeMars (1995) 113.
\textsuperscript{105} A very deviating title is \textit{sactis}, attested in Cumae, cat.no.274 (see chapter 2).
\textsuperscript{106} Cat.no.89.
\textsuperscript{107} Cat.no.17.
\textsuperscript{109} Brouwer (1989) 413, 417, 420. Brouwer, p. 421-422 offers some other speculations about the character of Bona Dea Cereris, but I do not think they are convincing.
In three other cases the word *Cereris* was substituted by *Cerialis* (cf. the ancient Roman *flamen Cerialis*). These three priestesses lived in Alvito, Aesernia, and in Capua, all located in region 1. We have seen above that the cult of Ceres-Demeter had a long history in Capua; the evidence dates back to the third century BC. It is possible that the priesthood of Ceres was the highest honour obtainable for a Capuan woman as was the case in Cumae, and be reserved for women from the highest ranks. And indeed, all Capuan priestesses of Ceres originated from families of high social rank.

The *sacerdos Cerialis* from Capua, Titia (?), Curia, was a member of the *gens Curia*, who has left traces in other Campanian towns as well: in Cumae, Puteoli, Herculanum and Pompeii. These were all cities where the goddess was worshipped, but no other members of the family have been attested as *sacerdotes* in the Ceres cult. Titia (?) Curia had the unique addition *mundalis* attached to her title. It is likely that this word refers to the chthonic character of the goddess Ceres and her role in guarding the opening of the *mundus Cerialis*. There is much uncertainty concerning this *mundus*, the only known rite related to it, is its opening. The sources do not provide a straightforward link between the *mundus*, Ceres, the underworld and agrarian life. Bendlin thinks the *mundus* was a cult place that was used during various rites, which together formed the *sacra Graeca Cerialis* (see above, section 1.1). He further writes that the Capuan priestess Titia (?) Curia must have played a role in a thesophoric ritual.

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110 Cat.no.271. Possibly – though highly unlikely considering the absence of male priests in the Italian Ceres cult – this *sacerdos* was a man, for no name has been preserved.
111 Cat.no.19.
112 Cat.no.56.
113 Peterson (1919) 335. However, the most important cult was that of Diana Tifatina, served by priests, Peterson (1919) 322, 328; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 113.
114 Peterson (1919) 335.
118 Spaeth (1996) 2, 5; *Neue Pauly*, s.v. Ceres, 1070, 1071, 1073; Staples (1998) 84; Le Bonniec (1958) 89-91, 107, 207, 456. *Mundi* were underground altars to the gods below and the spirits of death. The only known rites in which a *mundus* was involved, were those in honour of Ceres, Kvium (2011) 81.
121 Bendlin (2002) 50, 60.
122 Bendlin (2002) 69-70. Possibly, there was also a *mundus* in Corfinium, but this is subject to much debate, Devijver and Van Wonterghem (1983); Crawford (1990); Bendlin (2002).
As the other two priestesses of Ceres from Capua carried also rather unusual titles Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba ask the question whether the different titles ‘signe que le sacerdoce de Cérès n’était pas vraiment institutionalisé mais qu’on désignait des prêtesses en fonction des besoins, par exemple à l’occasion d’une crise religieuse ou lors de circonstances exceptionnelles?’ 124 Unfortunately, we do not have any parallels for such a practice, so this question cannot be answered. Another possibility is that the Capuan priestesses simply served different manifestations of Ceres. In the previous chapter some examples of sacerdotes who were active in the cults(s) of various manifestations of for example Juno have been mentioned. Divinities with multiple names were a common feature of polytheism in classical antiquity. Different epithets could refer to specific qualities, functions, rituals, important cult places and to places of origin (these last being important in the competition between towns and regions). 125 In case of the sacerdos Cereris Mundalis a link to specific rites and a specific locality is likely, as I have already mentioned.

![Figure 5: Sacerdos Cerialis mundalis from Capua](image)

The second Capuan inscription, erected on a place decreed by the local town council, records the name of Herennia 127, daughter of a Marcus. Possibly, she had been a sacerdos Cereri sacrata, a ‘priestess dedicated to Ceres’, but this is uncertain because the inscription has only partly been preserved. 128 Therefore, it is also possible – and in my opinion more likely – to regard Herennia as a sacerdos stricto sensu, who made a dedication to the goddess; sacr should then be restored as sacrum. If this is the case indeed, it is still possible to suppose that Herennia was priestess of Ceres (see chapter 2).

The third inscription from Capua is the most cryptic, mainly because of its very fragmented state:

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125 Versnel (2011) 61, 67.

126 All photos of inscriptions in this thesis are taken from the Epigraphische Datenbank Claus-Slaby.


128 Cat.no.54.
Savunen suggests that this priestess was a *sacerdos Ceres maxima*, the oldest and most prestigious *sacerdos* of a college of priestesses of Ceres in Capua. However, the text reads *maximi* instead of *maximae*, so Savunen’s proposal is grammatically incorrect. To support her view, Savunen refers to two inscriptions from Teanum Sidicinium, one of the richest Campanian cities and located close to Capua. The first of these inscriptions, recording a woman who was member of an important local *gens*, seems to indicate that a hierarchic college of priestesses of Ceres existed in Teanum: Staia Pietas was *sacerdos Ceres publica prima*. However, it is also possible that a chronological order was meant, and not a hierarchic one. The second inscription from Teanum Sidicinium that Savunen uses to support her view about a hierarchy in the priesthood of Ceres in Capua and Teanum contains the name of the woman – possibly Macquia – followed by the words *sacerdos Ceres / publica summa.* Savunen thinks that the word *summa* was part of the title of the priestess. This is not impossible, but still highly uncertain. Therefore, in my opinion both the evidence for a (hierarchic) college of priestesses of Ceres in Teanum Sidicinium and in Capua remains questionable.

However, the supposition of a college of priestesses in itself is not strange, for the existence of priestly colleges was common in the Roman world. The cult of Ceres was no exception, as a Carthaginian inscription shows:

*nepoti L(ucii) Memmi / [Tusci]llii pronepoti Memmi / Senecionis consularis / sacerdotes Cereal(es) universi / sua pecun(ia) fecer(unt)*

“To the grandson of Lucius Memmius Tusciillus, the great-grandson of Memmius Senecio, consular, all priests of Ceres made this of their own money.”

The words *sacerdotes Cereal(es) universi* suggest either that more than one man at the same time held a priesthood of the goddess, or that the former priests stayed member of the *collegium* – which, in my

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129 Cat.no.273.  
130 Savunen, 136-137.  
131 Arthur (1991) 47.  
132 Savunen (1997) 137 note 102 with epigraphic references to the *gens* of the priestess.  
133 Cat.no.132.  
134 Savunen (1997) 137.  
135 Cat.no.131.  
136 Ladage (1971) 18 holds the same view as Savunen.  
137 Cf. Schulz (2006) 71. One could think of the various priestly colleges in Rome, but also of the *consacerbotes* mentioned on an inscription from Beneventum (*CIL* 9, 1540; not included in the catalogue): a certain L. Sontius Pineius had been priest of Magna Mater, and refers to a Cosinia Celsina as *consacerbote sua*.  
opinion, is the most plausible suggestion of the two, for the Carthaginian priesthood was annual.\(^{139}\) Of course, this inscription is from a different part of the Empire than Teanum and Capua, and no proof of a *collegium* of female priests. However, colleges could also be made up of women. In the literary sources priestesses are often referred to in plural.\(^{140}\) Additionally, inscriptions record priestesses acting together, sometimes in a hierarchic order.\(^{141}\) For example, an inscription from Beneventum attests to a *sacerdos prima* (head priestess) and a *sacerdos secundo loco* (priestess second in command).\(^{142}\) Nevertheless, the evidence for priestly *collegia* of Italian *sacerdotes Ceres* is lacunary.

Regarding the uncertainties concerning the titles of the priestesses discussed so far, there is one thing that can be stated with certainty and that is that the priesthood of Ceres – and accordingly also the cult of the goddess – was certainly not uniform in all Italian towns. Therefore, I strongly agree with Šterbenc Erker, who writes about the Italian Ceres cults: ‘(…) die rituellen Praktiken der Ceres/Demeterkulüe unterschieden sich von Stadt zu Stadt.’\(^{143}\) In the next section another aspect showing the local peculiarities of the Ceres cults will pass under review: joint priesthoods.

2.4: Priesthoods of Ceres and their links to Libera, Magna Mater and Venus

In some towns the priesthood of Ceres was combined with that of other goddesses. In the previous chapter, the *sacerdotes Ceres et Veneris*, who can be found in several Italian towns, have been mentioned. The other two priestesses of Ceres who held (possibly) a combined priesthood lived in Aesernia and Superaequum, both region 4. The inscription from Aesernia, dating from the first century AD, records a *sacerdos Cerialis Deia Libera*, named Suellia Consanica.\(^{144}\) We have seen above that in the Aventine triad Ceres was linked to Liber and Libera. Apparently, in the first century AD the connection between Ceres and Libera still existed. In the *RE* however, it is said that Suellia Consanica served in the cult of Ceres and Diespiter Liber.\(^{145}\) Apart from a priestess of Dis Pater, priestesses of Liber have been attested epigraphically in Africa and in Aquinum in Italy (see chapter 2).\(^{146}\) In

\(^{139}\) Cf. Gascou (1987) 117: after their priesthood, the former priests possibly entered in the *ordo Cerealium*.

\(^{140}\) E.g., Varro *De Lingua Latina*, 6.14, about the priestesses of Liber.

\(^{141}\) Cat.no.64 records two priestesses of Venus. The women acting in the cult of Bona Dea are also generally supposed to have been members of *collegia*.

\(^{142}\) Cat.no.43. Cf. Cat.no.41, recording a *cfyjnbal[istria] [lo]co secundo*.

\(^{143}\) Šterbenc Erker (2006-2007) 130. Cf. Van Andrininga (2011) 135, about deities in Gaul: these should not be perceived as common Roman, Gallic or Gallo-Roman deities. Instead, they should be viewed as belonging to separate cities. The gods of polytheistic religious systems changed together with their local communities, because these systems were human constructs. See also Haeussler (2011) 390, 418, 423 about the enormous religious diversity in Gallia Narbonensis, where no cult place was the same.

\(^{144}\) Cat.no.19.

\(^{145}\) *RE* s.v. Liber Pater, 74.

\(^{146}\) Dis Pater: cat.no.11. Aquinum: cat.no.34; *RE* s.v. Liber Pater, 73. In imperial Rome, an Alexandria served as *sacerdos of Dis*, in addition to her office as *pastophorus* of Isis: *CIL* 6.32458=*IGUR* 1150=*IGRRP* 1.187=*SIRIS* 433; Rüpke (2005) 630, 748.
addition, they are probably depicted on Pompeian frescos in the House of the Dioscuri.\textsuperscript{147} Furthermore, as we have seen in the previous chapter, literary sources mention Roman priestesses of Liber who played a role during the \textit{Liberalia}.\textsuperscript{148} However, as the inscription provides us with two feminine words, the suggestion of the \textit{RE} is unconvincing. Another possibility is to see the word \textit{dea} as an epithet. The practice of using \textit{dea (or deus)} in this way was common in the Gallic provinces but not in Italy, though it can be found on an inscription from Formiae, where a certain Sallustia Saturnina had been a \textit{sacerdos deae Ceresis}.\textsuperscript{149} A third option is to read the title of Suellia Consanica as \textit{sacerdos Cerialis Deia(e) Libera(e)}, implying that she served the ‘Cerarian goddess Libera.’ In this case she would have been not a priestess of Ceres, or of Ceres and Libera, but of Libera alone, who then possessed certain qualities that linked her to Ceres.

On an inscription from Superaequeum (first century AD, region 4) a priestess whose name has not been preserved, was called \textit{sacerdos Ceres et Veneris et Matris Deum}.\textsuperscript{150} The combination of Venus and Ceres was common (see chapter 2), but this combination with Mater Deum has only been attested once. Of course, all three goddesses shared several characteristics, but as virtually all female deities did so, this is no convincing explanation for the existence of a joint cult. In Superaequeum no other priestesses of Magna Mater have been attested, and no dedications to this goddess.\textsuperscript{151}

Perhaps that in Superaequeum special circumstances, like a lack of people willing or able to hold a priesthood, played a role in forming the strange combined priesthood of this town (cf. Savunen’s suggestions about the Pompeian \textit{sacerdos Ceres et Veneris}, Epilogue, footnote 33).\textsuperscript{152} Superaequeum was not a large town, so the number of possible candidates for priesthoods was likely relatively small. As we shall see in chapter 5, holding a priesthood was expensive and therefore limited to the wealthy. Often, but certainly not always, the wealthy were members of the local elites. It can therefore be expected that the priestesses of Ceres originated from the highest ranks in local society. In the next section, this assumption will be checked.

\textbf{2.5: The rank and social standing of the Italian priestesses of Ceres}

According to Cicero, the priestesses of Ceres in Catena on Sicily were of high birth.\textsuperscript{153} This is not in accordance with \textit{all} epigraphic evidence, which mostly stems from a later period. Although the social rank of many Italian priestesses is unknown, the rank of those women of whom it \textit{is} known shows a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{147} Simon (1990) 126-127.
\item \textsuperscript{149} Cat.no.75.
\item \textsuperscript{150} Superaequeum: cat.no.123.
\item \textsuperscript{151} In Superaequeum, one other priestess is attested epigraphically; she acted in an unknown cult (cat.no.124).
\item \textsuperscript{152} The priestess’ son is called Sextus Agrius \textit{Asiaticus}. Unfortunately, the name Agrius is otherwise unknown in local name giving, so we do not know anything else about the family of the priestess.
\item \textsuperscript{153} Cicero, \textit{Verr.} 2.4.99.
\end{itemize}
considerable spread. A few *libertae* have been attested, just as are some women of equestrian rank and several belonging to the *decurions*. In her epitaph, one woman explicitly states that she did not belong to the elite, but was brought up well, thereby showing that social standing was made up of more than rank alone – see also chapter 1.\(^{154}\)

Sometimes, when indicators of rank are missing, proud references are made to honours granted to the priestess by the local *ordo*, such as the location of a grave monument on public ground, or the place for the erection of a statue, or to the benefactions offered by the priestess herself. Honorary inscriptions and their accompanying statues were usually not erected for people of low social rank and standing. Rather, they reflected *and* enhanced the standing of the recipient. Therefore it can be argued that the priestesses who were granted an honorary inscription and statue must have been quite prestigious – apart from the fact that they needed to possess a certain amount of money to pay for their priesthood and benefactions. More about public honours, rank and social standing will be said in chapter 5.

Moreover, in some Italian inscriptions, the magistracies held by the fathers, sons or husbands of the *sacerdotes* are listed, for instance in the epitaph of Tamudia Severa, *sacerdos publica Cereris* whose husband Marcus Caesius Magnus was *duovir iure dicundo* and four times (!) *duovir quinquennalis*.\(^{155}\) Another example is the inscription set up by the Pompeian Alleia Decimilla for her father and son.\(^{156}\) Marcus Alleius Lucius Libella had been aedile, *duumvir*, quinquennial prefect and her son Marcus Alleius Libella was already decurion when he was seventeen.\(^{157}\) It may be clear that the standing of their male family members was shared by the priestess.

In sum, it can be concluded that most Italian *sacerdotes Ceres* possessed a reasonably high social standing, often, though not always, reflected in a high rank. As I have mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, social rank and standing are useful for making a comparison between the Italian and the African priestesses of Ceres. In section 3.4 of this chapter the rank and standing of the African *sacerdotes* will be discussed.

3: *The Ceres cults in Africa*

We now turn to the Ceres cult in northern Africa. For the sake of convenience, I have made a distinction in the catalogue between inscriptions from Africa Proconsularis, Mauretania and Numidia, but it should be kept in mind that the borders of these provinces shifted in the course of time as a result of Roman political decisions. Generally speaking, from the time of Julius Caesar onwards Roman influences can be detected in the most important towns along the east-west route from Carthage to

\(^{154}\) Cat.no.89: (...) *libertinis ego nata parentibus ambis / pauperibus censu moribus ingenuis* / (...).

\(^{155}\) Cat.no.22 (Amiternum).

\(^{156}\) Cat.no.100 (on the reverse the same text is inscribed).

\(^{157}\) Franklin (1997) 436. Augustus had set the age limit for decurions at 25, but there are several examples of men who were younger magistrates or decurions, Castrén (1975) 58.
Cirta.\textsuperscript{158} But long before the Romans left their mark on indigenous and Punic religion in Africa, Greeks had exerted cultural influences in northern Africa from the end of the fourth century BC onwards.\textsuperscript{159} This means that African society was characterised by several ethnic and cultural layers – Libyan, Punic, and Greek – all remaining visible in some way. This was certainly the case with regard to African religion\textsuperscript{160} which was an amalgam of various ethnic elements: Libyan-Numidian, Punic, Egyptian, Greek and Roman.\textsuperscript{161} Therefore the categories of ‘Roman’, ‘provincial’, ‘Greek’ and ‘native’ are not easily distinguishable.\textsuperscript{162} As Whittaker aptly writes: ‘The fact is that the pre-Roman culture of Africa, including the strong Punic and Hellenistic elements, inevitably remained embedded in the make-up of the new provincial [that is, Roman] society (...)’\textsuperscript{163}

3.1: The epigraphic evidence

I have collected ninety-seven Latin inscriptions that record women serving as religious officials in North Africa. Fifty-four of these inscriptions – that is about 55.7% – mention women who (presumably) served in the cults of Ceres or the Cereress.\textsuperscript{164} This number includes not only priestesses (sacerdotes) but also three canistriarum (basket carriers, see chapter 4), and one lampadiferæ (see also

\textsuperscript{158} Gesztelyi (1972) 83.


\textsuperscript{160} Unfortunately, there is little information available about Punic and Libyan-Numidian cults, Szynzer (1968) 29, 31. There are, however, some inscriptions and reliefs attesting to a hierarchy of Punic priesthoods (Picard (1982) 75) and to lower religious officials like victimarii, lamp-litters and musicians, Tlatli (1978) 202. Women are represented as well: there are several examples of Punic priestesses, mainly from Carthage. These women were called kht, the feminine of khn, the word used to indicate male priests, Yon (2009) 211. Tlatli mentions a woman named Mattanbaal who was rb kham (this is the Punic expression of ‘chief of the priests’, implying a certain hierarchy) – ‘sans doute par rapport à des prêtresses,’ Tlatli (1978) 202. Furthermore, there is a sarcophagus, found in the necropolis of Saint Monica, on which a woman is depicted as the goddess Tanit and dressed in priestly garments. She carries a censer in her right hand and a patera in her left, Parrot, Chêhab and Moscati (1975) 169, 170; Tlatli (1978) 178; Picard (1982) 74. I do not discuss Punic inscriptions that attest to the pre-Roman Ceres cult (e.g. CIS 1.5987.1; Cadotte 2007, 343, 346).

\textsuperscript{161} Cadotte (2007) 391; Wurmig (1999) 14 n. 27. Cf. Rives (2007) 71-72. Desanges (1994) 71: ‘(...) the old naturalist basis [of African religious culture] had evolved under the influence of the Punic and Graeco-Roman cults, admitting to a progressive personification of the diffuse religious forces which had originally been perceived in a variety of things: thus it approached, at least in appearance, the official religion of the Empire (...).’

\textsuperscript{162} See also section 3.2 (Greek Ceres). Cf. Bendlin (1997) 46-50, 53. Even in coloniae, native elements remained strong.


\textsuperscript{164} The Numidian woman referred to in cat.no.194 (Madauros) is believed to be a sacerdos Cererum, but the title mentioned in the inscription is fragmentary (sacer[dos] /[-[-dem]]) and does not necessarily point to the priesthood of Ceres or to that of the Cereress. No accompanying relief to this funerary inscription is known. The inscriptions of five other women, who are believed to have been priestesses of Ceres based on the carvings of their stones, are not included in this number. The reliefs show torches, which were often connected with Ceres-Demeter, and images of women standing near small altars. It has been stated that they represent sacerdotes, but it is also possible that they were special devotees of the goddess. Cf. Picard (1970). Due to this uncertainty, they are not included in the catalogue.
below, chapter 4).\textsuperscript{165} Furthermore, the fifty-four inscriptions include twenty-three women called \textit{sacerdos magna} or \textit{sacerda}. Since two inscriptions refer to \textit{sacerdotes magna Cererum}, and one to a \textit{Caereris sacerda}, it has been supposed that all other \textit{sacerdotes magna} and \textit{sacerdae (magna)} served in the Ceres cult as well.\textsuperscript{166}

There is some iconographic evidence that supports this view. The bilingual – Punic and Latin – epitaph of a \textit{sacerdos magna} named Quarta found in Gales (Africa Proconsularis) is decorated with reliefs on all four sides. The relief on the right side depicts a priestess standing on a base, wearing a long tunic with a band around her waist, and on her head a filled basket. Two snakes are carved on either side of her. In her hands she is carrying two corn-ears.\textsuperscript{167} Snakes\textsuperscript{168} and corn-ears are symbols that were frequently used in connection with Demeter-Ceres. On other inscriptions that record \textit{sacerdotes magna} torches are depicted.\textsuperscript{169} (For the torch as symbol in the Ceres cult, see chapter 4)

As has been remarked, I have included all \textit{sacerdae} in the number of 54 Ceres priestesses, although I think that – despite the evidence discussed above – more convincing arguments are needed before it can be stated beyond doubt that all \textit{sacerdae} served Ceres or the \textit{Cereres}. An inscription from Simithus (Africa Proconsularis), for instance, mentions a \textit{sacerda} of Caelestis, which makes it likely that \textit{sacerda} was simply a local African way to write \textit{sacerdos}, and not exclusively connected with the Ceres cult.\textsuperscript{170}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Veturia Sex(ti) f(ilia)/ Martha/ sacerda Caelestae/ hic sita u(xiit) a(nnis) XCV(sic).}
\end{quote}

‘Veturia Martha, daughter of Sextus, priestess of Caelesita, is buried here; she lived 95 years.’

In addition to the 54 priestesses of Ceres or the \textit{Cereres}, there are 39 North African\textsuperscript{171} inscriptions in which male cult officials of Ceres/the \textit{Cereres} are attested.\textsuperscript{172} In a few cases, the name of the same man is recorded on more than one inscription, usually when he had had a long and distinguished career and the accompanying high rank and standing. The fact that several inscriptions that record male

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{165} Picard (1954) 151-152. A \textit{lampadi\^{f}era} is probably the Latin version of the \textit{dadouchos} in the Eleusinian cult, see chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{167} Cat.no. 175. Cadotte (2007) 356. On the same stone, a \textit{krater} – connected with Liber – and a Delphic table are depicted. Links between Ceres and Liber, common in Italy, were rare in North Africa, Cadotte (2007) 276-7.
\textsuperscript{168} Snakes can be found in other cults as well, for instance that of Hecate and Hygeia. The combination with corn ears however, makes it likely that the priestess served Demeter-Ceres,
\textsuperscript{169} Cat.no. 147 and 148; 192. One of these women (no. 147) was without any doubt a priestess of the \textit{Cereres}, as her title \textit{sacerdos magna Cererum} shows. Picard (1954) 140-1: two examples of depictions of snakes in the Ceres cult.
\textsuperscript{170} Cat.no.213. Audollent (1912) 367-368, is also sceptical about this view.
\textsuperscript{171} Apart from the African examples, one inscription which records a male \textit{sacerdos Cererum} was found in Marseille. For a list of these male priests, see: Gaspar (2011).
\textsuperscript{172} It is not self-evident in all cases that the male \textit{sacerdotes stricto sensu} included in this number did actually serve in the cult of Ceres/ the \textit{Cereres}, but for several reasons I think they did, see Gaspar (2011) 474-475 footnote 22.
\end{flushleft}
sacerdotes are honorific is an important difference from the epigraphic evidence for the priestesses, since that evidence is mainly funerary and offers little more than the names of the women, their priesthood and sometimes the (advanced) age at which they died.\footnote{Their age will be discussed in chapter 4.}

3.2: Peculiarities of the African Ceres cults

As has been mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, there are several differences between the Italian cults of Ceres and the African cults.\footnote{Cf. Beard, North and Price (1998) 1.248. Rives (1995) 49 writes that the Roman priestesses of Ceres were certainly not the model for the African priesthood, and that ‘the priesthood of Ceres in Carthage was an innovation without any real precedent in Rome’.} The most striking one is the fact that in North Africa also male priests served in the cult whereas no male sacerdotes Cereris have been attested in Italy or Rome (except the flamen Cerialis).\footnote{The ancient Roman flamen of Ceres can hardly be compared to the Italian and African sacerdotes. For differences between flamines and sacerdotes, see: Beard, North and Price (1998) 1.357. One possible exception from Fabratеріа Vetus, see below.} Diodorus Siculus’ account of the introduction of the cult of the Thesmophores to Carthage in 396 BC may offer an explanation for the existence of male sacerdotes of Ceres in Africa.\footnote{The fact that there were also priestesses of the Ceres cannot be explained by Diodorus’ writings. However, in Greece and Magna Graecia several inscriptions recording the names of priestesses of Ceres-Demeter have been preserved, see e.g. IG 1.1876; 1.2148; 1.2676. Cf. also Herodotus 5.72; Pausanias 2.35.8, 6.21.9; other inscriptions are mentioned in RE s.v. Demeter, passim.}

(...) they [the Carthaginians] appointed their most renowned citizens to be priests of these goddesses [the Sicilian Demeter and Kore], and consecrating statues of them with all solemnity, they conducted their rites, following the ritual used by the Greeks. They also chose out the most prominent Greeks who lived among them and assigned them to the service of the goddesses.\footnote{(…) τούτων ἱερῶς τοὺς ἐπισημοτάτους τῶν πολιτῶν κατέστησαν, καὶ μετὰ πάσης σαμνότητος τὰς θεᾶς ἱεροσάμενοι τὰς θυσίας τοῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἤθεον ἔποιον, καὶ τῶν παρ᾿ αὐτοῖς ἄντων Ἑλλήνων τοῖς χαριστάτωσιν ἐπιλέξαντες ἐκ τῶν τῶν θεῶν θεραπεύειν ἐτελέσαν. Diod. 14.70.4 (cf. 14.74.3); 14.77.4-5. Translation by C. H. Oldfather.}

This Carthaginian cult originated from Sicily, where, at least in Gela and Syracuse, the Deinomenids were male priests serving Demeter and Kore.\footnote{Hinz (1998) 233. We have seen above that the cult of the goddess was very popular on Sicily.} Diodorus’ account also shows why the male sacerdotes from Africa mainly served in the city of Carthage.\footnote{It is likely that the only priestess of Ceres or the Ceres attested in Carthage was sacerdos in a cult different from that of the ‘annual’ priests. Another possibility is that she was no priestess of the goddess in Carthage at all, but served somewhere else and only erected her dedication in Carthage. Unfortunately, we know nothing more about this woman than her name – Sallustia Luperca – so this remains speculative; cat.no.161.} It must be noted, however, that most of these priests for whom we have evidence served in a Ceres cult that had been re-established when
Carthage was founded as a Roman colony in the second half of the first century BC.\textsuperscript{180} Possibly, the revival of the cult was linked to the rebirth of Carthage, but Fishwick and Shaw write convincingly that ‘it might also be viewed as reflecting the inclusion within the Carthaginian territory of the grain fields of the Upper Bagradas, particularly when holders of the cult priesthood were, at least in later years, drawn not only from Carthage itself but from regions west as well as east of the Fossa Regia (…).’\textsuperscript{181} Therefore, they think that the first year of the cult was the first year of Lepidus’ administration, either 40 or 39 BC when Africa Proconsularis was created.\textsuperscript{182} Here, I will refer to the Carthaginian Ceres cult as the ‘annual’ cult and to its priests as ‘annual’ priests.

Although the cult of Ceres is attested in a much wider area, the worship of the \textit{Cereres} is found virtually only in Africa.\textsuperscript{183} This peculiarity has been given much attention, and various identifications of the goddesses have been proposed.\textsuperscript{184} According to the most commonly held view the \textit{Cereres} were Demeter and Persephone (or Korè); I think this is the most convincing interpretation, even though it cannot definitely be proved.\textsuperscript{185} Apart from Diodorus’ account of the introduction of the \textit{The斯mophores} in Carthage, there is other evidence that supports this view: on a pre-Roman Punic epitaph of the necropolis of Ard el-Kheraib at Carthage, a priest(ess) of Korè is mentioned.\textsuperscript{186} Besides, there are several African coins with Demeter,\textsuperscript{187} cult statues of the goddess and votive terracottas for Demeter and Korè from the fourth century BC until the second century BC, resembling Sicilian terracotta. Furthermore, Demeter and Korè were also worshipped in other Punic areas, like Ibiza, Sardinia and the Iberian peninsula.\textsuperscript{188}

\begin{flushright}
\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{180} Rives (1995) 158 convincingly argues that this cult was Roman and not Libyan-Punic.
\textsuperscript{181} Fishwick and Shaw (1977) 376-7.
\textsuperscript{182} Fishwick and Shaw (1977) 377, 379, 380. See also footnote 254 about the possible date of the re-establishment of the Carthaginian cult.
\textsuperscript{183} Sometimes both Ceres and the \textit{Cereres} were worshipped in the same place, Audollent (1912) 379. Only a few inscriptions mentioning the \textit{Cereres} have been found outside Africa. One is from Puteoli (cat.no.109); the maritime connections with Africa may explain its erection there, but influences from Thesmophoric initiation cults are also possible, Audollent (1912) 379-380, note 3; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 112. Another was found in Marseille, but mentions a priest from Africa (see footnote 171) while the third comes from Lilybaeum on Sicily, a Punic settlement (\textit{AE} 1964, 181 = \textit{AE} 1965, 219); Carratelli (1981) 367; Rives (1995) 157. See also Kunz (2006) 371. The last inscription (from Rome) is very fragmentary: \textit{CIL} 6, 87 = \textit{CIL} 1, 973 = \textit{ILLRP} 67 = \textit{ILS} 3333; \textit{Cereres caesi]. Finally, there is the ‘Herentas’ inscription, see section 2.1 and chapter 4.
\textsuperscript{185} Cf. Gesztelyi (1972) 80.
\textsuperscript{186} Cadotte (2007) 343, 346.
\end{footnotesize}
\end{flushright}
As already at the end of the fifth century BC the influence of Carthage had gradually started to spread over its hinterland and the practicing of agriculture – linked to Demeter and Korè – was encouraged, the cult of the goddesses became attractive and spread quickly and widely in North Africa – including Numidia – after the first decades of the fourth century BC. As we have seen in chapter 2, the popularity of Ceres in Africa shows the importance of the production of grain for the African society and economy.

Different types of Ceres in Africa

Diodorus’ description of the Carthaginian cult and the fact that in Roman times this cult was re-established, makes one suspect that we should speak of different cults of Ceres/the Cereres. This is most recently argued by Cadotte, who detects a difference between a Roman and a Greek-Punic cult in northern Africa. However, based on several inscriptions erected by or for sacerdotes, and certain aspects of Punic religion that will be discussed below, I think a difference was made between the Greek and a native-Punic cult as well.

The Greek Ceres (or: Greek Cereres) has been attested on two inscriptions in which priests are mentioned. Cadotte thinks that possibly in the towns where these priests lived, the Greek roots of the cults were remembered especially well. The first inscription is a dedication to Ceres Graeca, found in Sicca Veneria in Africa Proconsularis:

Ex imperio / Cereri Graec[ae] / sacr[u]m M(arcus) Lart[idi]/us A[----]mbugaeus[s] / sacerdos
primus / aram qvm (sic) gradi/bus dedicavit in su.

“Dedicated on the command of the Greek Ceres, Marcus Lartidius A(...mbugaeus, first priest, dedicated an altar with stairs on his own land.”

Of course, it cannot be stated with certainty that this man was priest of the Greek Ceres to whom he made his dedication, but it is at least likely, because otherwise the man would presumably have mentioned the name of the deity he served (cf. chapter 2, section 2.2). Besides, a priestly hierarchy, of

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191 Cadotte (2007) 357. This distinction can also be seen in the cult of Saturn, one of the most popular deities in Africa, according to a dedication to Saturnus Achaia from modern Bou Djalida: CIL 8, 12331 = ILS 4440.
which this inscription from Sicca Veneria is proof, is attested for the cult of the *Cereres* in Cirta as well, where a *sacerdos Cererum loci primi* held office.\textsuperscript{193}

The second inscription that points to the existence of a Greek Ceres cult stems from Cuicul in Numidia, a town that had close connections with Cirta, which was strongly Hellenised.\textsuperscript{194} On this inscription, a certain Titus Livius Crescens is referred to (in the genitive) as *antistoris Cererum(\textit{m}) Gr(a)ekaru(\textit{m}).*\textsuperscript{195} The title *antistes* is not unique in North Africa, but rare,\textsuperscript{196} and I have found no other *antistes* of Ceres/the *Cereres*, with one possible exception from Fabrateria Vetus in Latium.\textsuperscript{197}

As opposed to this Greek cult, some women and men carried special titles that stressed the *Roman* character of the goddess they served. The first is a certain Vindicia Theodora, who lived in Capsa in Africa Proconsularis – according to Whittaker a strikingly Punic town, although it had been Romanised by soldiers.\textsuperscript{198} She was called *sacerdos Cereris Augustae*. Two other priestesses whose titles (might) show Roman or Italian influences are Valeria Concessa\textsuperscript{199} from Bulla Regia and Cornelia Licinia\textsuperscript{200} from Ammaedara (modern Haidra). The first woman was *sacerdos publica Cererum* and the second is supposed to have been *sacerdos Cererum publica*. The addition ‘publica’ could be the result of Italian influences, for various Italian (mainly Campanian\textsuperscript{201}) priestesses were called *sacerdos publica*, sometimes without mentioning the name of the deity they served. Several of these Italian ‘public’ priestesses served Ceres.\textsuperscript{202} And, as we have seen above in section 1.2, in the only two inscriptions from Rome recording priestesses of Ceres it is also explicitly stated that these women were *sacerdos Cereris publica* (but with the addition of *populi Romani Quiritium*).\textsuperscript{203}

However, the interpretation of Cornelia Licinia’s inscription is problematic: of the word *publica* only the letter ‘p’ can still be read, so it is uncertain whether *publica* was inscribed. Furthermore, none of the other three priestesses thought to be serving in the *Cereres* cult of Ammaedara, was called a ‘public’ priestess.\textsuperscript{204} An alternative, and much more obvious, reading is the

\textsuperscript{193} *ILS* 4468 (Cirta, Numidia). A priestly hierarchy in the cult of Caelestis in Cirta is also attested on inscriptions, Rives (1995) 160.

\textsuperscript{194} Champlin (1980) 6-7.

\textsuperscript{195} *ILAlg* 2.3, 8000 (Cuicul, Numidia). In the *ILAlg* it is said that Ceres and Proserpina are meant.


\textsuperscript{197} On *CIL* 10, 5654 the words *cultores antistes deae Cereris* are recorded. They refer to a *collegium* of devotees of Ceres and possibly to a priest.

\textsuperscript{198} Cat.no. 160. Whittaker (1996) 609-610.

\textsuperscript{199} Cat.no.155.

\textsuperscript{200} Cat.no.150.

\textsuperscript{201} The Campanian influences in Africa were concentrated around Cirta, Thompson (1969) 135; Castrén (1975) 54; Champlin (1980) 6; MacKendrick (1980) 197; Desanges (1994) 70; Whittaker (1996) 586-587, 590.

\textsuperscript{202} E.g. cat.no. 22; 94; 100; 101; 102; 111; 112.

\textsuperscript{203} Cat.no. 4 and 5.

\textsuperscript{204} Ammaedara became a colony in AD 75 (Toutain (1912) 326; Witschel (1995) 308 note 193), so in my opinion the title of Cornelia Licinia, whose inscription has been set up at the end of the second or the beginning
word *pia*, which is attested on several other African inscriptions recording priestesses.205 Another, though in my opinion less plausible – because less common – way to complete the letter ‘p’ is to read the word *Punicarum* instead of *publica*. If this is true, it would imply that the priesthood of this woman was neither that of the Greek Ceres, nor that of the Roman one, but instead of the *Cereres Punicae*.206

The *Cereres Punicae* have been attested on an inscription recording a priestess in Thuburbo Maurus:

\[N[olnia Primitiva sacre/rdos] / Cererum Punicarum pia / felix vixit annis / LXX[X]XVII men(sibus) III dieb(us) VII\]

“Nonnia Primitiva, priestess of the Punic *Cereres*, pious, happy, lived 97 years, 3 months (and) 7 days.”

Cadotte thinks that these *Cereres Punicae* may have been the goddesses worshipped by the Punic part of the African population, because the (originally Greek) *Cereres* were being worshipped for such a long time in the area that the people had started to see them as ancestral deities.208 To support his view, Cadotte refers to Tertullian who has written about priestesses serving *Ceres Africana*, one of his examples of chastity amongst the pagan inhabitants of the Empire (see chapter 4, section 2.2).209 Secondly, Cadotte mentions a dedication from Madauros, erected for the goddess *Ceres Maurusia Augusta* by a *canistraria* named Iulia Victoria, who had paid for a statue of the goddess:210

\[Deae Caere/ri Maurusiae Aug(ustae) / Iulia Victoria / canistraria / simulacrum / deae de suo fo/icit et dedicavit\]

“To the Dea Ceres Maurusia Augusta, Iulia Victoria, *canistraria* made of her own (money) a statue of the goddess and dedicated it.”

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205 Cf. e.g. cat.no. 176; 184.
206 To read the ‘p’ as the first letter of *perpetua* is not likely in my opinion, for in northern Africa no priestesses, except those acting in the imperial cult, had this addition to their titles.
207 Cat.no.225. It is not fully clear whether this inscription is indeed from Thuburbo Maurus; another possibility is Mactar. This town, in which Punic culture remained strong for a long time, was not far from Ammaedara, and therefore could have influenced the local *Cereres* cult there – or *vice versa*. MacKendrick (1980) 75; Cadotte (2007) 356.
208 Cadotte (2007) 356-357, 360. It is perhaps indicative that on this relief the attributes of the Eleusinian Demeter are depicted: grain, torch, basket and winnowing fan, MacKendrick (1980) 75-76. Carratelli (1981) 368; writes that the stress on the African, Punic or Maurusian side of Ceres was the result of ‘nationalistic’ tendencies.
210 Cat.no.190. Cf. *AE* 1935, 39; Cadotte nr. 338 a dedication to *Ceres Maurusia Augusta* by a Marcus Pusillus Securus and his wife Autelia Audata, a *flaminica perpetua*, from Thagora, not far from Madauros.
Furthermore, Cadotte suggests that probably in northern Numidia and around Vaga in Africa Proconsularis Ceres/the Cereris was (were) identified with (a) native Libyan-Punic deity (deities),\(^{211}\) and that she/they probably had links to the dii Maurii, mentioned on an inscription from Vaga.\(^{212}\)

However, other interpretations of the Cereres Punicæ and Ceres Maurasia are also possible. They could be local divinities, who were worshipped by people originating from elsewhere, or goddesses with Punic roots, whose original character was preserved on purpose (like that of the gods worshipped Graeco rite in Rome).\(^{213}\) In my opinion, these two options are more likely, as the inscription – like the others used by Cadotte to support his argument – are very Roman in character. The names of the women, their religious titles, the language and the text – all show Roman influences. In any case, the epigraphic evidence and Tertullian’s writings show that in northern Africa the goddess Ceres was worshipped in various forms. The main and most striking characteristic of the African Ceres worship though, is still the difference between Ceres and the Cereris; this will be the topic of the next section.

**Ceres and the Cereris**

Some scholars have proposed that the ‘annual’ Carthaginian cult in which most male priests served was established originally for the single (Roman) Ceres, and only later changed into a cult for the Cereris.\(^{214}\) The epigraphic evidence does not support this suggestion,\(^{215}\) and because in many inscriptions the abbreviations CER or CERER are used, it cannot always be determined whether the priest in question served Ceres or both Cereris.\(^{216}\) The few Numidian male priests for whom we have evidence all served both Cereris, as did the stator templi (temple servant) from Theveste.\(^{217}\) In

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\(^{211}\) Unfortunately, very little is known about native Numidian religion, as Cadotte himself admits, Cadotte (2007) 357, 358, 360-1.

\(^{212}\) CIL 8, 14438 = AE 1956, 158; Cadotte nr. 220; Cadotte (2007) 357, 360-361. Vaga was possibly an old, Libyan town, Toutain (1912) 321; MacKendrick (1980) 36; Whittaker (1996) 613. Carcopino (1928) has shown that a Ceres cult existed in Vaga at the time of Jugurtha. See also Cadotte (2007) 347.

\(^{213}\) I would like to thank professor Greg Woolf for suggesting this.


\(^{215}\) Admittedly, the only sacerdos Cereris who definitely served in the ‘annual’ Carthaginian cult held office in the first century AD; AE 1997, 1655. He was sacerdos Cereris anni CXXVII, the priestly year 127 was a year between AD 83 and 90. However, the other three male sacerdotes Cereris were presumably priests of other, local Ceres cults, and their inscriptions do not all belong to the earliest evidence. E.g. no. CIL 8, 14447 (Henchir Bir El Afu), a dedication by a sacerdos Cereris et Aesculapi, erected between AD 222 and 235. Moreover, of the two Proconsularian men who definitely served both Cereris, only one was an ‘annual’ priest (CIL 8, 12318 = ILS 6814, Bou Arada: sacerdos Cererum Karthaginiani anni CXX), and he had held office only a few years after the sacerdos Cereris from the first century just mentioned, sometime between AD 87 and 94.

\(^{216}\) Rives (1995) 158; Delgado Delgado (1998) 33. It has been suggested that all abbreviations refer to the Cereris, because many other (dedicatory) inscriptions show that the cult of these two goddesses was widespread in Africa Proconsularis. However, the fact that several priestesses and four priests were sacerdotes Cereris while various others used different titles like magister Cerealium shows that the abbreviations do not necessarily stand for Cererum, cf. Rives (1995) 158. See also Fevrier (1975) 40.

\(^{217}\) ILAlg 2.3. 7244 = AE 1989, 835a and CIL 8, 6709 = ILAlg 2.1, 3618.
Numidia four women served both *Cereres* while another four served Ceres alone,\(^{218}\) and in Mauretania three of the five attested priestesses served Ceres.\(^{219}\) Only one Proconsularian inscription records a woman who, without doubt, served the single Ceres instead of the *Cereres*.\(^{220}\) All the other priestesses from Africa Proconsularis served in the cult of the *Cereres*.

Audollent has argued that the single Ceres was worshipped mostly by the ‘Romanised’ elite, while poorly educated people – the lower strata of the population which were more attached to local and older cults influenced by Punic religion – felt especially attracted to the cult of the *Cereres*.\(^{221}\) This ought to mean that we should expect to find a difference in social rank and ethnic background between the various priests and priestesses: *sacerdotes* with Roman names and, in case of the men, with a municipal career would have been serving in the Ceres cult, while people with (partly) native names who did not belong to the local elite, would have been *sacerdotes* of the cult of the *Cereres*. Audollent’s hypothesis can be tested by an examination of the names of the *sacerdotes*, of the status of the cult and the standing of the priest(esse)s themselves. Since it has been suggested that women were less Romanised than men,\(^{222}\) gender could make a difference as well, and so priestesses ought to have served mainly in the cult of the *Cereres*, if Audollent’s suggestion were correct.\(^{223}\)

Before I turn to these topics, I have to mention the inscription of Vindicia Theodora from Capsa who was *sacerdos Ceres Augustae* (cf. above).\(^{224}\) The epithet *Augusta* can be regarded as a general expression of ‘Romanness’ or of loyalty to the imperial family.\(^{225}\) Therefore, this inscription shows that not all women were necessarily connected with, or limited to, cults that were less Roman in character. Instead, they could not only serve in the cult of the single Ceres, but also in a cult that had an explicitly Roman connotation.

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218 The woman mentioned in cat.no.194 could have been *sacerdos Cerorum* as well. It cannot be established whether the other women, mainly *sacerdæ* and *sacerdotes magnæ*, served Ceres or the *Cereres* – if they served Ceres at all.


220 Cat.no. 160. Accordingly, Savunen (1997) 139, is mistaken when she writes that in Africa only male priests served the *Cereres*. In only one inscription of a priestess from Africa Proconsularis an abbreviation has been used, cat.no.161. The only known Mauretanian *sacerdos*, Herennia Tertulla from Saldae, was a priestess of Ceres, cat.no.203.

221 Audollent (1912) 379. Cf. Dubois (1907) 135.

222 See chapter 1.

223 Although I will look at the aspects mentioned above, I do not think Audollent’s view is convincing, because the fact that a Numidian *antistes* served both *Ceres*, while the *sacerdos primus* from Africa Proconsularis – probably – was priest of a single Greek Ceres shows that the use of singular or plural form for the name of the goddess(es) does not necessarily offer any clues about the character of the cult, or at least that the Greek cult was not automatically connected to the plural *Cereres*. Cf. Tlatli (1975) 188: there is no proof for viewing the *Cereres* as the expression of strong Hellenization. Besides, if Audollent’s view were correct, it would imply that the ‘Romanness’ of the ‘annual’ priesthood of Carthage changed from time to time, which would be very remarkable.

224 Cat.no.160.

225 Gészteleyi (1972) 82 and Spaeth (1994) 100, who – basing herself on Audollent (1912) 377 – argues that ‘[t]his cult [of Ceres/the *Cereres*] was tied to the person of the Roman princeps through the application of the epithet *Augusta* to its divinities’. Audollent writes that the single Ceres was relatively often endowed with epithet *Augusta*. This may have been fashion but also shows links to the imperial house, which could suggest that the single Ceres was more Roman in character than the *Cereres*, Audollent (1912) 377-8.
3.3: The names of the African priestesses

There are many problems regarding nomenclature and its possible links to Romanization and ethnic origin.226 Cherry explicitly states that Roman names are not useful for measuring Romanization, because often it is impossible to distinguish between immigrants and Romanised natives.227 Names with Libyan and Punic parts can only partly be linked to the indigenous population, and Romanised names that are traditionally regarded as typically African were not only given by the native population, but also by immigrants. A *gentilicum* that was the same as that of a senator who had connections to Africa, could either point to the acquirement of civil rights with help of this senator or to a real Italian descent.228 In addition, from the end of the first century AD onwards, new citizens are no longer distinguishable by their names from non-citizens.229

Despite these limitations, I think names can help us to get some insight into the background of the priestesses. Names can tell something about stages of Romanization, sometimes across generations.230 Purely Libyan or Punic names, dating from the first and second centuries AD – rather than the Romanised ones like Data or Fortunata – could point to a less Roman character of the *sacerdotes* than that of other priestesses who had Latinised names.231 Although Rives states that the names of the African priestesses of Ceres/the *Cereres* were often Punic, most were clearly Latin(ised), like Firmidia Impetrata or Baburia Ianuaria.232 That is not surprising, for there are many translated or Latinised native names on inscriptions in the three African provinces, mainly in Numidia and Mauretania, whereas purely native names were rare.233 The priestesses conform to this trend: there are only two with purely Libyan-Punic names, though several had partly Libyan-Punic names. The appearance of partly native names among the priestesses is noteworthy, because only one of the priests had a partly Libyan-Punic name.234 This could point to a higher level of Romanization among the male priests. The frequency of Latinised names fits with Cadotte’s view that ‘le clergé de Cérès se recrutait volontiers parmi les gens de souche africaine’.235

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227 Cherry (1998) 86.
231 Cherry (1997) 74, writes that non-romanised people had one or more non-Latinised, African name(s). Cf. Curchin (2004) 183: ‘The prevalence of Roman over native nomenclature seems to indicate a considerable degree of Romanization among the worshippers [of deities in Celtiberia].’
232 Rives (1995) 157, 158. The names of the women from Africa Proconsularis usually consist of a *nomen* and *cognomen*, whereas the priestesses in Numidia more often had a single name; sometimes a filiation was included.
234 Publius Iulius Hibba, who had been *sacerdos Cere(um) c(olonorum?) c(oloniae) Κ(olui) K(arthaginis) anni CXCIII, CIL 8, 3820.
There is a small difference in the origins of the names of the priestesses who had titles other than *sacerdos: sacerdae* fairly often had Libyan or Punic names, like Birical Iurat, or names with a Libyan or Punic element, like Caecilia Zaba.\(^{236}\) Perhaps this shows that the *sacerdae* themselves were not as Romanised as the *sacerdotae*, as their strange titles also suggest. On the other hand, Adams writes that ‘(...) (partially) Romanised Punic-speaking inhabitants of Tripolitania often had two names, one traditional, the other Roman. These could be used together in the same inscription, or alternatively distributed between the different versions of a bilingual text (...). This form of mixed naming reveals with particular clarity the referent’s sense of a double, or changing, identity.’\(^{237}\) The fact that in general the use of a double Latinised name was the most widespread practice suggests that the women holding the priesthood were at least superficially Romanised and had accepted their changed identity – or at least saw the need to use their Latinised name in contexts in which they may have seemed more appropriate.

The bilingual epitaph of Quarta, daughter of Nyptan and *sacerdos magna* illustrates nicely the gradual change to Roman names *and* the supposition – to be elaborated in section 3.4 – that the African priestesses of Ceres belonged to a ‘middle class’, and not to the decurial elite.\(^{238}\) The names in the inscription are the same in the Latin and Punic version; however, as Adams writes: ‘there is evidence for a change in naming practices between two generations, this time in two families. The dedicant [Quarta] has a Latin name, but her father a Punic’; similarly her husband has a Latin name, but his father too a Punic name.’ The list of (Latinised Punic) names – Saturum, Rogatu(m), etc. – is inscribed in the accusative, while *curatoribus* is an ablative. According to Adams, the ‘presence of this usage locates the Latin version somewhat down the educational scale,’ which shows that bilingualism can be found across broad social-educational spectrum.\(^{239}\)

In sum, the names of the priestesses show that most priestesses did not live outside the sphere of Romanization and saw the need to adapt to the new politico-cultural circumstances, something which is also suggested by the fact that they erected inscriptions that followed the conventions of Latin epigraphy.\(^{240}\) However, compared to their male colleagues some appear to be less Romanised.

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\(^{236}\) Eleven *sacerdae* have been attested in Numidia and Africa Proconsularis. As the word *sacerda* seems to be pigeon Latin, one could expect to find the *sacerdae* in settlements that were not very Romanised. The inscriptions of two Proconsularian *sacerdae* have been found in an area where several of the earliest inscriptions recording (female) *sacerdotae* had been erected, so the proper Latin word for priest(ess) was probably not unknown. On the other hand, two *sacerdae* – Iulia Zaba (cat.no.210) and Caecilia Zaba (cat.no.204) – are attested in relatively small and unimportant settlements. This could imply that their titles were indeed the result of limited Roman influences. The native *cognomina* of both women seem to fit with this, although the *gentilicium* Iulia points to a family that was granted Roman citizenship relatively early. Birical Iurat: cat.no.151.


\(^{238}\) Cat.no.175.


\(^{240}\) Cf. Cherry (1997) 75.
3.4: The social rank of the priestesses

Unfortunately, none of the inscriptions that record priestesses of Ceres or the Cereres gives any information whatsoever about the social rank of the women, although many do seem to have been freeborn. Furthermore, no male relatives are mentioned that could offer insight into their rank. In the few cases in which the name of a father or son is included, nothing is said about his rank or a municipal career, if he had one. In some other inscriptions from the towns where the priestesses lived, possible male relatives are recorded, but usually also without a career. This may suggest that these male relatives had never held any important local offices, and did not belong to the local elite.

In only one case we may be able to identify the offices of male relatives, which were of some importance. In the inscription of Valeria Concessa, two Domitii are mentioned:

Valeriae I(ucil) K(iliae) Concessae / C(aius) Domitius C(ai) K(ilius) Quirina / Pudens Lucretius Ho/noratianus et C(aius) Do/mitius C(ai) K(ilius) Quirina / Concessus matri opti/mae et bene de filiis suis / merita item sacerdote (sic) / publicae Cererum de/creto ab ordine loco / s(ua) p(ecuniā) p(osuerunt)

“To Valeria Concessa, daughter of Lucius. Gaius Domitius Pudens Lucretius Honoratianus, son of Gaius, of the tribe Quirina and Gaius Domitius Concessus, son of Gaius, of the tribe Quirina erected (this) with their own money for the best of mothers who deserves well from her sons, also public priestess of the Cereres; the place decreed by the ordo.”

Several Domitii are attested in Bulla Regia; one had been procurator Augusti, and a Quintus Domitius Pudens had been duovir and benefactor. Therefore, it seems likely that Valeria Concessa was of a

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241 The Mauretanian inscription of the lampadifera Fabatia Polla Fabia Domitia Gelliola (cat.no. 200) is an exception, for she was called a ‘consular woman’. This woman’s religious office was different from that of the sacerdotes (see chapter 4).
242 The filiation is not consistently applied (which was not uncommon in the second century AD), but is nevertheless recorded is several cases. Since it is mostly unknown, the archaeological context of the inscriptions does not offer any help in determining the rank or standing of the priestesses.
243 A (possible) exception is Sittius Celer, son of Trebia Matrona. This man had possibly held a perpetual flaminiate, but the inscription is very fragmentary. In CIL 8.431 = ILT 425 two male relatives of Trebia Matrona (her father and grandfather??) are mentioned, but without status indicators.
244 See e.g. the husband (?) of Munatia Lull? – ILAlg 2.1.1710; the relative (?) of Sittia Urbana – ILAlg 2.1.326 or Iulia Credula’s son (?) – CIL 8.6360 = CIL 8.19338 = ILAlg 2.3.10129. Cf. Hemelrijk (2006a) 86. On an inscription from Nemausus, recording a public burial granted to a woman, her social rank is omitted. MacMullen (1986) 436, suggests that it could have been deliberately omitted because her rank was known to her fellow citizens. This may be a satisfactory explanation for this Nemausian case, but I think it applies only to priestesses who were ‘special’ and were granted public honours, and not for the African priestesses discussed here.
245 Vindicia Theodora’s son Antonius Pudens may have been a relative of Antonius Africanus, mentioned in CIL 8.146, who had (possibly) been a duovir (?) quinquennalis. However, this cannot be proved.
246 Cat.no. 155.
higher social rank and standing than most other priestesses of Ceres/the Cereres. I think this is also suggested by the fact that she received a statue (or a grave monument?) on a location decreed by the ordo, whereas no other African priestess of the Ceres cult appears to have been granted this honour. May be her higher status was also expressed by her title sacerdos publica Cererum.248

I think it can be concluded that generally speaking249 the African priestesses did not belong to the highest echelons of the local society, which took part in the local government.250 This is in accordance with Witschel’s view that the priesthoods of cults like that of Ceres or the Cereres were less prestigious than the ‘main’ priesthoods (amongst which was presumably the imperial cult), and that they could also be held by common people. These cults were very popular with the Romanised native ‘middle classes’, as can be concluded from the quality of the dedications in general, according to Witschel.251 Perhaps that is one of the reasons that none of the African priestesses (not only those of Ceres, but others who also seem to have belonged to the ‘middle class’ as well) is recorded as benefactress – in contrast with the flamininiae of the imperial cult.252

In short, the social rank, and accordingly the social standing of the African priestesses was different from that of their Italian colleagues, who were, generally speaking, of higher rank and possessed more prestige. In order to gain a fuller picture of the place in society of the African priestesses of Ceres, the next two sections will deal with the male sacerdotes Cereris/Cererum, their social rank and standing and the Ceres cult in Carthage.

3.5: Cult and priestly status in Carthage

Although the inscriptions recording priests of Ceres or the Cereres are the only evidence for this cult in the city of Carthage,253 the ‘annual’ Carthaginian Ceres cult must have been important because a


249 Even though it is usually accepted that a priesthood brought distinction both to the priestess herself and to her family, and that it reflected a certain prominence of her family in local society, Spickermann (1994b) 189; Kleiner-Matheson (2000) 3. See also chapter 5.

250 Cf. Gaspar (2011) 480. This is also suggested by the quality of the inscriptions that do not mention any priestly title, but only feature relief sculptures that could indicate that the women mentioned were sacerdotes Cereris: the short texts, the sometimes poor lettering and the low quality of the carvings indicate that the persons who erected them were not of high standing. This fits with Saller and Shaw (1984) 127, who write that most tombstones belonged to humble urban people, those below the curiales. Still, they must have had a certain amount of money to spend.

251 Witschel (1995) 293 n. 126, 321. The ‘annual’ Carthaginian Ceres cult was an exception, see below.


253 Rives (1995) 48; No Ceres temple has been excavated in Carthage so far. It is possible that we have some literary evidence of the cult, but this is highly uncertain: Apuleius may have been priest of Ceres in Carthage, as may be concluded from his Florida (16.38-40), but this is debated, see e.g. Rives (1994a). In the Carthaginian theatre, a statue of the Roman Pudicitia type was found (ca AD 140-150). Ros (1996) 485, writes that this statue
special era commenced with the establishment of the cult. This can be concluded from the inscriptions in which the formula sacerdos anni is followed by a number (and sometimes a reference to the colony of Carthage). The importance of the cult is also shown by the fact that the ‘annual’ priesthood was fully integrated into the cursus honorum. For instance, on the honorary inscription of Sextus Pulloaenus Florus Caelianianus, his priesthood is mentioned among his public offices. This suggests that the priesthood itself was in some sense the equivalent of a public, municipal office. The title of Publius Iulius Gibba — sacerdos Cere(um) c(olonorum?) c(olonae) K(arthaginis) anni CXCVIII — suggests the same. However, it is difficult to establish just how important the priesthood was, because it is not listed in a fixed place in the cursus honorum. Furthermore, in several other inscriptions no municipal career is mentioned.

Various priests of the ‘annual’ cult belonged to the circle of the most important men in Carthage. Most were of decurial rank and had at least been praefectus iure dicundo; three were equestrians. There was a clear link between the cult and the ordo and its members, that both appointed and provided (most of) the priests. It is no surprise that the ‘annual’ priests were Roman citizens. Besides, many of these men had clearly adopted Roman values and standards, which is incidentally another argument against Audollent’s view that the Ceres were especially worshipped by the native (lower) part of the population.

was probably erected to honour a prominent Carthaginian woman. Since she held pomegranates and ears of wheat, she might have been a priestess of Ceres. Link between Ceres and African theatres: Poinssot (1963). Picard (1954) 150; Spaeth (1994) 100. Much has been written about this African annual priesthood, but usually only to recover the exact year in which the cult was installed and its (new) temple built. See e.g.: Gründel (1965) 351-352, 354; Fevrier (1975) 41; Gascou (1987) 128; Fishwick and Shaw (1978) 353, 354; Rives (1995) 21, 46; Whittaker (1996) 589. The precise date is not important for the purposes of the present discussion. In any case, the priests either served in a newly established Roman cult, and not the one described by Diodorus, or they served in the same — but Romanised — cult, which I think is more likely. Cf. Whittaker’s (1996) 614.


E.g., in ILAfr 390=ILS 9406=AE 1910, 78 the priesthood is listed after the offices of military tribune, aedilis and praefectus iure dicundo, while in ILAfr 384=AE 1920, 29 the priesthood is recorded after the offices of aedilis, quaestor and praefectus iure dicundo. Sometimes a flamen was mentioned before the priesthood of Ceres (AE 1909, 163), sometimes after (CIL 8, 25808b=ILS 9403=AE 1909, 162). Gascou (1987) 119 and Fishwick and Shaw (1978) 349-351, however, claim that the priesthood was usually held at an early stage of the municipal career of the priest.

AE 1909, 164; CIL 8, 26245. Fishwick and Shaw (1978) 348. Cf. Fishwick (2002) 194. Despite these uncertainties, Rives (1995) 161 thinks that possibly the annual priests of Carthage were important enough to have had authority over the African priestesses of Ceres. However, this would have been hardly possible in practice, for only a few inscriptions attest to women serving as priestesses near Carthage. Therefore, in my opinion, Rives’ suggestion is only an interesting speculation.


AE 1909, 163; AE 1951, 52; AE 1997, 1665. The equestrians mentioned in AE 1909, 163 and AE 1951, 52 were not of Carthaginian origin, but they were probably appointed as priests because of their social prominence, Gascou (1987) 112. See Gascou (1987) 116-120 for a discussion of the social status and the cursus honorum of the priests. Two liberti, who were among the first men to hold the priesthood and who did not have a distinguished career, are the only exceptions: ILT 1063=AE 1924, 23; AE 1976, 386; Cadotte (2007) 355. Fevrier (1975) 40, 41, though, claims that the inscriptions recording these liberti show that in coloniae liberti were allowed to hold magistracies. See also Whittaker (1996) 605. Gascou (1987) 117, 119, alternatively, argues that after a while the status of the priests and accordingly of the Carthaginian annual cult itself, started to rise.
Given that many priests had successful careers and were of high social rank, it is not surprising that many of the inscriptions record honorific decrees that accompanied statues – in contrast to those of the female sacerdotes, which are virtually all epitaphs or votive inscriptions. In the honorary inscriptions the priests are often praised for their benefactions or their patronage of a town.\(^{260}\) Sometimes a priest is only praised ob merita, but it is likely that benefactions are meant.\(^{261}\) The inscriptions make clear that these men belonged to the local elite that had adopted the Roman system of municipal offices, benefactions, patronage and honour.\(^{262}\)

**3.6: The standing of non-Carthaginian priests of Ceres or the Cеререс**

As can be judged from their names, the male sacerdotes of Ceres or the Cеререс from Africa Proconsularis who did not serve in the ‘annual’ cult were likely virtually all Roman citizens. Like the ‘annual’ priests some – but very few – of them had also had a municipal or military career. Sometimes only a list of religious offices was inscribed.\(^{263}\) Rives argues that Quintus Pullaenius Clinicia, sacerdos Cеререс, was probably a freedman from the gens Pullaenia that possessed estates near Thugga and Uchi Mius and held several important offices in Carthage.\(^{264}\) If Rives is correct, it is worth noting that another man named Pullaenius – perhaps Clinicia’s patron – had been sacerdos in the ‘annual’ Carthaginian cult.\(^{265}\)

As far as can be concluded from the little information their inscriptions provide, none of the Numidian priests held municipal or other religious offices apart from their priesthood of the Cеререс. Nor did any of the ‘non-annual’ priests, neither from Proconsularis, nor from Numidia, receive an honorary inscription (their inscriptions are either dedicatory or funerary, like those of the

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\(^{260}\) *ILA* 390 = *ILS* 9406 = *AE* 1910, 78; *ILA* 384 = *AE* 1920, 29; *CIL* 8, 25808b = *ILS* 9403 = *AE* 1009, 162; *CIL* 8, 26615 = *ILS* 9404; *CIL* 8, 26419; *CIL* 8, 2255 = *ILS* 9401 = *AE* 1908, 263; *CIL* 8, 1478 = *CIL* 8, 15503 = *CIL* 8, 26519 = *ILA* 520 = *ILT* 1496; *AE* 1997, 1655. Cf. Santangelo (2008) 465.

\(^{261}\) *Ob. merita.* *AE* 1997, 1665; no municipal offices, only benefactions: *CIL* 8, 805 = *ILS* 4464; *CIL* 8, 26419. No career or benefactions, but a father who had been benefactor: *CIL* 8, 23820. Priests without municipal offices: this suggests ‘that it [the priesthood] could be held simply as an honorific position, outside of any municipal career,’ Rives (1994) 285.


\(^{263}\) Municipal career: *CIL* 8, 15585; this man had been member of the decuriones, arcaei, aedilis and praefectus iure dicundo. Military career: *ILT* 1204 = *AE* 1931, 34. Series of religious offices: *CIL* 8, 15589. A special case is the religious career of a man, whose name has not been preserved, *CIL* 8, 14447. The many religious offices this man had held were listed in full: [--- flamen divi] Antonini [Pli] flamen [ei]n divi Traiani sacerdos Ceres et Aesculapi sacerd]os ---] / [--- flamen] divi Magni Antonini sacerd]os unicus (Henchir Bir El Afu; beginning of the third century); Cadotte (2007) 358. Perhaps because this inscription is a dedication to Fortuna Redux, either only the religious offices of this man were inscribed, or they were listed before his non-religious municipal ones, for the inscription is broken after the word unicus.

\(^{264}\) *CIL* 8, 24522 = *AE* 1897, 36; Rives (1995) 153. The fact that Clinicia as libertus – and accordingly of low social rank – had been sacerdos of the single Ceres is another argument against the link between status and single or plural Ceres, as suggested by Audollent. Clinicia was probably priest of one of the less significant Ceres cults of Carthage (a ‘respectable but not necessarily official cult’, Rives (1995) 154), Rives (1995) 153-154, in which Sallustia Luperca – cat.no. 161 – had served as well!

\(^{265}\) *CIL* 8, 26615 = *ILS* 9404; *CIL* 8, 26419: Sextus Pullaenius Florus Caecilianus.
priestesses) or act as benefactor to his town.\textsuperscript{266} Thus it seems that these men were of lower social rank\textsuperscript{267} than the ‘annual’ sacerdotes, and accordingly the prestige of the ‘annual’ cult was probably higher than that of the other, local Ceres or Cereres cults.\textsuperscript{268} This all fits with the lack of rank indicators in the inscriptions recording the female sacerdotes Cereris/Cerera, these women presumably served in cults that possessed less standing than the Carthaginian cult – although this does not necessarily imply that these cults were not significant at the local level.\textsuperscript{269}

3.7: Some conclusions about the African cults of Ceres

As may be clear, there is no direct connection between the cults of the single Ceres and the plural Cereres, and the standing or the ‘Romanness’ of their religious officials. Nor was the worship of the Cereres reserved for the lower strata of the population. However, not much can be said about the ‘Romanness’ and the social standing of the female sacerdotes of Ceres in North Africa. The names they used are mainly Latin(ised), but some are partly Punic. The situation is different for the names of the male priests that are all, with one exception, Latin(ised), as are those of the Ceres priests who did not serve in the ‘annual’ Carthaginian cult. The social rank and standing of the priestesses was probably not very high, for otherwise it would have been indicated on the inscriptions or could be deduced from their (honourific) character, as is the case with the inscriptions of the Italian sacerdotes Cereris. Several Italian priestesses seem to have been of higher social rank than their female colleagues in northern Africa, and possessed a social prominence that was roughly similar to that of the sacerdotes anni from Carthage. Many of these ‘annual’ priests – though not all – belonged to the highest echelons of the local elite. They had had brilliant municipal careers and were praised for their patronage of, and benefactions to, the local community.

This is not the case with the other male sacerdotes for whom no benefactions have been attested; most of them seem to have belonged to the middle classes, just like the African priestesses. This is reflected by the nature of the inscriptions that have been preserved: the ‘annual’ priests are mostly known to us through honorific decrees, whereas the other priests and priestesses are recorded on dedications or epitaphs. Furthermore, the title sacerdos Coloniae Itiae Carthaginis anni indicates a difference in standing between the Carthaginian cult and the other, local cults of Ceres or the Cereres.

\textsuperscript{266} There is one possible exception from Carthage, but it is uncertain whether the men mentioned here were benefactors or dedicators: CIL 8, 24586=ILS 4462=AE 1899, 196: nepoti I(ucl)] Memmi / Tusc[i]lii pronepoti Memmi / Senecionis consularis / sacerdotes Cerealis / uniuersi / suau pecun(i)ae fisc(um).

\textsuperscript{267} The sacerdos Cereris et Aesculapi (CIL 8, 14447) is probably an exception, for he had also been flamen, and this religious office was usually reserved for members of the elite.

\textsuperscript{268} This is also mirrored by the lack of something comparable to the formula sacerdos anni and a reference to the colony of Carthage.

\textsuperscript{269} Gaspar (2011) 486.
As has been mentioned in the previous chapter, Ceres and Tellus were closely connected to each other and therefore the priestesses of Tellus are discussed in a separate section in this chapter. It has been suggested by Cadotte that the sacerdotes Telluris were in fact priestesses of Ceres, for in Africa Demeter was identified with Tellus,²⁷⁰ but in my opinion the evidence is rather unconvincing.²⁷¹ Cadotte mentions an inscription dating from AD 2, found in Vaga (Africa Proconsularis) where the cult of Ceres was very ancient, that attests to the restoration of an aedes Telluris.²⁷² However, I cannot see why there could not have been several sanctuaries in Vaga, one for Tellus and one for Ceres. The second piece of evidence Cadotte mentions, is an inscription from the territory of the gens Bacchuina in which both goddesses were directly linked to each other.²⁷³ In my opinion, this may show the close ties of the goddesses but need not necessarily mean that they were identified with each other.

Furthermore, Cadotte states that in most places where evidence of the worship of Tellus has been found, the Cereses have been attested.²⁷⁴ I think that this could equally well show that Tellus was not Ceres, for why would Ceres need a different name and a special cult, if she could be worshipped perfectly well in the cult of the Cereses under her own name? Cadotte’s last argument is based on the Greek precedent of linking Pluto to Demeter and to the Thesmophores in the temple of Tellus in Thugga a dedication to Pluto was erected, which in Cadotte’s view also suggests that Tellus was equated with Demeter-Ceres.²⁷⁵ However, one dedication is no proof of a general practice and besides, it was not unusual to set up dedications for other deities in a sanctuary than for those to whom the sanctuary was consecrated. In sum, I think Ceres was not the same as Tellus, and accordingly, that the priestesses of Ceres served in a different cult from the priestesses of Tellus. Obviously, this does neither mean that both goddesses were not closely related to each other, nor that there were no similarities between the two priesthoods, as I will show below.

The priestesses of Tellus had comparable epitaphs to those of the priestesses of Ceres, and therefore it is likely that they originated from the same social group, i.e. the ‘middle class.’ Furthermore, the male relatives recorded on the inscriptions are not attested as magistrates in the towns where the priestesses

²⁷⁰ Carcopino (1928) 4-5; Carcopino (1942) 17. Cf. Wagenvoort (1956) 162.
²⁷² CIL 8, 14392 = ILPBardo 184 (Vaga, Africa Proconsularis): Imper(.erato) Caesare(m) Aug(usto) / X[I] M(arco) Plautio Silvano / co(n)s(ulis) M(arcus) Titurius M(arcii) I(ilius) / Arn(ensi) Africanus aede(m) / Telluris ref(ecit) HNC.
²⁷⁴ Carcopino (1942) 19, writes that in the Tellus temple in Carthage (built in 40 BC, Gesztelyi (1972) 79) possibly de Ceres were worshipped.
²⁷⁵ For this dedication, see: Goffetto (1961)44; Gesztelyi (1972) 81.
lived, and most are not recorded on other inscriptions than those of the priestesses at all.\textsuperscript{276} This implies that the male relatives of the \textit{sacerdotes Telluris} – and, accordingly the priestesses themselves – were no part of the local elite. The only possible exception is a certain Quintus Calpurnius Festus, who seems to have been the husband of Iulia Katullina from Madauros.\textsuperscript{277} There are several other Quinti Calpurnii attested in Madauros, but no Quintus Calpurnius Festus except the one recorded on \textit{ILAlg} 1, 2087. This man erected a statue in honour of his aedilate for the wellbeing of the emperor Septimius Severus, his sons and Plautilla.

In contrast to the female \textit{sacerdotes Telluris}, the only male priest of the goddess seems to have belonged to the local elite. He lived in Calama in Numidia. The altar he dedicated – which provides us with a good example of a specific local manifestation of the goddess, see also above about Ceres in Capua – contains the following inscription:\textsuperscript{278}

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

“Dedicated to Tellus Gilva\textsuperscript{279} Augusta. Caius Arrius Sabinius Datus, son of Nepos, of the tribe Papiria, aedile, priest of Tellus…”

No other inscriptions of this priest have been found in Calama, but as may be clear, he was a Romanised member of the \textit{decuriones}. Yet, the office of aedile mentioned here, was not really important and usually reserved for young men.\textsuperscript{280} This could imply that the priesthood of Tellus was one that was held at an early stage of a man’s career, and that it was therefore probably not very important. This means that the difference in standing between the priestesses of Tellus and the priest was probably less than it may seem at first sight. However, as there is only one inscription of a male \textit{sacerdos Telluris}, we cannot conclude that the priesthood of the goddess was often held by young men at the start of their career.

\textit{Conclusions}

In the cults of the goddess Ceres women played an important role. In Rome, the priesthood of Ceres was one of the few of which women have been attested epigraphically. The connections between

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\item \textsuperscript{276} On \textit{ILAlg} 1, 2306 possibly the father of Caelia Sperata from Madauros (cat.no.187) is mentioned, and \textit{CIL} 8, 5092 = \textit{ILAlg} 1, 1791 may record the father of a priestess from Thubursicu Numidarum (cat.no.229).
\item \textsuperscript{277} \textit{AE} 1914, 50.
\item \textsuperscript{278} \textit{CIL} 8, 5305 = \textit{ILAlg} 1, 232 = \textit{ILS} 3958 = \textit{AE} 1983, 944; \textit{Cadotte} nr. 361.
\item \textsuperscript{279} Gilva was a town in Mauretania (modern Mersat Madar). As the dedicator records specifically this uncommon Tellus, it is likely that this Tellus differed from the one in Calama, \textit{Cadotte} nr. 361.
\item \textsuperscript{280} Castrén (1975) 62-63.
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Rome and *Magna Graecia* helped to shape this priesthood. In many Italian – mainly Campanian – towns where the Ceres-Demeter cults were very ancient, priestesses served the goddess. In northern Africa both men and women are attested as *sacerdotes*. The inscriptions they have left behind offer some insight into their rank, social standing and background. These varied between the two main areas where priestesses and priests have been attested, and between the sexes of the religious officials. In Africa, the priestesses belonged to the middle classes (just like the *sacerdotes Telluris*, priestesses closely resembling the *sacerdotes Ceres*) while the male (annual) *sacerdotes* from Carthage were members of the local elite. In Italy most priestesses of Ceres were of relatively high social rank and standing. This may lead to the conclusion that the standing of the priesthood of Ceres was not linked to the popularity of the cult: in Africa the cult was widespread as many votive inscriptions show, while in Italy virtually the only epigraphic evidence for the Ceres cult are the inscriptions recording the priestesses.

Apart from these conclusions regarding rank, standing and popularity, the inscriptions of the priestesses illuminate local preferences and peculiarities that resulted from the blending of Roman, Greek and native influences. Superficially similar cults were managed in different ways in various Italian regions, Sicily and North Africa, even surviving unifying factors like colonization. Examples of these local characteristics are the worship of the *Cereres* in Africa, the variety in title of the *sacerdotes* in Capua, the explicit addition *Sicula* in the Roman Casponia’s otherwise short inscription and the references to local or regional manifestations of Ceres like *Ceres Maurusia* or *Ceres Graeca*. This shows that the cults of Ceres and the goddess’ priesthoods were on the one hand local, but on the other products of acculturation, implying that the women who held the priesthood where very much involved in local life but at the same time clearly part of the large cultural changes that were brought about first by Hellenization and later by Romanization.
Chapter 4: The religious side of being a priestess

Introduction

In this chapter I investigate the religious and practical side of holding a religious office. Although offices held by women have sometimes been regarded as purely honorific, it will become clear that this was certainly not the case with priestly offices in the western part of the Roman Empire. Priests, male and female alike, had to take an active part in ritual action. Being a priestess could imply that the woman in question had to devote quite some time to her religious office. Certain prescriptions may have even required that she adapted her family life to her priesthood, as we shall see.

The first theme of this chapter concerns the tasks that priestesses and women with other religious offices had to carry out after they had been appointed. What did a priestess actually have to do? Obviously, the most important duty of male priests was sacrificing – or rather: overseeing a sacrifice – but there is some controversy about the question whether women had to carry out the same task. As I will argue below, there is enough convincing evidence to state that women had to oversee blood sacrifices like their male colleagues. Apart from sacrificing, there were many other tasks involved in holding a religious office, varying from presiding at festivals and processions – performed by priest(esses) – to humble responsibilities as keeping the keys of the sanctuary, executed by members of the lower cult personnel. These tasks will all pass under review.

The second theme of this chapter are the special requirements that could have been attached to female priesthods – could and not were, because most seem to have been reserved for women acting in a limited number of cults only. I will deal with ceremonial clothing and the outward appearance of priestesses, and with their age and years of service. As both ancient authors and many modern scholars have paid much attention to women’s sexuality in relation to religion, this chapter concludes with a discussion of religious chastity and sacred prostitution in the West.

It has to be kept in mind that the evidence is rather limited. In many cases only a few scattered inscriptions illustrate the topics under discussion, and accordingly nothing can be concluded about their spread or universality. Nevertheless, as I have already pointed out in the first chapter, these isolated documents can be illustrative of the diversity of aspects related to female religious offices and therefore deserve to be mentioned. In some cases, evidence related to other cults than those included in the catalogue, will be used as additional evidence.
2: Religious tasks

Although we might be curious as to what exactly Roman religious officials had to do during the period they held their office, the Romans themselves did not think this interesting enough to discuss extensively or record on stone. As a consequence, very little is known, not only about the duties of priestesses, but also about those of priests. Even the tasks of an important priest like the flamen Augusti remain obscure.¹ Therefore, we have to tie together all bits of information we can find, gathered from different types of evidence and periods and related to different kinds of priesthoods. Obviously this is problematic, also because in many cases religion was very much a local affair. For that reason, much in this section remains a bit uncertain. The only topic on which the inscriptions in the catalogue provide a reasonable amount of information, is sacrificing – fortunately one of the most important aspects of Roman religion. Therefore, this section starts with a discussion of women and animal sacrifice.

2.1: Sacrificing

The role of women in sacrificing has been subject to much debate. It is taken for granted that they could sacrifice things such as milk, incense and honey (e.g., as preliminary sacrifices), but their role in blood sacrifices is another matter. The most recent view is that they did sacrifice animals – or rather, that they let victimarii or popae kill them, which was the general habit, also with regard to male priests.² Adorning the victim, checking its sexual status, leading it to the altar and finally killing it was not performed by the sacerdos but by members of the lower cult personnel.³ As Moede writes, far more important than the act of killing was handing the offered substance to the deity⁴ – and this could be done by priests and priestesses alike.

The evidence that is generally used to support the view that women were excluded form animal sacrifice is either misinterpreted⁵ or related to special occasions and special rituals, which implies that under normal circumstances women did take part, as has convincingly been argued by Hemelrijk.⁶ In addition, there is evidence that positively attests to women sacrificing.⁷ There are

⁵ E.g., sources used to argue that women were not allowed to use wine when sacrificing, Flemming (2007) 95.
⁶ Hemelrijk (2009) 254-256. Priestesses who were depicted sacrificing, did this not only for goddesses, but for gods as well, Hemelrijk (2009) 261. Cf. priestesses in Greece, who also supervised blood sacrifices on behalf of the city, Osborne (1993) 402; Connelly (2007) 179-180.
⁷ Varro LL 5.29 writes that women sacrificing Romanu rito covered their heads with a rica (see also below, section 2.3). Nowhere is stated that sacrificing Romanu rito did not expand to blood sacrifices. Cf. Schultz (2006) 136. See Glinister (2011) 110, 132, about the sacrificial capacity of the Salae.
several, sometimes quite explicit, reliefs on stones that record priestesses. These carvings show the victims and in one or two cases the priestesses themselves involved in sacrificial actions. Good examples are the grave monuments of several priestesses of Ceres. The first is a low relief from Corfinium on a marble plaque with the epitaph of Helvia Pothine. The relief, of which only the lower left corner is left, shows a sacrificial scene with a sow – the usual victim for Ceres – standing in front of an altar. Behind the victim a female sacerdos and a small assistant are depicted (see figure 6). On the grave monument of another woman – named Helvia Quarta – who had been sacerdos Cereris et Veneris in Sulmo, an altar and a young man or woman holding the victim are carved. Cat.no.111 is also an epitaph – unfortunately in bad condition – of a certain Sabina who lived in Puteoli and held office as sacerdos Cereris. Again a victim, together with a knife and torches, is depicted.

Figure 6: Epitaph of Helvia Pothine

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8 In images priests were usually referred to by sacrificial instruments, Fless and Moede (2007) 255. Several reliefs accompanying inscriptions that record priestesses depict knives used for sacrificing: cat.no.104 (sacerdos XVviratis); RIB 1129 (archiereia of Herakles; not included); cat.no.38 (Ceres). However, knives can also be found on inscriptions that do not record priestesses, and seem to belong to the group of religious attributes, including e.g. also paterae, that can be found on many stones.

9 However, the killing itself is only rarely visible on reliefs, and when it is depicted, only dying bulls – no pigs and sheep – are shown. Many reliefs only depict cult instruments or victims, Moede (2007) 168, 173.

10 Hemeleijik (2009) 261. Cf. cat.no.53 of Flavia Ammia. According to Forbis (1996) 370 and (1990) 510; Ladage (1971) 59, Flavia Ammia fulfilled the ceremonies of sacrifice particularly diligently. The link between the Pompeian porcaria publica (public pig keeper) and her former mistress Clodia, sacerdos publica of Ceres (cat.no.103 and 102), also strongly suggests a female priestly role in animal sacrifice, as Van Andringa (2009) 84 has pointed out.

11 Cat.no.67.

12 Cf. IG 14, 702: a relief depicts Ceres, a pig and an altar.

13 Cat.no.120.
Pigs has also been carved on a funerary cippus that was erected in modern Sidi Bou Beker (Africa Proconsularis) to commemorate Iulia Rufina.\(^{14}\) Its relief shows the priestess standing on a cartouche containing her name. With her right hand she holds a torch over a small round flaming altar; her left hand is damaged. Her hair is covered by a sort of cap bound under the chin. Pigs are depicted on both sides of the priestess. Furthermore, a large fountain or sheaf of corn, a snake and a basket of fruit are carved. At both sides a long torch can be detected. Iulia Rufina is only called sacerdos, but regarding the popularity of the Ceres cult in Africa and the carvings of typical objects of the Ceres-Demeter cult, it is likely that she had been priestess of the goddess.

Apart from this iconographic evidence, there are various inscriptions which show that women could play a role in taurobolia. As these inscriptions record priestesses serving Magna Mater, they are not included in the catalogue (except those from Beneventum, see below). Nevertheless, I will discuss them here as they provide additional evidence for women’s sacrificial capacity.\(^{15}\) CIL 13.1754 from Lugdunum is a dedication for the wellbeing of Septimius Severus and his family. The name of the deity whose favour was asked, is omitted but it is likely that Magna Mater was meant for a taurobolium was given (cf. chapter 2=kale sac.). The dedicators were assisted by several religious officials, amongst whom Aemilia Secundilla, a priestess.\(^{16}\) Other examples mention priestesses from Beneventum who had made a dedication to Attis and the local goddess Minerva Paracintia, and had supervised taurobolium.\(^{17}\) One priestess from Beneventum is even recorded on two inscriptions as the official who carried out the sacrificial rite. Her role is described by the words ob taurobolium traditum a Servilia Varia sacerdote prima. Unfortunately, these inscriptions do not make clear what exactly the tasks of the priestesses were, but at least they show clearly that in the cult of Magna Mater, female sacerdotes had a leading role in blood sacrifices.

A last inscription that has to be mentioned here is from Caesarea in Mauretania. It records a sacrifice for Saturn ‘victima accepta ab Iulia Respecti filia Vitale Rusguniense’ (the victim was accepted by Iulia Vitalis of Rusguniae, daughter of Respectus).\(^{18}\) It is possible that this Iulia Vitalis was a priestess, though she could also have been an assistant whose task it was to receive the victim.

\(^{14}\) Cat.no.209.

\(^{15}\) Of course, one could argue that the cult of Magna Mater was different from that of e.g., Ceres, but my point is simply to show that women performed blood sacrifices.

\(^{16}\) See Spickermann (1994b) 234 about this inscription. Varro provides some textual evidence that attests to a female role in sacrificing – though no animal sacrifice – on behalf of private individuals. He writes that during the Liberalia priestesses of Liber in Rome sacrificed cakes to the god for any purchaser, Varro, LL 6.3: (...) seurent ut sacerdotes Liber anus hedera coronatae cum libis et foculo pro emptore sacrificantes- (...) the priestesses of Liber, old women crowned with ivy, sit with cakes and a foculus, and they sacrifice [the cakes] for any purchaser. Transl. Based on that of G. Nagy. Cf. Schultz (2006) 73

\(^{17}\) Cat.no.44.

As the inscription has not fully been preserved this problem cannot be solved, but nevertheless it is clear that the woman was involved in animal sacrifice.  

A special aspect that needs to be stressed when discussing gender and sacrifice is the nature of the deity involved. Hemelrijk has argued that participation in animal sacrifice ‘was cult-specific rather than gender-specific.’ The small quantity of evidence for women sacrificing animals should be related to the limited number of priesthoods they could hold, and to the sacrificial rites of these cults. Examples are the *flaminic peace* of the imperial cult: unlike the emperor, empresses were probably not commonly honoured by blood sacrifices. Instead, they received offerings of wine and incense. Therefore *flamines* may not have had to perform a blood sacrifice - in contrast to the *sacerdotes Cereris*.

Even though depictions are no exact reflection of reality, the difference between what was depicted and what was real cannot have been too great, because the relief had to be recognizable and linkable to a specific cult. Therefore, I think we may conclude from both inscriptions and carvings that priestesses, certainly those involved in the Ceres and Magna Mater cult, did perform blood sacrifices. This implies not only that they represented their community (or individual members of that community) in the eyes of the gods during the most important rite of Roman religion, but also that they acted clearly visible in front of that community, for most sacrifices were carried out in the open space in front of the temple, near the altar.

Finally, some words have to be said about those women who were part of the lower cult personnel and attended animal sacrifices. Iconographic evidence shows that priests and priestesses could be assisted by *tibices, ministri, victimarii* and other assistants. On reliefs the *popae* and *victimarii* who kill the animal are always male, but it might be possible that women could also hold this job. There is one

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19 Due to the uncertainties regarding the woman’s religious office – if she had one, which is uncertain – this inscription is not included in the catalogue.
22 Hemelrijk (2007) 327. However, this a sacrifice of wine and incense was also common in the worship of a (defied) emperor, for apart from carrying out an animal sacrifice, a *flamen* sacrificed often by offering a (much cheaper!)*supplication* of wine and incense, Fishwick (1987) 132-133.
23 The kind of animal that was sacrificed was also often specific to the cult concerned: pigs were killed in honour of Ceres, while for example Juno received a cow. Cf. Scheid (2007), 264; male gods received castrated male victims and goddesses female victims. It should not be forgotten, that deities usually honoured with victims also received bloodless sacrifices performed by priest(esses). In the *aedicula* of the *macellum* in Pompeii a statue of a priestess who is sacrificing incense has been found. See also the reliefs of cat.no.201 from Saddar (Numidia) and cat.no.172 from Djenun (Africa Proconsularis), both depicting a sacrificing woman.
inscription that records the name of the freedwoman Critonia Philèma who was *popa*. It is uncertain whether *popa* is not meant as an abbreviation of *popinaria* (cook), but if not, this Critonia is the only *popa* who is known to us by name.\(^{28}\) This would mean that the involvement of women in blood sacrifices could go much further than has often been thought.

### 2.2: Processions, festivals and banquets

Apart from sacrificing, festivals and processions were important facets of Roman religion.\(^{29}\) Again, the evidence I will discuss here partly derives from other cults than those of the priestesses in the catalogue (i.e. of that of the emperor and of Isis). With one epigraphic exception, mentioned below, the evidence of festivals in honour of for instance Ceres and Juno consists of literary texts that are all focused on Rome, while that of Isis and the imperial cults relates to the provinces and is therefore a more fruitful source of comparison.

Fishwick has argued that the imperial cult consisted of several rituals during the year, for instance the festivities held at the birthday of the emperor in question. In addition to the days on which specific rites had to be carried out in the whole Empire, the imperial cult consisted of local festivities.\(^{30}\) It is likely that local rites also played the most important role in the cults of the priestesses in the catalogue, for we have seen that many served deities that had clear local roots or characteristics. However, one can expect that at least in Italy, in areas close to Rome and influenced by the City at an early stage, certain major festivals in honour of goddesses like Venus, Juno and Ceres may have been shared by different towns. The epigraphic exception I mentioned above proves this: in Nepet (region 7), a town that became a colony in 383 BC and was therefore thoroughly Romanised in AD 18 when the inscription was erected, a *magister pagi* and a *magistra* celebrated the *Cerialia*. What exactly they had to do though, is unknown.

Although most evidence stems from the eastern part of the Empire, Fishwick has shown that also in the imperial cult in the West processions were held on major festival days. During such processions, statues (e.g., that of the reigning or the deified emperor) were probably carried around.\(^{31}\) That during processions objects were shown to the public is also told by Apuleius. In his *Metamorphoses* he describes a procession in honour of Isis. Although this description contains obviously elements that were specific to the cult of this goddess, I think the general lay-out of the

\(^{28}\) Hemelrijk (2009) 263. Cat.no.269.
\(^{31}\) Fishwick (1987) 133; Fishwick (2004) 268-273. Cf. Merlat (1960) 202, 205-206: sacred processions, in which statues of deities were carried, were common in the Orient. These processions were led by priests, wearing special clothing. Rogers (1991) 80-126; Van Nijf (1997) 192-193 and Rives (2007) 114, mention a procession of various statues in Ephesus: first came those of the emperor and empress, followed by others, amongst which several of Artemis. These statues were kept in the sanctuary of Artemis. Special groups (e.g., ephebes) had their own task during the ceremonies, ‘affirming the distinct social roles that the different parts of the population were supposed to play.’
procession can be transferred to other cults as well. Lucius-ass tells the reader that the initiates of Isis were followed by the high priests of the goddess. These ‘carried before them the distinctive attributes of the most powerful gods’ (potentissimorum deum proferebant insignes exuvias). The first carried a special lamp, the second a portable altar, the third a palm branch made of gold, the fourth a symbol of justice, the fifth a golden winnowing-fan and the last an amphora. The priests were followed by people dressed as gods (cf. section 2.3) and others carrying secret attributes. It is worth noting that sacred objects (sacra) were also carried by the priestesses of Juno in Rome. Apart from statues and sacred objects, standards and sceptres seem to have been common objects that were carried during processions (often, of lower ranked religious officials carried ritual objects, see below.

Unfortunately, the inscriptions in the catalogue and their accompanying reliefs do not provide any evidence of priestesses leading processions, although some information about carrying sacra can be retrieved. Some inscriptions found in North Africa record canistrariae (basket carriers) – see below, but there is also iconographic evidence from this area. Symbols related to the Ceres cult, like torches and corn ears are often depicted on North African inscriptions. Ovid writes that torches were carried by white-clad people during the ludi Cereales as a reference to the search of Ceres for her daughter Proserpina. Torches were especially connected to the Demeter cult in Eleusis. One of the Eleusinian priests was called torch-bearer (δαδούγος) and according to Juvenal (15.140), torches were the special emblems of the Eleusinian priests in general. We have seen in chapter 3 that the African Cereres had strong connections to the Greek Thesmophores and therefore it is likely that the African priestesses of the Cereres (and possibly also their Italian colleagues) carried torches during certain religious rites. On one inscription from Rusiris in Mauretania a priestess is called lampadīfera which is presumably the equivalent of δαδούγος.

Priests of the imperial cult were supposed to pay for and organise the festivals that were celebrated in honour of the emperor. It is possible that flaminicae did the same for the festivities organised for the living empress and the divinised women of the imperial house. Paying for festivals was also done by priestesses of other cults. Valeria Situllina from Cartima, Iulia Paulina and Flavia Ammia from Capena and Agusia Priscilla from Gabii organised spectacles and ‘magnificent ceremonies’ on entering their priesthood, for which they paid themselves (see chapter 5). Although the contents of

32 Apuleius, Metamorphoses, 11.10-11.
33 Ovid Am. 3.13.30.
35 While in general, there are many reliefs depicting processions, Moede (2007) 170. Processions are also depicted on wall-paintings, e.g., in the Pompeian House of the Wedding of Hercules. This painting shows a procession near the temple of the goddess Venus, who was served by priestesses, Small (2007) 187. See Henig (1984) 39-41 for an impression of a religious procession and the following sacrifice.
36 Ovid, Fasti 4, 495, 620.
37 Juvenal, Sat. 15.140-142.
these ceremonies are unknown, it is likely that they had a religious component. Other references to religious festivals however, are not attested on the inscriptions in the catalogue.

In his discussion of the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, Merlat mentions the organisation of banquets in which the priests may have been involved. In a cult like that of Jupiter Dolichenus these were probably reserved for initiates.\(^{39}\) In other cults, however, other groups than those overseeing the sacrifice were usually allowed to take part. Still, as Scheid states, the ‘single overriding principle which governed sacrificial banquets was that of hierarchy and privilege. Those overseeing and carrying out the sacrifice generally ate their share straightaway, at community expense.’\(^{40}\) We shall see in the next chapter that organizing banquets was also undertaken by female *sacerdotes*. Two priestesses from Baetica organized a banquet *ob honorem sacerdotii* and Iulia Paulina from Capena paid for a banquet for the *decurions* and the *municipes*, apart from the ceremonies she organized on entering her priesthood. The last example of a priestess paying for a banquet is rather striking. Caesia Sabina, priestess of Fortuna Redux,\(^{41}\) was ‘the only woman’ to provide a banquet for the mothers, sisters and daughters of the decurions and for the citizen-women of every order (*haec sola omnium feminarum matribus Cviorum et sororibus et filiabus et omnis ordinis mulieribus municipibus epulum dedit*). For this reason, she was honoured with a statue given by the *sorores piissimae*. Who these ‘sisters’ were remains unclear.\(^{42}\) It is uncertain whether this banquet was organized on a religious occasion and if it was linked to the priesthood of Caesia Sabina (see also chapter 5).

2.3: *Dedicating*

Although all kinds of people erected votives, assisting people who wanted to make a dedication to a deity seems to have been one of the tasks of priestesses and other women with religious offices.\(^{43}\) However, most dedications recording priestesses are paid and carried out by the *sacerdos (magistra, ministra)* herself.\(^{44}\) Sometimes the priestesses made a dedication together with her relatives or with help from someone else, usually a priest.\(^{45}\) Like dedications made by ordinary people, many dedications of priestesses and other female religious officials were very simple and probably made to

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\(^{40}\) Scheid (2007; Rupke) 267-8.

\(^{41}\) Her religious office is recorded in cat.no.136, while the banquet mentioned here is recorded in *CIL* 11, 3811 (not included in the catalogue).

\(^{42}\) Priestesses paying special attention to women can be found elsewhere: Reynolds (2011) 504-505 mentions the priestess Antonia Mego who feasted the unmarried girls of Cyrene and surrounding area.

\(^{43}\) See also Fishwick (2004) 289-290.

\(^{44}\) Sometimes the dedication was explicitly connected to a religious office, see: *CIL* 11, 1916 = *ILS* 4366 = *SIRIS* 577 (not in the catalogue): *Ob honorem / Isidis Aug(ustae) / Apollini sacrum / Crtionia Clin(ai) (liberta) Chrotis / minist<e=/>rio suo / donum dedit* –Sacred to Apollo, Critonia Chrotis, freedwoman of Cnaeus, gave this gift during her *ministerium*, on account of her office of Isis Augusta. Transl. by Clark (2011) 354 footnote 32. See chapter 5, footnote 88 for another example.

\(^{45}\) E.g., cat.no.238 (Vegesela, Numidia) and 133 (Ticinium, region 11)
fulfil a vow.⁴⁶ Even though dedications for the well-being of the emperor were a very common phenomenon, there are surprisingly few of these in the catalogue.⁴⁷ The reason for this remains unclear; it may have been simple coincidence. The number of dedications made by priestesses, magistrae or ministrae on behalf of other people is small. May be it was not common to record the assistance of a priestess during a dedication just because this was such a regular task, or perhaps the name of the priestess who had aided the dedicator was only mentioned on special occasions.⁴⁸

An interesting dedication that needs to be mentioned in this section stems from Spoletto (region 6), and dates possibly from the fourth century AD. Its meaning is not fully clear.⁴⁹

[Lu̇ċus Bon(a)e de(a)e / dedicatus ut liceat / per masculos rem/undari permit(tente) Poma(peia(?)) / com[magistra? ara(m) posu[it] / Ren(ita) Maxim(a) uxson(!) Umb(o)n/ris p(rim)a(ilaris) posit(a) in va[cua] / suo

“A sacred grove has been dedicated to Bona Dea. In order that it may be cleansed again by⁵⁰ members of the male sex, Renatia Maxima, wife of Umbro, ex-primipilar, has erected this altar, with the approval of the joint-magistra Pompeia. It has been placed on her empty land.”

It seems that one of the magistrae had erected an altar to cleanse or help cleansing the grove of Bona Dea. As she was a magistra of the goddess this can be seen as part of her religious duties. Afterwards she had consulted with her colleague who had to approve of the erection. Brouwer writes that Renatia Maxima possibly erected the altar on her own land because of strict building regulations in the grove.⁵¹ This inscription shows that making dedications could be done for a whole group of worshippers – i.e. those of Bona Dea – which was also a task of male religious officials, as several inscriptions of individual Augusta(s) who erected inscriptions nomine Augustalium show.⁵² In my opinion it is likely that other female religious officials than the magistrae Bonae Deae had the same task, even though no other inscriptions than the one of Renatia Maxima and her colleague Pompeia can be found in the catalogue.

⁴⁶ An exception is the dedication of an antistita from Metz, cat.no.264. This inscription was erected ‘after an indication in a dream’ (somnio monita).
⁴⁷ E.g., cat.no.185.
⁴⁸ A dedication from Iliberris in Baetica that was requested by the ordo, is a modern forgery, CIL 2-5, 39. Unsurprisingly, the name of the assisting priestess could be inscribed in the ablative. In cat.no.24 the words sacerdote Iulia Proculea are used. A parallel with a male priest in a Syrian cult (CCID 525): [per] Valentem sac(erdotalem), Belayche (2001) 296-297
⁴⁹ Cat.no.116. Transl. based on Brouwer.
⁵⁰ Brouwer (1989) 380-381, writes that men probably cleaned away dead branches and pruned the trees of the sacred grove. As they were normally not allowed to enter the grove, it had to be ritually purified after they had left by erecting an altar.
⁵¹ Brouwer (1989) 381.
⁵² E.g. AE 1993, 471; AE 1993, 474; CIL 6, 2026.
Deities honoured by dedications made by priestesses

In order to discover if a priestess felt a special kind of devotion to the deity she served, we have to look at the deities they honoured with dedications. Eck writes that in the Roman Empire most dedications were set up for Jupiter and Hercules, followed by other Graeco-Roman deities and ‘oriental’ deities like Magna Mater and Isis. The inscriptions in the catalogue provide no examples of dedications made by priestesses to Hercules, but there is ample evidence of dedications to other Graeco-Roman divinities and for Magna Mater, although local deities are also represented. Jupiter, Juno, Diana, Venus and Ceres (not mentioned by Eck!) are most frequently honoured.

Although Alföldy has stated that the number of dedications for a certain deity reveals little about the popularity of his or her cult, it seems that goddesses were more popular than gods with priestesses. The predominance of Ceres in the dedications made by priestesses can be explained by the high number of sacerdotes Cereris in the catalogue: most dedications to Ceres have been erected by women serving this goddess. Apart from votives set up in honour of their ‘own’ deities priestesses made also dedications to others. Many examples from different parts of the Empire, including Rome, can be found. In Carthage, for instance, a priestess named Sallustia Luperca, served Ceres or the Cereres, but made the dedication that has saved her name from oblivion to Juno. Obviously, like other women (and men) priestesses needed the help of specific deities for specific problems.

2.4: Other tasks

It has been suggested that assisting people in ritual cleansing and washing may have been another duty of sacerdotes. I rather think that members of the lower cult personnel were involved in these tasks, although the catalogue provides no evidence. Interpreting oracles and explaining dreams could have been done by priests and priestesses, according to Merlat. About inscriptions with formulas like ex visu, monitu, somno monitus he writes ‘Il se peut, mais ce n’est pas nécessaire, que l’interprétation de ces songes ait été confiée à des prêtèses.’ The only inscription, in which both a priestess and a formula referring to a dream are mentioned, is erected by an antistiita from Divodurum in Gallia Belgica. As no

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53 Including dedications erected by women to these gods, see e.g., CIL 13.11221; Wiegels (2001) 213-214.
55 A Greek inscription from Corstopitum in Britannia, erected by an archiereia, is not included in the catalogue, RIB 1, 1129.
57 This is noteworthy, for male gods made up a greater part of MacMullen’s list of main deities mentioned in Latin inscriptions. MacMullen (1981) 6 provides a table with their relative popularity: nine were male, four were female.
59 Cat.no.161.
60 Merlat (1960) 206-207. The priestess of Venus in Cyrene (Plautus, Rudens 404) tells a girl to fetch some water for her, but probably this was to be used for sacrificing. The bowl used is described as sacred, see 2.5.473 and 475.
61 Merlat (1960) 207-209.
one else except the priestess is recorded on the inscription, it seems that she erected the dedication to Silvanus and the Nymphs because of her own dream (*somnium monita*).\(^63\)

The last task of *sacerdotes* I will discuss is speaking in front of an audience and praying. According to Ward, it is likely that during processions and other public cult observances, priestesses had to speak in public.\(^64\) The priest – and likely, the priestess as well – had to declare that the offering had been accepted by the god after it was killed.\(^65\) Generally, all sacrifices were accompanied by prayers that were – on official occasions – uttered by magistrates or priests.\(^66\) The Romans did not have collective prayers; usually a single person addressed the deity, while the audience watched silently.\(^67\) Hickson Hahn thinks that the system of public prayer served the elite. ‘Significantly, the wording of public prayers typically employs the first person singular of verbs of prayer. (...) The highly visible roles of the elite in public ritual, in particular the recitation of prayers, served to construct and reinforce their political domination. Priests and magistrates performed as mediators between gods and citizens, and just as divine favor was necessary for continued prosperity of the state, so the religious services of the elite were represented as equally necessary.’\(^68\)

Obviously, this applied not only to priests but also to priestesses. Furthermore, it applied not only to prayer but to other religious acts in which priestesses played a role as well, for these acts were all meant to maintain a proper relationship with the gods. And as we have seen, the religious tasks of priestesses were manifold. This implies that those priestesses who were members of the local elites helped to strengthen the position of the other *decuriales* in their community and that of their own family within the elite. Those *sacerdotes* who did not belong to the *decuriales* may have used their ‘public voice’ and mediating role as a way to enhance their status.

What has been discussed so far were the various (possible) tasks of priestesses, the main religious officials. However, women can be found in a variety of other religious functions as well. Their duties were not as lofty as those of the priestesses, and were certainly not performed by members of the elite, but they were of great practical value. These tasks are the subject of the next section.

2.5: *Tasks of ancillary officials*

A proper temple needed a varied staff that fulfilled a wide range of functions, from assisting at ceremonies and processions to guiding visitors, from cleaning and acting as servants during banquets

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\(^{63}\) Cat.no.264.


\(^{65}\) Scheid (2007) 266, 267.


\(^{67}\) Hickson Hahn (2007) 237.

to gate-keeping. Possibly, some of these staff members lived in the sanctuaries in which they served, for various temples possessed rooms ‘that have been or could be interpreted as residences for a permanent present college of priests or other attendants.’ Quite a few inscriptions record women who were members of the lower cult personnel, but often it is unclear what exactly their tasks were.

Aedituae and magistrae

Several women held an office as aeditua and/or magistra in various cults. On an inscription from Rome, a woman is recorded as aeditua and ministra, and another example from the same city mentions an aeditua a Diana, a certain Doris. This woman had been serva of Asinius Gallus, as the inscription erected by her fellow-slave Antiochus shows. There is some controversy about the tasks of aedituae. In the first place, the difference between an aeditu(m)us (aeditua) and a magister (magistra) remains obscure. Unfortunately, the tasks of magistri and magistrae are neither fully clear to us. Stambaugh writes that an aeditu(m)us tended temples on a daily basis. However, a curator aedium publicorum or curator templi was also responsible for temples, at least during the imperial period and magistri fulfilled religious duties in temples as well, so this leaves us no wiser. Rives writes that both magistri and aeditui were attendants or caretakers, which does not separate these two roles either.

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70 Rous (2009) 74.
71 Cf. Schultz (2006) 72: ‘The precise distinctions among the different categories of sacerdos, magistra, and ministra cannot be recovered.’ In the literary sources, other religious functions of women are mentioned, but it is questionable whether these were official. Plautus (Miles 3.97) mentions women as praecautrix (a woman who uttered incantations), coniectrix (a woman who interpreted dreams), hariola (inspired prophetess) and haruspica (diviner). See also Horster (2007) 338. (Male) haruspices were sometimes paid on regular basis in the city or the army, but often they acted on a more private basis, Horster (2007) 337. Festus 232-34L and Paulus 233L refer to women who were specialized in expiations and were called (expiaetri, saga or simulpatric, Schultz (2006) 28; Flemming (2007) 106. In HA Macr. 3.1-2 a vates Caeselis is mentioned. Cf. HA Pert. 4.2 – see chapter 2. See Guerra Gomez (1987) 287-303 for a discussion of prophetic priestesses in Graeco-Roman religions.
72 They were certainly not confined to the cults of Bona Dea and Ceres, as Eichenaier (1988) 47 writes. She also forgets to mention priestesses of, e.g. Venus and Juno in her account of religious offices open to women.
73 Cat.no.7. The name of the son has been interpreted as a dative, but in my view it is more obvious to translate it as a nominative. As names of slaves (and accordingly, of liberti) often ended with –io (Kajanto (1982) 134), it is possible that the mother and her son were liberti. This is very plausible, because aeditui and magistri were often of slave or freed status. On CIL 6, 2212, found close to the inscription of the aeditua et magistra, a man from Rome is recorded who was aedituus and magister at the same time.
74 Cat.no.6; Rüpke (2005) 1497.
75 Rives (1995) 34 asks the question whether magistri were the same as aeditui.
76 Some authors are very unspecific, for example, Ausbütel (1982) 52, who only writes that magistri had several religious tasks. However, in some cases, more is known. Magistri ad lana delubra for example, were appointed ‘für die Organisation öffentlicher Opfer und Aufstellung von Götterpolstern’, Frateantonio (2001) 182.
77 Stambaugh (1978) 575. Varro, RR, 1.2.2 refers to the aeditusus of the temple of Tellus, that was supervised by an aedile. Horster (2007) 332 calls the aeditu(m)us a kind of sacristan.
79 In the Republic: aediles, e.g. of the temple of Ceres on the Aventine, Stambaugh (1978) 574, 582.
80 Stambaugh (1978) 576.
Caput 128 of the Lex Ursonensis describes in broad terms the way in which the organisation of cults by magistri had to be arranged. Magistri had to be appointed for all shrines, but their tasks are not specified.\textsuperscript{82} According to several modern scholars, the most important task of magistri seems to have been a financial one.\textsuperscript{83} Rives thinks that possibly magistri resembled financial curators.\textsuperscript{84} This seems plausible, because someone had to take care of the income acquired by the temple:\textsuperscript{85} temples often owned property form which a rental income was extracted, various sacred funds existed and private worshippers could have had to pay a fee for the services the temple provided. Furthermore, temples acquired money and possessions from donations and votive offerings.\textsuperscript{86}

North supposes that magistri were responsible for administration, mainly financial, while priests were responsible for religious matters.\textsuperscript{87} That non-priestly figures had a say in religious financial matters can be read in colonial charters.\textsuperscript{88} The Lex Iritana (caput 77, De inpensis in sacra ludos cenasque faciendas) states that the ‘duumviri who are in charge of the administration of justice in that municipium are to raise with the decurions or conscripti on the earliest possible moment how much should be spent for expenses on religious observances (…).\textsuperscript{89} Obviously, the public money referred to here is not that which belonged to the temple, but money belonging to the municipium. In any case, it is clear that most modern scholars think that a financial task was reserved for magistri.

In my opinion, it is likely that the duties of magistrae were comparable to those of magistri and that they also had a financial character. But it may not have been as simple as that, as some inscriptions and speculations by modern authors show. Spickermann writes that magistrae, who were often libertae, took care of temples\textsuperscript{86}, sacrifices and banquets for gods.\textsuperscript{91} Lundeen on the other hand, thinks that magistrae were responsible for the daily administration of a cult, together with ministrae.\textsuperscript{92}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82} Rives (1995) 36; Rüpke (2006a) 37. Cf. Scheid (2003b) 144. According to Raggi (2011) 335, these magistri ad fana are comparable to the well-known Republican magistri in Capua and Minturnae.
\item \textsuperscript{83} E.g. Raggi (2011) 336, 342.
\item \textsuperscript{84} Rives (1995) 37. Spickermann (2001b) 27, stresses the financial-religious tasks of magistri vici and pagi.
\item \textsuperscript{85} This ‘religious money’ did not belong to the priests, who did not make a gain from their office, Horster (2007) 331. Cf. Grannino Cerere (2009) 42-43: pecunia sacra, or better: all movable goods dedicated to the gods, were not taken care of by the priests, but instead by civic magistrates and sometimes by local religious associations. Cf. Castrén (1975) 68.
\item \textsuperscript{86} Tertullian, Apolog. 13.6 and 42.8; Chapter 72 of the Lex Ursonensis; Rives (2007) 116; Rous (2009) 74; Raggi (2011) 341. The money acquired by votive offerings could be used for decorating the temple, as the example of a mosaic in the temple of Nodens in Lydney Park in Britain shows; it was paid for ex stipibus, Henig (1984) 135.
\item \textsuperscript{87} North (2003) 210.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Woolf (2001) 120, 122-123; Raggi (2011) 338, 340.
\item \textsuperscript{89} Gonzalez and Crawford (1986) 148, 200. Duumviri, qui in eo municipio iure dicundo praerunt/ primo quoque tempore ad decurions conscriptosque / referunto quantum inpensis sacrorum, transl. by Crawford. Cf. Woolf (1998) 220, who writes that municipal and colonial charters show that the organisation and financing of the public cults were the responsibility of the civic authorities, supervised by the governor.
\item \textsuperscript{90} Cf. Schultz (2006) 73. She also writes that magistrae (and ministræ) interacted with the worshippers who visited the sanctuary.
\item \textsuperscript{91} Spickermann (1994a) 294; Spickermann (1994b) 239.
\item \textsuperscript{92} Lundeen (2006) 46. Some magistrae (and ministræ) were active in a collegium. Clark (2011) 352 writes that nothing suggests that collegia bearing the name of the gods had more intimate relationships with these gods than others without name of deity in their title, as all collegia had a tutelary deity. Some colleges made these deities part of the name of their group, p. 349. Accordingly, she thinks that the magistrae ‘of a god’ (i.e. those with a
\end{itemize}
However, Lundeen also writes that magistrae could be termed as ‘female chief or superintendent; high priestess; female expert or teacher’. In my opinion, there is no convincing evidence for this last statement and I think that in many cases claiming magistrae to be ‘high’ priestesses is overestimating their role, because the magistrae were generally from lower social rank than the sacerdotes in the catalogue (cf. chapter 5, section 3.1). Consequently, it is rather strange to maintain they were higher religious officials than ‘ordinary’ sacerdotes.

That magistrae in some cases could have been the main officials of a temple and cult is not unlikely though. In the Lex Ulsoneensis nothing is said about priests of individual gods (only pontiffs and augurs are mentioned), so it is possible that magistri – and in analogy: magistrae – were not supervised by sacerdotes and were indeed the main officials involved in specific cults or attached to specific temples (until or unless a special priest(ess) was appointed). This seems to be backed by the fact that most magistrae included in the catalogue lived in towns where no sacerdotes (male or female) of the deities they (probably) served are attested, though the evidence is rather patchy.

That the role of magistrae in some cases could be very practical, is illustrated by an inscription from Vibo Valentia (region 3), in which is referred to two magistrae, a certain Helvia and Orbia. During their time of office, two local magistrates saw that a statue of Proserpina was repaired and erected and that the altars were repaired. If there had been a sacerdos present, likely his or her name would have been recorded, instead of those of his or her subordinates. The same can be said about Renatia Maxima and her joint-magistra Pompeia who erected an altar to cleanse the sacred grove of Bona Dea, and about Italia, a magistra of the same goddess, who organised a banquet on the occasion of a dedication (see above and chapter 5).

The last inscription in the catalogue that offers information about the tasks of magistrae stems from Nepet (region 7), and was erected in AD 18. This dedication to Ceres Augusta mater agrorum

deity in their title) and other magistrae had the same tasks, or at least, that nothing suggest that the name of the deity ‘had any bearing on the difference’, 355. Nevertheless, I have decided only to include the magistrae (and ministri) in the catalogue in whose inscription the name of a deity is recorded. I think that magistrae and ministri did not necessarily all act in the collegia meant by Clark, but could also be ancillary personnel of a priestess. The ministrae sacrorum publicorum from Teanum Sidicinum (see chapter 2) is a good example: she served Juno Populonia, who was also served by sacerdotes. Besides, the magistri mentioned in the Lex Ulsoneensis seem to have been attached to shrines, not to the collegia Clark discusses. Obviously, this does not imply that the tasks of these different magistri were not similar.

95 Reliefs that belong to the inscriptions of other magistrae are not really useful for tracing their tasks; they usually depict paterae and other sacrificial instruments. There is only one inscription from Baden-Baden in Germany (cat.no.263) which shows more interesting carvings, although these were linked to the deity to whom the dedication was made, and not to the tasks of the magistra making the dedication. This relief shows a sitting woman with a basket with fruit (?) on her lap. Probably because of this relief, it has been suggested by Spickermann that the woman was magistra of a native mother-goddess, which is not unlikely; Spickermann (1994a) 294; Spickermann (1994b) 239 nr. 17. Cf. dedications to Nehalennia, depicting the goddess as a sitting woman with a bowl of fruit on her lap, Stuart and Bogaers (2001) 1.21. At the sides of Nehalennia altars, often figures are carved. According to Stuart and Bogaers (2001) 23, these were worshippers of the goddess. In several cases, the figures carry objects.
states that the *magister pagi* Lucius Bennius Primus and the *magistra* Bennia Primigenia, likely either the daughter of the *magister* or freed by the same master, celebrated the *Cerialia* on April 19th. Taylor writes that on the stone reliefs are cut that depict attributes related to the cult of Ceres, like corn ears, torches and a victim. As I have already remarked, what the *magister* and *magistra* exactly had to do during this festival in honour of Ceres is not mentioned.

*Ministrae*

Generally, the tasks of *ministrae* are supposed to have been assisting. The inscriptions in my database that record *ministrae* say little about their tasks. However, there is proof of a very practical way of caring for individual *worshippers* by a *ministra*. Cannia Fortunata was *ministra* of Bona Dea in Rome and assisted someone who suffered from problems with his eyes:

> Felix publicus / Asinianus pontific(um) / Bonae Deae agresti Felicu(lae?) / votum solvit iunice(m) alba(m) / libens ano(m) ob luminibus / restituitis derelictus a medicis post / menses decem beneficio(!) dominae(!) medicinis sanatus per / eam restituta omnia ministerio Canniae Fortunatae

> “Felix Asinianus, public slave of the *pontifices*, fulfilled his vow to Bona Dea Agrestis Felicula willingly and with good cause, (sacrificing) a white heifer on account of his eyesight having been restored. Abandoned by doctors, he recovered after ten months by taking medicines, by the aid of the Mistress. Through her, all things were restored during Cannia Fortunata’s tenure as *ministra.*”

Unfortunately, it is not explicitly mentioned what Cannia Fortunata did, but it is likely that she assisted Felix Asinianus with his sacrifice and possibly also with taking his medicines (who these medicines had prescribed remains obscure, for the man was abandoned by his doctors). In any case, it seems that *ministrae* could have been involved in the practical assistance of the visitors of a sanctuary.

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96 Clark (2011) 360 seems to think that the *magistra* did not celebrate the *Cerialia* herself.
97 Cat.no.85; Taylor (1923) 99, 243; Chirassi Colombo (1981) 427. Castrén (1975) 72, writes that *magistri pagi* were people who, because of a low birth, could not become ordinary magistrates or priests, but nevertheless had great personal authority, e.g., as result of their wealth and generosity or of the *auctoritas* of the *gens* that had freed them. They were sometimes freeborn, but usually freed. *Magistri pagi* were assisted by *ministri*, who were slaves or freed. I would not classify *magistri pagi* as religious officials, although they certainly had religious tasks. The *magistra* Bennia is not recorded as *magistra pagi*, and therefore I have included her inscription in the catalogue.
98 Taylor (1923) 99.
99 The little we know about the *Cerialia* in Rome does not help either: during this festival foxes were released, with burning torches attached to their tails, Boyd (1960) 148.
100 See e.g. Lundeen (2006) 46 footnote 59.
I think this can be explained by the fact that these women were more accessible than priestesses, for their rank and standing was less high than that of most priestesses.

Apart from the inscription of Cannia Fortunata, no other inscriptions in the catalogue – or accompanying carvings – inform us about the tasks of ministae. However, as can be concluded from several reliefs studied by Fless, ministre had many different tasks. A minister or ministra is often depicted with jugs and plates used for the ritual purification of the persons sacrificing. They also carry boxes with incense, keys, baskets, objects for sacrifices, garlands and twigs, torches and various other ritual materials. They acted as heralds and led in prayers (though praying was also a priestly duty, see above). In sum, according to Fless ministre assisted their ritual superiors. These superiors may have been magistri or sacerdotes. The catalogue contains only one example of a ministra who – possibly – assisted a sacerdos.

Vitellia / Virgiliae / Felsiae / [ministrii sa/crorum pu[bl(icerum)] / [p]aesidis l[f[n]o/nis Populo[n(ae)] / Virgilia Fl[3]A / [m]a[te]r (ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) [d(ecurionum)]

“To Vitellia Virgilia Felsia, ministra of the public rites of the protectress Juno Populona. Virgilia ? her mother [made this]. The place is given by decree of the decurions.”

This large stone statue base was erected in Teanum Sidicinum (region 1). In this same town, Nonia Prisca and Flavia Coelia Annia Argiva had both been sacerdos lunois Populonae. Therefore, the ministra may have assisted two sacerdotes, but as the relevant inscriptions cannot be dated, it is impossible to tell when both sacerdotes and the ministra lived. From the high social status of both Nonia Prisca and Flavia Coelia and the fact that they were granted a public burial place, it can be deduced that the cult of Juno Populona was held in high esteem in Teanum Sidicinum. Therefore, it is not as surprising as it may seem at first sight that the ministra Vitellia Virgilia Felsia, who after all held a relatively low office, was granted a place for the erection of her statue by decree of the ordo.

I think the most important thing that can be concluded from the inscription from Teanum and the other evidence discussed in this section, is that ministriae (and, in fact, magistriae as well) cannot

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102 She writes that minister or ministra is a better term for what has often been called a camillus or camilla. These religious officials were usually depicted as young males, although there were differences in the iconography, Fless (1995) 16, 43. The term camillus/camilla was probably unusual in the imperial period, and is used in the literary sources only to indicate the servants of the flamen and flaminica Dialis; Fless (1995) 47, 100. These camillli/camillae were in general freeborn ingenii/ae, sometimes even from high descent; Fless (1995) 45-46.


104 There was no fixed rule that priestesses were only served by ministriae, for both boys and girls served the Vestals, Fless (1995) 40-41 and male tibicines assisted the female sacerdotes Magnae Matris recorded in CIL 13, 1754 and CIL 14, 408. An inscription from Tridentum (CIL 5, 5026) records four magistriae, their names followed by four other women who were ministriae. Their relationship is not elucidated and it is unknown whether they were religious officials; therefore the inscription is not included in the catalogue.

105 Cat.no.130; Savunen (1997) 143. Connelly (2007) 217-218, writes that in Greece, priestesses had a say in the choice of members of the lower cult personnel.

106 Cat.no. 128; 129.
easily be fitted into one category: their tasks appear to have been manifold, and their standing depended not only on their office, but also on the cult in which they served and possibly the place where they lived.\textsuperscript{107}

\textit{Women with other ancillary religious functions}

\textit{Musicians and dancers}

Many people with religious offices were in one way or another involved in music or dance, which were vital elements of Roman religious rituals.\textsuperscript{108} In the \textit{Lex Ursonensis tibicenes} (flute players) are assigned to magistrates as attendants.\textsuperscript{109} They played the double flute during sacrifices, and were organised in a \textit{collegium}.\textsuperscript{110} According to Festus 482, the \textit{tubicines sacrorum publicorum populi Romani} were considered to be priests (\textit{sacerdotes viri speciosi}),\textsuperscript{111} but this has apparently more to do with his definition of priest than with reality. Pliny the Elder (\textit{NH} 28.3) writes that the function of the flute-player was to drown out the disturbing noises, like a herald. A \textit{tibicen} did not play during the whole ceremony.\textsuperscript{112} I have found only one woman recorded as \textit{tibicen}; this freedwoman lived in Rome and died at the age of fifteen.\textsuperscript{113}

Apart from fluteplayers, \textit{cymbalistriæ} and \textit{tympanistriæ} had to add musical lustre to religious ceremonies,\textsuperscript{114} but as these were generally connected to the cult of Magna Mater, I have not included them in the catalogue and will not discuss them here.\textsuperscript{115} Other female musicians are not attested on the inscriptions, and only one dancer is – though we know that religious dancing by the Salian virgins was an ancient habit in Rome, and likely in various cities outside the \textit{Urbs} as well.\textsuperscript{116} On her epitaph that was found in Rome, the little girl Flavia Vera, who did not reach her seventh year, is called \textit{praesula sacerdoti Tuscanulanorum}.\textsuperscript{117} Wissowa thinks that this girl, who may have been related to the Flavia Vera recorded in \textit{CIL} 14.2617, was in fact a Salian virgin. He argues that the words \textit{sodales} and \textit{sacerdotes} are mixed up in the inscription, because the \textit{sacerdotes Tuscanulanorum} originated from the equestrian order, while the girl Flavia Vera belonged to the middle classes. As the Salian virgins from Rome were also members of the middle classes, it is plausible to suppose that Flavia Vera was a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{107} Cf. Brouwer (1989) 275-276: the title of \textit{magistra} was not confined to slaves.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Rives (1995) 29; Rüpke (2006a) 36.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Fless (1995) 80, 83. Other religious musicians also had their own \textit{collegia}, e.g. the \textit{fidicines} (luteplayers). A \textit{collegium fidicinum} is attested in Praeneste: \textit{CIL} 1, 3063. In Rome, citizens, including people of high rank, were members of these \textit{collegia}, Fless (1995) 85; Fless and Moede (2007) 252. No women have been attested as members of these \textit{collegia}.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Fless and Moede (2007) 252; Rüpke (2011) 28.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Henig (1984) 33; Fless and Moede (2007) 258.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Cat.no.12. This male word was usually also used to indicate women, Eichenauer (1988) 52.
\item \textsuperscript{114} \textit{Cymbalistriæ} also played at non-religious occasions, see: Cicero, \textit{Cont. Pis.} 9.20 and Petronius, \textit{Sat.} 22.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Cf. Apuleius, \textit{Met.} 8.30. See also Henig (1984) 138. Two exceptions that are included are cat.no. 41 and 44 from Beneventum, as they served not only Magna Mater, but also Minerva Paracentia.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Glinister (2011) 111, 112, 114.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Cat.no.3. Latte (1960) 406 writes that the girl’s parents paid for the costs of her office – which is likely.
\end{itemize}
Salia. Praesula is the feminine form of the word used to indicate the lead dancer of the male Salii. This implies a hierarchy that is parallel to that of the Salii. However, as the organisation of religious dancers (both men and women) in general is not very clear, nothing more can be said about this young girl and her possible colleagues.

Basket carriers

During rituals, incense, fruit, grain and dairy offerings were carried by assistants in baskets, jugs and boxes. There is some epigraphic evidence that attests to women who had to carry baskets at religious rituals. They were usually called canistrariae, and the baskets they carried presumably contained offerings or sacred objects. The inscription from Rome lists various women who served Caelestis: Flavia Epicharidis was sacerdos deae Virgini Caelestis, and others were sacratae and canistrariae. All other canistrariae I have found lived in North Africa, where also some reliefs with depictions of basket carriers were found. Most of these reliefs are not included in the catalogue, but as I think they provide interesting evidence for the variety of cults in which women served as basket-carriers, I will discuss them here as well.

One of the reliefs belongs to the inscription Ofisia Cattula from Mididi; she was sacerda, probably in the Ceres cult. At the left side of her short epitaph a woman is depicted who is holding a basket. On the right side a woman with a basket in her hand and another on her head is carved.

Three other reliefs that depict canistrariae stem from Mauretania and Numidia; they accompany dedications to Saturn. Two are erected by male sacerdotes and the third by a man of whom only his name is known. Figure 7 shows the richly decorated dedication of one of the priests, a certain Caius Pomponius Felicus, sacerdos Saturni Augusti, who had solved his vow (ILAIg 1. 3472). The right figure is a close-up of the lower part of the stone that includes the inscription; here three rudely carved women can be detected, each with a large, filled basket at her head. What the baskets contain is unclear. The women seem to stand near, or approach, an altar behind which two people stand, one holding a jug in his right hand. Two bulls, supposedly the victims, are also depicted.

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119 Glinister (2011) 112. If indeed a hierarchy within the group of Saliae existed, it is possible that a magistra and vates (prophetess) were also a part of this hierarchy, Glinister (2011) 112.
122 In addition to baskets, other sacred objects could be carried as well during processions (see above). The epigraphic evidence mentions women as matres of collegia of dendrophores (‘tree-bearers’) and pastophores. Pastophores were active in the cult of Isis; dendrophores served Magna Mater. Therefore, they are not included in the catalogue. Van Nijf (1997) 195-197 about dendrophori taking part in civic processions.
123 Cf. Apuleius, Metamorphoses, 11.11.
124 Cat.no.13. The difference between the sacerdos and the sacratae backs the view (implicitly stated in Rives (1995) 161 where he mentions sacratae of Ceres) that sacratae were different from priestesses. See also chapter 2.
125 Cat.no.197.
126 CIL 8, 9022 (Auzia, Mauretania); ILAIg 1, 2926 (Altubia, Numidia); ILAIg 1, 3472 (Gunifida, near Theveste, Numidia) – not included in the catalogue.
This relief confirms again the fact that women could perform religious tasks in the cults of male deities, but the main point is that carrying baskets was obviously seen – at least in Africa – as important enough to be depicted on stone.

This importance is also shown by the fact that no less than six inscriptions mention the names of African women acting as canistrariae. All inscriptions except one are dedicatory. Three of these dedications were erected in honour of Ceres, which makes it possible that the other three canistrariae may also have been active in the cult of this goddess. That one of these last three canistrariae lived in Carthage where the Ceres cult was very important, may also point to a religious office in the cult of this goddess.\(^{127}\) This is, however, by no means certain regarding the relief of Caius Pomponius Felicus’ inscription discussed above and the fact that another group of canistrariae attested epigraphically served Virtus. These canistrariae of Virtus are recorded on an inscription from Madauros.\(^{128}\) The inscription lists the names and offices of the cistiferi deae Virtutis.\(^{129}\) It starts with the names of several priests, followed by that of the canistraria Terentia Bonifatia. The second part of the inscription lists some men (seemingly without religious office) and ends with three other canistrariae, Antonia Matrona, Manilia Honorata and Iulia Lucilla.\(^{130}\) What is noteworthy in the first

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\(^{127}\) Cat.no.163. The other two were erected in Caesarea in Mauretania.

\(^{128}\) Not included in the catalogue, for the goddess Virtus may have been the same as the Cappadocian Bellona.

\(^{129}\) Elsewhere in Africa, other cistiferi – who carried chests during ceremonies – have been attested, for example *CIL* 8, 10627 = *CIL* 8, 16532 = *ILAlg* 1, 2996 = *ILS* 5432; AE 1965, 230: a cistifer, possibly of Virtus; *CIL* 8.16532 of Bellona.

\(^{130}\) *ILAlg* 1, 2071: *[Nomina c]istiferorum deae Virtutis/* [---] duas dextra sinistra et gradus d(e) s(uo) f(ecerunt) / [---] Victor (l)amens (e)pt(us) sac(erdos) / [---]s Madaurius sac(erdos) / [---] P(rimianus) sac(erdos) / [---]ius Sabinus fanas / [---] Vibia Servilia sac(erdos) / [---] Domitius Numidius / Q(uintus) Cluvius Cremensius / Terentia Bonifatia / canistraria // T(itus) Flavius Natalis / C(au[ius]) Valerius Sabinus / L(uci)us Avianus Felix /
place, is that *cisthiēri* were not synonymous to *canistrariae*. Instead, the term *cisthiēr* seems to have had a broader meaning. Secondly, the men who held a religious function were all *sacerdotes*, while the women were *canistrariae* – and therefore of lower religious rank. This hierarchical difference between men and women within the same cult is also seen on inscriptions recording religious officials in the cult of Magna Mater.\(^{131}\)

**Others**

Apart from being musicians, dancers or basket carriers, women could fulfil several other religious tasks, for example that of *sacraria*. According to Taylor this title ‘should denote the keeper of the *sacrarium*, the room where the sacred *instrumenta* of a temple were stored.’\(^{132}\) On an inscription from Verona, a slave woman named Salvia is recorded as *sacraria*.\(^{133}\) It is possible that the office of *ostiaria* (door-keeper), only once attested on an inscription from Rome, was largely comparable to that of *sacraria*.\(^{134}\) Horster writes that a male *ostiarius* was a kind of janitor who kept the keys of the sanctuary.\(^{135}\) As it is equally possible that an *ostiaria* or *ostiarius* was janitor of the private home of a family, as Mazzoleni et al. maintain, and there is nothing in the inscription recording the *ostiaria* that points to a religious character, it is not included in the catalogue.\(^{136}\)

Another group of inscriptions that are neither included in the catalogue, record *ornatrixes*. Supposedly, they were active in the cult of Isis and tended to the statue of the goddess – that is: those who held a religious office, for *ornatrix* could also mean hairdresser.\(^{137}\) Nevertheless, the religious office of *ornatrix* needs to be mentioned here, because I think it is likely that the statues of other deities were tended in a similar way.\(^{138}\) According to Seneca, in Rome Juno and Minerva were tended


\(^{132}\) Taylor (1923) 71. Taylor thinks that the office of *sacrarius/sacraria* was the same as that of *aeditius*, which would imply that the tasks of a *sacrarius/sacraria* were wider than guarding the keys of a temple room. This is also suggested by the title of a male *sacrarius* from Falerii, who was officially called *pontifex sacrarius Iunonis Curtius*, and was, according to Taylor ‘perhaps the chief religious officer of the colony’, Taylor (1923) 64-65. Cf. the *pontifex Volcani et aedium sacrarum* from Ostia, CIL 14, 72= ILS 5451 and CIL 14, 4443, Taylor (1923) 71.

\(^{133}\) CIL 6, 6326 = ILS 7438: Optata Pasaes / ostiaria fecerunt / amici.

\(^{134}\) Horster (2007) 332. On an inscription from Rome a (male) *ostiarius* and a *ministra* are recorded (AE 2006, 234) so Horster may be wrong in classifying the *ostiarius* as a *minister*. This inscription is not included in the catalogue, for the same reasons as that of the *ostiaria* Optata, see above.

\(^{135}\) Mazzoleni et al. (2006) 417.

\(^{136}\) An *ornatrix* was the equivalent of a Greek *stolistes* or *hierostolis*. She was responsible for the clothing and make-up of the image of the goddess. Cf. Apuleius, Met. 11.20. Turcan (1997) 109; Spickermann (1994a) 106; Spickermann (1994b) 238-239.

\(^{137}\) Cf. Auleius, Met. 4.29 who writes about the worship of Aphrodite on Cythera. The statues of the goddess were normally garlanded. Although Auleius refers to a practice from the eastern part of the Empire, I think it is likely that it also existed in the West.
by female hairdressers, though these women did not directly touch the statue.\footnote{Seneca in Augustine, De Civ. Dei 6.10: Sunt quae lunoni ac Minervae capillos disponant (longe a templo, non tantum a simulacro stantes digitos mouent omentium modo), sunt quae speculum teneant – ‘Juno and Minerva have special women hairdressers, who operate some distance away, not just from the statue but from the temple.’ Special (male) attendants bathed and oiled the statue of Jupiter – that is: they mimed the movements with their hands.} Possibly in other cults, taking care of the cult statue was carried out by magistrae.

Apart from tending the statue, the sacrificial animals had to be cared for. This could range from keeping (and probably also breeding) the animals to killing them. Concerning pigs, the first could be done by porcarii\footnote{ILLRP 106b from Palestrina possibly records a collegium porcarum and CIL 3, 14370 = ILS 9243 from Augusta Vindelicorum (modern Augsburg) in Raetia mentions a porcarius. There is no link to the cult of Ceres or to that of another divinity in these inscriptions.} and probably kept the pigs, bred as sacrificial animals for Ceres.\footnote{Fless (1995) 54. Cf. Budin (2009) 215. See also the lex Irmitana and the lex Ursonensis in which public slaves are assigned to the aediles who were in charge of the maintenance of temples, Raggi (2011) 336.} I have found no other evidence for female porcarii.\footnote{From Cularo (Gallia Narbonensis) stems an inscription that attests to a male slave of Mercurius and Ceres, CIL 12, 2318 = ILN 5.2, 459: Apollini ex voto / Iustus Mercur(i) / et Cereris serv(us) – ‘To Apollo according to the vow. Iustus, slave of Mercurius and Ceres.’ Surely he had nothing to do with religious prostitution. Cf. Cicero, Pro Cluentio, 15.43 in which he compares Venerii to Martiales, who are called ministri publici.} The killing of the victim was done by the victimarius or popa, as has been discussed above.

Another category of women with religious tasks were the servae of various deities. As there is no convincing evidence to support the view that (all) religious slaves were involved in sacred prostitution (see also section 2.2), we should follow the view offered by Fless. She writes that servi publici – and in my opinion also servae publicae – took care of a sanctuary.\footnote{Cicero, In Q. Caec. 17.55-56; Verr. 2.3.89. About Agonis and the Erycian Venerii, see Lindner (2009) 302-305. Kunz (2006) 36. In Verr.2.4.32 Cicero mentions a male servus Veneris from Lilybaenum. See also Verr. 2.4.104. About manumission of sacred slaves: Budin (2009).} These ‘public slaves’ were not only ‘real’ slaves (i.e. unfree), but also free or freeborn (wo)men.\footnote{Schindler (1998) 194) lists collegia of slaves of Venus. Besides, in Patrae in Greece, a (young?) woman or girl lived, who had been polos Cereris (CIL 3, 498; not included in the catalogue). The title polos was often used in a religious context, as is stated in Patras, especially regarding girls consecrated to Demeter and Kore. It was also used in Egypt, where the cult of Demeter was linked to that of Isis. Perhaps a polos was comparable to a religious slave, for how else do we have to understand ‘being consecrated’ to a deity?} Although there is epigraphic evidence for religious slaves in the cults of Mars, Mercurius and Ceres, the other evidence is mostly limited to the Venus cult.\footnote{Schindler (1998) 194) lists collegia of slaves of Venus. Besides, in Patrae in Greece, a (young?) woman or girl lived, who had been polos Cereris (CIL 3, 498; not included in the catalogue). The title polos was often used in a religious context, as is stated in Patras, especially regarding girls consecrated to Demeter and Kore. It was also used in Egypt, where the cult of Demeter was linked to that of Isis. Perhaps a polos was comparable to a religious slave, for how else do we have to understand ‘being consecrated’ to a deity?}

Cicero mentions a certain Agonis, a wealthy liberta Veneris from Lilybaenum and a Banobalis, male slave of Venus.\footnote{Cicero mentions a certain Agonis, a wealthy liberta Veneris from Lilybaenum and a Banobalis, male slave of Venus. I have not found much epigraphic evidence of religious servae, but there is some from North Africa and – probably – from Gades in Spain.\footnote{The Spanish inscriptions are the epitaphs of two women, Maria and Domitia. Their names are followed by the word Veneris, and}
therefore it has been suggested in the *Inscripciones Romanas de la Provincia de Cadiz* that they were *Veneris servae*.147

The African evidence for religious slaves of Venus is less uncertain than that from Spain. Two inscriptions, both from Sicca Veneria (Africa Proconsularis), record (former) slaves of Venus. Baricca, daughter of Rogatus lived twenty-five years and died as *Veneris serva*.148 The other inscription from Sicca Veneria mentions Caius Iulius Optatus, who had been freedman of Venus (*Veneris libertus*) and died when he was forty.149 This inscription shows that men – at least in Sicca Veneria – could also be slaves of Venus. This is not really surprising, for in the same town two male *sacerdotes Veneris* have been attested,150 and a male *actor of Venus*.151 Furthermore, the inscription also shows that religious slaves could be freed, which we also know from other sources.

A last inscription stems from Castellum Biracsaccarensium in Africa Proconsularis. It is the funerary inscription of a girl who may have been slave of Juno. As the name of the goddess is abbreviated this is rather dubious.152

*Extricata l(unonis?) M(agna?) / R(eginae?) ser(va) Felicis S/altuari i f(ilia) pia vi/xit annis III hic sita*

“Extricata, slave of Juno Magna Regina?, daughter of Felix Salutarius, lived piously three years. She [is] buried here.”

This epigraph shows that – if indeed this young Extricata had been slave of the goddess – children could be given as ‘religious slaves’ by their parents when they were very young (from which follows the question what these slaves had to and *could* do!). Furthermore, it confirms that religious slaves were not necessarily of unfree status, for otherwise the name of the girl’s father would not have been inscribed.

What can be concluded from the evidence discussed so far is that women could hold a great variety of religious offices and had a wide range of tasks to fulfil. From the noble *sacerdos* to the humble servant and from supervising public sacrifices to carrying baskets – the offices and tasks open to women were largely comparable to those of men. There is however, one important religious task for which there is no evidence whatsoever which shows that women had their share in it: debating points of ritual. This

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147 Cat.no.287 and 288.
148 Cat.no.208.
149 *CIL* 8, 27580.
150 *CIL* 8,15879 and 15882.
151 *CIL* 8, 15894. Rives (1994b, 301) writes: ‘The cult of Venus was clearly one of the most important *sacra publica* in Sicca.’ Apart from the servants of Venus mentioned here, in the same town a group *Venerii* has been attested, *ILS* 5505.
152 Cat.no.279.
seems to have been reserved for men. In Rome the pontiffs sat as a court and decided how to handle *incestum* committed by a Vestal, and the *Acta Arvalium* provides us with the protocols of the Arval Brethren.\(^{153}\) Admittedly, this evidence for debating male religious officials stems from the City, while there is not much comparable evidence from the provinces, as far as I know.\(^{154}\) This could simply be a matter of coincidence, or point to a slightly different role of priests in the provinces, which I think is possible. Colonial charters attest to an important role of the decurions in local religion, so possibly the task of debating about ritual problems was, at least partly, taken over by them. However that may be, women seem to have been excluded from it.

2: Priestesses as embodiment of ritual

Above, I have discussed what women who held religious offices had to *do*. Now I turn to the *persona* of the priestess. Several priests and priestesses in Rome had to live a ritualized life, regulated by a great variety of prescriptions, in order to be able to embody the divine. The Vestals are the most famous example, but the regulations to which the *flamen* and *flaminica Diaulis* were subjected are no less appealing to the imagination.\(^{155}\) In this section I will investigate if comparable rules regulated the lives of female religious officials in the provinces. In order to do so, I shall deal with questions concerning the presentation, required age and prescribed behaviour of the women. Some of these issues highlight ritualized ways of being and acting, meant to let the divine be embodied in the priestesses; others relate more to the way priestesses publicly performed their religious roles. I will start with an examination of the epigraphic evidence that provides information about the number of years priestesses served and the age when religious officials acquired their position. This is followed by a discussion of the supposed chastity of the *sacerdotes Cereris*. Sacred prostitution, which forms an interesting contrast to chastity, will be the rather controversial topic of the following section. Finally, I will discuss the clothes a priestess wore, in order to recover whether she was recognizable as a religious official.

2.1: Age and years of service

Apart from the Roman Vestals,\(^{156}\) little is known of the age at which women or girls entered their priesthood and of the number of years they had to serve. According to the *Lex Ursonensis*, the

\(^{153}\) I would like to thank Professor Greg Woolf for bringing this difference to my notice.

\(^{154}\) There may be some comparable evidence from the imperial cult: the provincial priest was chairman of the provincial *concilium* and it is likely that this council also discussed religious matters. However, this council was not made up of priests, and had close links to the local *ordo*, which may underline the important role of decurions in provincial religion. See Fishwick (2004) 211 for the link between *concilium*, provincial priest and local *ordo*.

\(^{155}\) See e.g. Boëls (1973); Beard (1980) and (1995); Scheid (1986).

\(^{156}\) Aulus Gellius 1.12; Wildfang (2006) 44.
pontifices and augures were chosen annually, but the question can be asked whether the same was true for the priesthoods of individual gods in the provinces in general and for those held by women in particular.157 The cult of Ceres may shed some light on this matter, although it is by no means certain that we can generalize within this cult or to other priesthoods. Fortunately, there is some – though very little – evidence from other cults available as well.

While priests like the pontifices and augures had to be of a minimum age when they entered their priesthood, such a prescription does not seem to have been required of all priests and priestesses or other religious officials. The catalogue provides us with some evidence of young girls who held religious offices; this will be the topic of the section following the discussion of the number of years served. In contrast to girls holding priesthoods, some priestesses may have been of a ripe old age: the female sacerdotes of Ceres were supposed to be elderly ladies. In the last section of this part of the chapter, I will investigate whether this supposition is correct.

Years of service
From three inscriptions – all funerary – it can be concluded that at least some priestesses and other female religious officials served more than one year. These inscriptions record how many years the three women had served, although unfortunately, of one inscription the number is unreadable. Furthermore, it can be deduced at what age these women had acquired their offices. Two inscriptions were erected in North Africa and one in Italy. This Italian inscription is the epitaph of a ministra of Salus, who lived in Amitemum in the beginning of the first century AD:158

Dis Man(ibus) / sacrum / Plaetoriae / Secundae / ministrae Salutis / ann(os) XIII vixit XXX

“Dedicated to the spirits of the deceased Plaetoria Secunda, ministra of Salus for thirteen years; she lived thirty [years].”

Likely, this woman entered her office when she was seventeen years old, which was not extremely young for a member of the lower cult personnel (see below).159 As it was thought worth recording how many years Plaetoria Secunda had served, it seems that thirteen years was supposed to be a considerable time. The inscription recording Aemilia Amotmicar from the Gens Bacchuiana in Africa Proconsularis is an example of a woman, this time a sacerdos, who had served even longer than Plaetoria Secunda. Aemilia had been priestess of the Cereres and had held her office for thirty-five

158 Cat.no.23. See also Schultz (2006) 71.
159 A common parallel expression from the military: militavit annos (number) vixit annos (number) and vice versa, see e.g., AE 1897, 132; AE 1905, 201; AE 1995, 1724; CIL 8, 24682.
years.\textsuperscript{160} She died when she was seventy five, which means that she was forty when she acquired her priesthood.\textsuperscript{161}

\textit{Aemilia Amot/micar sacerdos / Cererum p\textit{(i) a} vix\textit{(it)} an\textit{(nis)} LXXV / consecr\textit{ vit an\textit{(nis)}} XXXV}

“Aemilia Amotmicar, pious priestess of the \textit{Cereres}, lived seventy-five years; she has dedicated [herself] thirty five years.”

The other African inscription in which is referred to a specified period in service was erected in Saldae in Mauretania. Again it is an epitaph of a \textit{sacerdos} who served Ceres. Unfortunately, the actual number of years is unreadable:\textsuperscript{162}

\textit{Maesolaeve\textless m\textgreater Heren/nia M\textit{(arci)} r\textit{(ilia)} Tertulla / sacerdos Cere\textit{ris} vixit a\textit{nnis}) \textit{?} / sacerdotium gessit a\textit{nnis})

“When Maesolaeum? Herennia Tertulla, daughter of Marcus, priestess of Ceres lived ? years; she held her priesthood for ? years”

It is not certain whether after the words \textit{sacerdotium gessit} a number of years was inscribed, though it is likely, for the \textit{a ofannis} or \textit{annos} can be read, after which a number could have been carved. An inscription from Zattara in Africa Proconsularis provides an analogy with the same words \textit{sacerdotium gessit}. Caius Aquilius Telesinus died when he was 103 after he had been priest of the \textit{Genius Patriae} for forty-eight years.\textsuperscript{163} On the other hand, it is also possible to read \textit{anno} instead of \textit{annis}, which would imply that Herennia took up her office during a certain year.\textsuperscript{164} This last option would be an interesting parallel to the male priests of Ceres in Carthage whose priesthood was linked to a year of the religious era (see chapter 3, section 3.5). However, the male Carthaginian \textit{sacredotes} seem to have served in a cult that was different from the other North African Ceres cults, which makes it plausible

\textsuperscript{160} This was even longer than the mean length of office-holding of the Roman Vestals (26.6 years), and certainly much longer than other Roman priesthoods that were not annual, see: Rüpke (2011) 32-33. In Rome, the more prestigious priesthoods were held for a longer time than less prestigious ones, Rüpke (2011) 33. Guerra Gomez (1987) 62 erroneously writes that Aemilia held the priesthood for 25 years.
\textsuperscript{161} Cat.no.176.
\textsuperscript{162} Cat.no.203. About this woman, see also Delgado Degado (1998) 32.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{ILA}1 1, 540 = AE 1897, 30: \textit{D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / C(aius) Aquili/us Tele/sinus vix(it) / annis CIII / ex i(i) sacer/dotium gess(it) / Gen(i) pat(rae) an(nos) / XXXXIIIX / h(ic) s(itus) / e(st) / Casta Satu/ra uxor s(upra) s(criti) / vix(it) annis / LXX h(ic) s(it) / est.\textsuperscript{164} Delgado Degado (1998) 33, writes that Herennia Tertulla served more than one year.
to suppose that the fact that they held their priesthood for only one year was not the norm. In addition, the other evidence I mentioned here seems to indicate that priestesses could serve for a longer period. Therefore, I think the first option is more convincing, although one cannot exclude the possibility of local differences in the required minimum or maximum number of years a sacerdos had to serve.

Children holding religious offices

We have seen that Plaetoria Secunda, the ministra of Salus, acquired her office when she was seventeen. There is some, though little, epigraphic evidence that attests to much younger women – or rather girls – who held religious offices. In some cases these offices must have been purely honorific. To be appointed as priestess when one was very young required a high social standing, as generally the importance of a priesthood did not fit with young age, which therefore had to be compensated by something else. Gaia Nummia, who had been public priestess in Beneventum, is a good example. On her inscription she is addressed as clarissima puella which suggests that she was young, but also descended from a senatorial family. And indeed, as I will indicate in the next chapter, the gens Nummia was quite prestigious.

Regarding the honorific character of religious offices held by young girls, it seems that when a priestess was praised for her ‘indefatigable piety’ (ob infatigabili pietatem eius) as in the following inscription, I think we should not interpret this as a religious qualification. Rather, we should see it as a more general positive characteristic that can better be translated as ‘dutiful’ or ‘devoted’, or as an expression of motherly sorrow over losing a lovely daughter:

\[D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Petiliae Q(uinti) f(iliae) Secundinae / sacerdoti Minervae vix(it) / ann(os) VIII m(enses) VII d(ies) XVIII ob infa/tigabilem pietatem eius Messia Dorcas mat(er) infel(icitissima) fil(iae) d(ulcisima) b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit)\]

“Dedicated to the spirits of the deceased. To Petilia Secundina, daughter of Quintus, priestess of Minerva. She lived nine years, seven months and eighteen days. Because of her indefatigable piety/devotion, her most unhappy mother Messia Dorcas made this for her very sweet daughter, who deserved well.”

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165 In contrast to for example the priestesses of Artemis in Cyrenaica who seem to have held their office for one year, after which they joined together in a group, Reynolds (2011) 501.

166 In addition, there are statues of young priestesses, for instance that of a sacerdos Isidis from Taormina, Palermo, Museo Archeologico Regionale „Antonio Salinas“, Inv. Nr. 704. Children holding religious offices were not uncommon, especially in the third and fourth century, Brouwer (1989) 385. In Rome, the Saliae were not older than teenagers, Gilinster (2011) 121

167 Cat.no.49. Saller and Shaw (1984) 126: especially when children died, affection played a role in the erection of epitaphs. Schultz (2006) 70, also thinks that this priestess probably held a purely honorific office.
Petilia Secundina, whose epitaph was found in Butuntum (region 2), was only nine years old, but that is nothing compared to Extricata, the three year old girl who may have been a *serva Lunonis* (see above). The young woman who was *tibicen* was much older (fifteen), though she too was relatively young, compared to the other women in the catalogue. At her fifteenth, this Fulvia Copiola was not only religious flute player, but she was freed as well. Flavia Vera, the *praesula* (lead dancer) from Rome was nearly seven when she died (both also mentioned above).

It seems that like their mothers, children could act in a variety of cults and in many different religious offices, both as priestesses and assistants. The difference between the two must have been that some young assistants could probably really perform their tasks (e.g., dancing and flute playing can very well be done by children) while the child-priestesses may have had only a ceremonial function (and pay their *summa honoraria*, see chapter 5, section 2.3).

*The (supposed) old age of the African sacerdotes Cereris*

In Greco-Roman religion elderly women and widows seem to have played an important role.168 Apart from many priestesses in Greece who were of an advanced age,169 the fictive priestess of Juno mentioned by Vergil,170 that of Venus in Plautus’ *Rudens*,171 the *alma sacerdos* of Bona Dea described in Propertius’ *Elegies*172 and the elderly women who acted as priestesses of Liber during the *Liberalia*,173 we encounter old women in the cult of Ceres. Cicero writes that the *sacerdotes* and *antistitae* of Ceres in Catena on Sicily were ‘of great age’ (*maiores nato*).174 Most striking though, are the many North African epitaphs of priestesses of Ceres who grew remarkably old.175 The most extreme ones belong to Numidian *sacerdotes magnaer*.176 Claudia Rufina from Thagaste reached a 103 years,177 while Iulia Urbana and Aria Anulla died when they were both 101.178 Firmidia Impetrata from Saddar passed away at the respectable age of 100.179 In general, most African priestesses of Ceres died when they were older than fifty-five. As of only one Italian *sacerdos Cereris* the age when she died is preserved on stone, we cannot compare the age of the African priestesses to that of their Italian colleagues. However, the one exception, a woman from Puteoli whose name has been lost, also passed away at an advanced age; she died when she was ninety-three.180

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168 Cf. Drine (1994) 180-1, who writes that in religion older women played an important role, because of their supposed wisdom and maternal qualities.
169 Connelly (2007) 43.
170 *Aen.* 7.419.
171 *Rudens* 406.
174 Cicero *Verr.* 2.4.99.
175 Drine (1994) 177.
176 Although Quarta died at 59, cat.no.175.
177 Cat.no.218.
178 Cat.no.212 and 154 respectively.
179 Cat.no.201.
180 Cat.no.112.
A more fruitful comparison can be made between the African priestesses of Ceres and their male colleagues. With two exceptions, the male sacerdotes of Ceres (or the Cereres) also died at a considerable age: Marcus Clodius ? Caecilianus from Carthage expired at seventy-two but Publius Valerius Alexa from the same city passed away when he was 105. Even the only priest of Ceres who died outside Africa grew reasonably old: Marcus Nonius Metrodorus, the freedman who had served in the annual Carthaginian cult but whose epitaph was erected in Massilia (see chapter 3) died when he was eighty. One of the two Numidian male sacerdotes Cererum whose age is known, died at ninety-five; he lived in Saddar like Firmidia Impeutra, the sacerdos magna who deceased when five years older. Sittius Iunarius from Tiddis (Numidia) passed away when he was 100 years old.

It is well-known that many African epitaphs attest to people (including most female sacerdotes of other cults) who died at a very old age compared to other regions of the Empire, so we have to be careful not to attach too much value to the high ages of the sacerdotes of Ceres mentioned here. Furthermore, the age at which they died does not tell us anything about the age when the priestesses acquired their priesthood. Maybe they were appointed as priestesses when they were much younger and held their office for a large number of years (cf. above)? Or maybe they held their priesthood during a limited period but were still called priestess after their deaths because it enhanced their prestige? Unfortunately, these questions cannot be solved with the available inscriptions.

However, we should not too readily dismiss the epigraphic evidence. First we have to discuss a statement of Tertullian that has been put forward by modern scholars to show that the sacerdotes serving Ceres in North Africa were indeed exceptional with respect to their age. In De Exhortatione Castitatis 13.2 Tertullian mentions women, dedicated to Ceres Africana, who spontaneously abdicate matrimony, and so live to old age (feminas uero Cereri Africanae, cui etiam sponte abdicato matrimonio assenescunt). In my opinion, this quotation does not say that the women were already of advanced age when they gave up their marriage and entered the service of the goddess. Besides, as Tertullian’s observation focuses on (temporary) chastity – see below – and not on age, I think the word assenescunt should be interpreted as a way to stress the – in Tertullian’s eyes – positive sacrifice of the abdication of marriage, which the women endured for a long time, and not reaching old age per se. In

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181 Cnaeus Cornelius Datus from Mustis died when he was only fifty-two (CIL 8, 15585). The most important exception is a certain Aulus (his nomen and cognomen are mostly unreadable); this priest of Ceres died when he was only twenty (ILAB 383; Cadotte nr. 191).
182 AE 1909, 164.
183 ILTun, 1063 = AE 1924, 33 = ILPBardo-A, 41.
186 CIL 8, 6709 = ILAlg 2, 3618.
187 Hopkins (1966) 247-249; Duncan Jones (1977) 334. In addition, age-awareness of women was generally less than that of men, Duncan-Jones (1977) 339. Furthermore, recording one’s age was almost universal on African epitaphs, Duncan-Jones (1977) 342. Cf. Saller and Shaw (1984) 130 about the high number of elderly people in rural North Africa.
188 Transl. by S. Thelwall. Cf. Ad Ux. 1.6.4. See the next section.
his De Monogamia, Tertullian mentions to the same women (then called sacerdotes) who live separated from their husbands; there is no reference whatsoever to the age of the priestesses. ¹⁸⁹

*Cereris sacerdotes viventibus etiam viris et consentientibus amica separatione viduautur.*

“The priestesses of Ceres, even during the lifetime and with the consent of their husbands, are widowed by amicable separation.”

In sum, it seems that neither these passages from Tertullian, nor the epigraphic evidence discussed above is sufficient proof for the supposition that the African priestesses of Ceres were all elderly women. In the next section, the same women will figure, and the same quotations of Tertullian will be used in a discussion of what by Drine has been called one of the main characteristics of the African priestesses of Ceres/ the Cereres: their chastity. ¹⁹⁰

2.2: Chastity and Prostitution

Chastity

Chastity was a common feature in many Greco-Roman cults. ¹⁹¹ The most famous examples are of course the Vestals, ¹⁹² but many others can be found; for instance, during the festival of the Vestalia, the flamen Dialis and flaminica had to withhold from sex. ¹⁹³ Livy (39.9.4) mentions continence in relation to the Bacchanalia, while Soranus (Gyn. 1.32) mentions women who live in religious celibacy, unfortunately without giving any further details. In her book on women’s religious activity in Republican Rome, Schultz writes that that priestesses had to be either matrons (like the flaminica Dialis or the regina sacrorum), or the opposite: unmarried virgins like the Vestals. ¹⁹⁴ However, it is not certain whether the sacerdotes of Ceres of the city of Rome were married or not. ¹⁹⁵

It seems that not one norm existed regarding the sexual status of priestesses in Italy and the provinces, for many sacerdotes were married and/or had children, while of others no family members at all are attested. I think is likely that most priestesses were or had been married, as this was generally expected from Roman women (see chapter 1). However, there is some controversy about the married status of the priestesses of Ceres – mainly the African ones – and it has often been supposed that these

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¹⁸⁹ De Monog. 17.4, transl. by Thelwall.

¹⁹⁰ Drine (1994) 177. According to Drine, the other main characteristic is their old age, discussed above.

¹⁹¹ In Greece, permanent chastity seems to have been limited to older priestesses; most priestesses were married, Connelly (2007) 29, 41. In Greece, chastity could also be required of male priests, Osborne (1993) 393.

¹⁹² See e.g., Parker (2004); Wildfang (2006) chapter 4. Controversia 1.2 of Seneca deals with a priestess who had to be chaste and pure and born of chaste and pure parents, and had otherwise many similarities to the Vestals.

¹⁹³ Boels (1973) 97.


women were either widows, or that they had to live apart from their husbands or at least remain abstinent from sex during their term of office.

That sacerdotes Ceres could be married is shown by several inscriptions, mostly from Africa. These inscriptions also show that even if the priestesses had to live apart from their husbands, they still perceived themselves as married or were perceived as such by their husbands and children. A good example is the epitaph erected by Baburia Ianuaria, who lived in Ammaedara around the turn of the second century AD. As was common for a loving spouse and dutiful mother, this woman took care of the funerary monument of her husband and their daughter. In the epitaph of Quarta, sacerdos magna in Gales in Africa Proconsularis, it is explicitly mentioned that she was married to a man named Celer (uxor Celeris), with whom she probably had a son called Valens. So it seems that at least some African priestesses of Ceres still had close ties to their families after they had acquired their office. Of course, it remains possible that they had to live in celibacy during the period they held their priesthood but nothing in the inscription suggests this.

The evidence generally used by modern scholars as proof of a (temporary) chastity of sacerdotes Ceres is a reference in Ovid and three references by Tertullian, two of which are mentioned above. Ovid writes that in Rome during the yearly festival of Ceres white-clothed matrons (matres) had to stay abstinent from sex for nine days (perque novem noctes venerem tactusque viriles in vetitis numerant). As may be clear, Ovid does not speak of priestesses, so in my view this cannot be used as sufficient evidence for the (supposed) chastity of sacerdotes Ceres. The passages of Tertullian are more convincing. In Ad Uxorern where he discusses remarriage, he mentions African women who served Ceres as examples of pagan chastity in order to show that even pagan women could live a life of celibacy, which he preferred over remarriage. These African women need not be virgins, but had to stay abstinent from sex and their marriage, at least during the period they served the goddess, but possibly even for the rest of their life (which may be identical).

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196 See e.g., cat.no.209; the priestess recorded here probably also served Ceres.
197 Cat.no.149.
198 Cat.no.175.
199 Therefore, in my view Schultz’s statement that it is rightly accepted that the priestesses remained celibate during their time of office, is exaggerated, Schultz (2007) 15.
201 Contra Cadotte (2007) 360, who writes that the chastity of the African Ceres priestesses had a Roman origin.
202 Apart from the priestesses of Ceres, Tertullian, De Exhort. Cast. 13.2 also mentions virgines of Minerva and Diana in several places (quibusdam locis). It is noteworthy that the sacerdos of Minerva, cat.no.49, was only nine years old, and accordingly must have been a virgin.
203 There is evidence for a (temporary) chastity of the Greek priestesses of Demeter Thesmophoros (Lucianus, Timon 17) and we have seen in chapter 3 that the African Ceres cult had Greek roots. Remarkably, Heyob (1975) 126, thinks the Tertullian actually meant devotees of Isis. She does not give any convincing arguments to prove her view that Ceres Africana was the same deity as Isis, so we can dismiss this statement as unfounded.
204 Ad Uxorern 1.6.4. Cf. De Exhort. Cast 13.2 and De Monog. 17.4, where the women are called sacerdotes.
Ceterum uiduas Africanae Cereri adsistere scimus, durissima quidem obliuione a matrimonio affectas. Nam manentibus in uita uiris non modo toto decedunt, sed et alias eis, utique ridentibus, loco suo insinuant; adempto omni contactu, usque ad osculum filiorum et tamen, durante usu, perseverant in tali uiduatis disciplina, quae pietatis etiam sancta solacia excludit.

“Moreover, we know that widows minister to the African Ceres; enticed away, indeed, from matrimony by a most stern oblivion: for not only do they withdraw from their still living husbands, but they even introduce other wives to them in their own room----the husbands, of course, smiling on it----all contact (with males), even as far as the kiss of their sons, being forbidden them; and yet, with enduring practice, they persevere in such a discipline of widowhood, which excludes the solace even of holy affection.”

As Tertullian chose this example of pagan chastity likely because the priestesses of Ceres were well-known in northern Africa in the time he lived (around AD 200), we may assume that there were indeed some rules governing the sexual life of these women – though it is by no means certain that we have to take everything he writes literally. He may have exaggerated the strictness of the rules for his own purpose, and have come up with the story that the priestesses introduced other women to their husbands to show the perversity of the heathens. Nevertheless, that the priestesses had to stay abstinent from sex during a certain period seems likely.

Still, it is dubious whether this quote of Tertullian is simply applicable to the situation in Rome or Italy. Even though she has noted this problem, Schultz writes that the Italian priestesses seem to have been widows or old and never married at all. Lundeen holds the same view and suggests that it is possible that the priestesses, both in Italy and Africa, did not have children and husbands or were only loosely attached to these, for most inscriptions do not record children or husbands. She also writes that possibly because the priestesses had to be chaste and leave their families, only single women were appointed as priestesses, which in its turn could explain the absence of commemorators on the epitaphs. It may be clear that this is circular reasoning.

Furthermore, many other priestesses who did not serve Ceres, both from Italy and Africa, are also recorded on simple epitaphs without names of husband and children. In addition, there are several inscriptions of Italian priestesses of Ceres that do record family members, including husbands. Schultz writes that these inscriptions could be the result of a chronological or geographical deviation,

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205 Transl. by S. Thelwall.
209 And not only of priestesses. The epitaphs of the local Pompeian elite, for instance, rarely record other persons than the deceased and sometimes a dedicator, Mouritsen (2005) 47. Saller and Shaw (1984) 130, 132, 133, have noticed cultural differences in commemorating and write that the percentage of inscriptions that do not mention commemorators varies between areas.
but in my opinion this is rather unconvincing. A much easier explanation is to conclude what I have already stated above: there was no single norm: priestesses could be married and have children, but they could equally well be unmarried or widowed.

Remarkably, the last piece of evidence that could show that a temporary chastity was part of the Italian Ceres cult, is not mentioned by the scholars who have propagated the view that sacerdotes Cерерис had to be chaste and live apart from their husbands. It is the epitaph of the priestess Prima Pettiedia from Corfinium (first century BC; see also chapter 3). Peruzzi translates the first lines of this inscription as follows:

‘Near the place of Persephone lies the priestess Prima Pettiedia, called Vibidia during the time she lived without husband…’

If indeed Peruzzi is correct, this temporary divorce from her husband could possibly be linked to Prima Pettiedia’s priesthood of Ceres. This would imply that temporary chastity was a requirement of Ceres priestesses in the Republican period (at least of those in Corfinium). As the translation of this inscription is controversial, and as it is uncertain if the time Prima Pettiedia lived without husband was indeed required by her religious office, I think this epitaph can not be seen as proof of a temporary chastity of sacerdotes Cерерис. Furthermore, it is problematic to use an inscription dating from the first century BC as evidence for practices in the time of Tertullian. In sum, the evidence for (temporary) chastity and voluntary divorce of sacerdotes Cерерис is not conclusive, though it was likely a part of the Ceres cult in northern Africa.

**Sacred prostitution**

Another controversial subject related to female priestesses is sacred prostitution. Several literary sources mention sacred prostitution in various parts of the Graeco-Roman world, and many modern scholars have discussed the topic. A town they have paid much attention to, is Sicca Veneria in North Africa, where the goddess Venus was worshipped. Members of her religious personnel are often supposed to have acted as sacred prostitutes. This is of particular interest for this thesis, because we have seen above that there is epigraphic evidence of various people – both men and women – active in the Venus cult of Sicca, including religious slaves.

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211 Peruzzi (1995) 13, 15. For the text, see the appendix.
212 See Budin (2008) for references. Rituals involving sexual acts have attracted much attention, see e.g. Rousselle (1988) 107-112, who writes that a certain sexually slanted religious festival during which men had to take hold of women in the dark, ‘doubtless’ became a part of the cult of the African Cereres. Besides, she thinks that nudity was ‘in any case’ part of some of the rituals of Ceres in Africa. As the evidence she uses to back those two views is rather meagre and unconvincing, and because Ceres was generally viewed as a chaste goddess, I think we can dismiss these views as speculation.
Rives thinks, based on a statement of Valerius Maximus, quoted below, that Punic women acted as temple prostitutes. This would imply that the cult was not imported from Rome, as some have maintained, also because temple prostitution seems to have been no part of the Venus cult in the City.²¹³ Rives maintains that the ‘practice of temple prostitution strongly suggests that the cult was Semitic in origin, or at least subject to great Semitic influence.’²¹⁴ This Semitic influence would have come from Sicily as at Eryx a comparable system of temple slaves and freedmen as in Sicca is attested, while such a system was not common in Roman cults.²¹⁵ However, we have seen above that religious slaves of various cults are attested on inscriptions.

Although many other modern scholars also simply believe that temple prostitution existed in Sicca, Eryx and elsewhere,²¹⁶ there is, according to Budin, nothing in the epigraphic sources – neither from Eryx, nor from Sicca – that attests to temple prostitution in those places. Only slaves in service of Venus are recorded, and there is nothing that can prove that these slaves, neither the female, nor the male, were prostitutes.²¹⁷ Nevertheless, Cadotte writes about the inscription of Baricca, mentioned in section 1.5 of this chapter, that it might record a prostitute in service of Venus.²¹⁸ Budin has convincingly shown that the statement of Valerius Maximus, which has led to the interpretation of the inscription of Baricca as possible proof of a sacred prostitute, is not as straightforward as it may seem. Valerius Maximus writes about the cult of Venus in Sicca Veneria:²¹⁹

Siccae enim fanum est Veneris, in quod se matronae conferebant atque inde procedentes ad quaeestum dotes corporis injuria contrahebant, honesta nimium tam inhonesto uincolo coniugia iuncturae.

Budin translates it as follows:

²¹³ Rives (1994b) 301.
²¹⁶ E.g., Tlalti (1978) 180; Stehle (1989) 152; Palmer (1997) 120; Schindler (1998) 120-138. Kunz (2006) 37 writes that the temple prostitution in Sicca Veneria was non-permanent because it was limited to the pre-nuptial state. Schilling (1980) 450-451, even thinks that in the sanctuary of Venus in Casinum in Italy women served as prostitutes. This is, in my opinion, not based on sound evidence (inscriptions recording several women making dedications to Venus: CIL 10.5166; 5167; 5165).
²¹⁷ See also Lindner (2009) 301, 308, 318, 319. Yon believes that in Fenicia, Carthage, the occidental part of the Mediterranean and on Cyprus sacred prostitution existed, although the sources are dubious. She writes that in Carthage a ‘mt ’irtt, a female servant of Asarte has been attested, although in my opinion, this does not automatically to point to sacred prostitution, Yon (2009) 208-9
²¹⁸ Cat.no.208; Cadotte (2007) 209.
²¹⁹ Val. Max. 2.6.15. Plautus, Poenulus 930-949 is another source for modern speculations about sacred prostitution.
“For at Sicca is a temple of Venus in which the matrons used to gather and going forth from there for profit they used to acquire dowries by illicit use of the body, undoubtedly to join with such a dishonest bond honest marriages.”

The word *iniuria* deserves special attention, as it shows that the matrons could not have been prostitutes, because ‘[p]rofit for sex would not have been *iniustus* for actual prostitutes’. 220 Besides, the word *quaestus* does not necessarily refer to prostitution, but only to something indecent. Budin concludes that the ‘matrons of Sicca are condemned because they publicly commit adultery and make a profit from it.’ 221 And permitting women to commit adultery was obviously very scandalous in Roman eyes. 222 Of course, this is not to say that the Venus cult of Sicca was not linked to selling sex – only that no sacred prostitutes were involved, or, in other words: cult personnel (slaves) attached to the temple. 223

In conclusion, there is no proof of women who were slaves of the temple in Sicca and sold their bodies in service of the goddess at a regular basis. The religious slaves recorded epigraphically were simply unfree persons who belonged to a deity and its temple, comparable to state slaves. This is supported by the tasks of the Erycian slaves of Venus, as listed by Cicero; their tasks varied from keeping order to financial duties, but nowhere prostitution is mentioned. 224 It seems the imagination of the modern scholars is running wild.

2.3: Clothing and outward appearance

The last topic of this chapter is much less controversial than the previous two. While wearing special garments was probably required of a *sacerdos*, her clothing has not evoked half as much speculation as the (supposed) chastity and prostitution. Nevertheless, it deserves its own section, for special clothing was linked to the religious *persona* of the priestess.

Distinctive clothing was often worn on religious occasions, by both priests and worshippers (i.e. usually initiates). 225 In Rome, special religious clothing that was worn each day and was combined with a special way of living was reserved for the *flaminica Diaīis*, the *regina sacrorum*, the Vestals and the *Saliæ*. 226 Priestesses in Italy and the provinces were probably also recognizable as

223 Lindner (2009) 315. Additionally, if sacred prostitution existed in classical antiquity, it will probably never have taken place in a temple, considering the numerous prescriptions regulating purity that were imposed on people entering a sanctuary, as Dr. Lucinda Dirven has kindly brought to my attention.
225 In Greece, regulations concerning clothing and finery also existed, mainly in Demeter or Demeter-related cults, Osborne (1993) 398.
religious officials – but likely only on religious occasions, as full time priestships were rare. Croom writes that the special clothing of priestesses was often old fashioned and needed to be fastened in a special way. It was intended to make the priestess stand out from ‘ordinary’ people. Alternatively, the requirement not to wear certain garments could also be part of a religious office: Picard mentions an inscription from somewhere in modern Algeria that records a priestess who had served many years barefoot. Unfortunately, he does not give a reference to this inscription, and I have not been able to trace it and verify its contents.

Something which was certainly far more universal than serving barefoot was wearing the *influla*. The *influla* was the common sign of Roman priesthoods, mainly worn during sacrifices. An *influla* consisted of a beaded ribbon wrapped around the head, with its ends hanging loose about the neck or on the shoulders. Cicero writes that when he visited Enna, he was met by the priestesses of Ceres, who wore *influlae* and carried sacred branches (*sacerdotes Cericus cum influlis ac verbenis fuerunt*). They had come to him as suppliants because of the loss of the cult statue of the goddess (see chapter 3). Apart from the *influla*, priestesses could be recognised as religious officials by other headgear. Varro mentions the *capital*, a woven band fastened to the hair, worn by *sacerdotulae*. Crowns were worn by priests and priestesses of various cults, though mainly in the Greek East. The few reliefs of priestesses that accompany the inscriptions included in the catalogue do not depict *influlae* or crowns, but often these reliefs are damaged or crudely carved, so I think there is no reason to assume that the priestesses in the catalogue did not wear such head coverings during religious ceremonies.

In various cults the clothing of the priest or priestess seems to have resembled that of the deity he or she served. By their outward appearance *flaminicae* resembled imperial women and priestesses of Isis wore the same clothes as the goddess, although it is unclear whether this clothing was meant for daily use or for religious occasions only. Tertullian (*De Pallio* 4.10.2) mentions the special clothing worn by African initiates (not *sacerdotae*) in the cults of Ceres, Bellona and Saturn. Those who were

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228 Croom (2000) 112, 113. Cf. Olson (2008) 11: ‘Female dress in Roman antiquity ideally marked a woman’s rank and status, sexual as well as social, and displayed the characteristics of her role in marriage and society’.
229 He also writes that in North Africa the priests of Hercules had to walk barefoot in the temple, Picard (1954) 138.
230 Festus 100.7L; Schade (2003) 101. About *flaminicae*, the *influla* and a link with the empress, sec: Hemelrijk (2006b) and Hemelrijk (2007).
233 Varro, *LL.* 5.29.130: *item texta fasciola, qua capillum in capite alligarent, dictum capital a capitae, quod sacerdotulae in capite etiam nunc solent habere*.
initiated into the cult of Saturn wore purple and red, the adherents of Bellona wore dark clothes, and initiates of Ceres were to be clad in white, and wore a head-band and a bonnet (ob cultum omnia candidatum et ob notam uittae et privilegium galeri Cereri initiatur).<sup>238</sup> This white clothing mirrored that of the goddess Ceres herself,<sup>239</sup> although white garments were also worn by priestesses of Juno in Rome, according to Ovid, so may be white was a relatively common colour for religious garments.<sup>240</sup> This is also suggested in Plautus, <i>Rudens</i> 270, where a priestess of Venus tells two girls that they should have come to the temple dressed in white. Probably the same costume as that mentioned by Tertullian is meant in the Passion of Felicitas and Perpetua 18.4, where it is said that the convicted male Christians had to put on the clothing of the priests of Saturn, and the women that of those who were consecrated to Ceres (<i>cogerentur habitum induere, uiri quidem sacerdotum Saturni, feminae uero sacratarum Cereri</i>). It is not certain whether the garments of priestesses of Ceres are meant, for the word <i>sacratarum</i> is used, but this is possible because of the parallel with the priests (<i>sacerdotes</i>) of Saturn.<sup>241</sup>

Despite the fact that priestesses could have to wear special clothing, their statues often depict them without any priestly attributes and wearing normal clothes; only their head is covered. The statue of the Pompeian Eumachia is a good example (see figure 8). It has been stated that the covered head of statues of priestesses implied worship and female ideals of modesty and chastity.<sup>242</sup> However, because several statues of emperors – for instance the well-known Augustus Pontifex from the Museo Nazionale Romano – depict them <i>capite velato</i>, I think the veiled head of priestesses as such is in the first place a reference to their priesthood, as it shows them in the key moment of the central ritual in Roman religion: the sacrifice.<sup>243</sup> This fits with Olson’s statement that in general statues of veiled women have a religious context and often show them sacrificing.<sup>244</sup> Varro (<i>LL</i> 5.29.130) provides us with literary evidence that supports this view. He writes that Roman women normally covered their

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<sup>238</sup> (<i>…</i>) <i>cur istos non spectas uel illos item habitus, qui noutitais uestitu religionem mentiuntur? Cum ob cultum omnia candidatum et ob notam uittae et privilegium galeri Cereri initiatur; cum ob diversam affectionem tenebricæ uestis et tetrici super caput uelleris in Bellonae montes fugantur; cum latioris purpuræ ambitio et Galatici ruboris superiectio Saturnum commendat</i> - Or why do you not look at those other garments that in their novel dress falsely claim religion? For it is for entirely white clothing and for the sign of the head-band and the privilege of the bonnet that people are initiated into Ceres; it is for the opposite affection of dark dress and a gloomy covering upon the head, that people flee into the mountains of Bellona; and the (opportunity of) wrapping with a broader, purple tunic and of taking on a Galatic, red mantle commends Saturn (to others). Transl. by V. Hunink.

<sup>239</sup> Simon (1990) 48.

<sup>240</sup> Guerra Gomez (1987) 63 thinks the clothing of priestesses is meant.


<sup>242</sup> Cf. Welch (2007) 561. Obviously, this does not mean that together with other elements, the statue of a veiled priestess did not propagate a message of chastity as well. About statues of priestesses and other women, see: Mürer, forthcoming.

<sup>243</sup> Olson (2008) 35.
heads with a *rica* for sacrificing (*sic* *rica ab rito, quod Romano rito sacrificium feminae cum faciunt, capita velant*).

![Figure 8: Statue of Eumachia](image)

Obviously, much more can be said about clothes worn by priestesses, for instance in relation to different styles that were fashionable during certain periods and in certain areas. However, the information given here suffices to show that priestesses did not look like ordinary women during the fulfilment of their religious tasks – instead, in some cases they resembled the immortal gods they served.

**Conclusion**

As has been stated in the introduction to this chapter, holding a religious office usually required an active attitude. It was not just a ceremonial role (apart from priesthoods held by young children) and in certain cases seems to have had implications for the personal life of a woman. Holding a priesthood was not simply a matter of being entitled to call oneself *sacerdos* and enjoy the accompanying prestige. A priestess was the representative of her community – or sometimes a special group within it – that

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she had to embody during sacrifices which were the central acts of Roman religion, but also during processions and other rites. Her tasks were manifold and assured her a position in the public eye. Other members of the cult personnel may have had tasks that were held in less high esteem, but these tasks were still necessary to enable the worshipping of the deity they served in the proper fashion. The women and their families took enough pride in their religious roles to have them recorded on stone. Their inscriptions show the great variety of religious offices that were open to women.

But there could be more to a priesthood than performing religious tasks. The person and the behaviour of the priestesses could become a focus of ritualization. In their outward appearance, at least when they were fulfilling their religious duties, priestesses looked different from other women. This underlined the special role they had in their community. As some priestesses seem to have held their priesthood for many years – although not much is known about the time they had to serve – they will have been clearly visible during a long time of their life. Sometimes priestesses were very young when they were appointed, which shows both the value attached priesthoods and the importance of the family of the girl in question.\(^{247}\) Others, such as the (African) *sacerdotes Ceres*, may have been of a ripe age, but there are many uncertainties concerning the age when these women held their priesthoods. The same priestesses of Ceres may have had to live (temporarily) separated from their husbands and remain chaste during their time of office, but again, this is controversial, certainly where it concerns the Italian *sacerdotes Ceres*. Local and chronological differences cannot be excluded. Even more debatable than the age and supposed chastity of the priestesses of Ceres, is the topic of religious prostitution in the cult of Venus. In my opinion, there is no convincing evidence which shows that slave women had to act as prostitutes.

There is one thing that is certain though: priesthoods and other religious offices provided women with a possibility to step aside – but not necessarily, outside! – from the general way of life open to women – that of being a wife and mother – and to step inside the public world of their communities. In the next chapter we will see that this public role could be further expanded by taking part in the system of euergetism.

\(^{247}\) As has been observed about honorific offices for women in the Greek East, it was the prestige they acquired that was the most important, MacMullen (1980) 215. Cf. Marshall (1975) 125.
Chapter 5: Being a woman, holding a priesthood: the social life of the priestesses

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have discussed the religious aspects related to priesthods and ancillary functions held by women. Here I will focus on the non-religious side of the lives of priestesses, and discuss the social, economic and political significance in their communities of women who held religious offices. The main theme will be the relation between priestesses and others, both their towns and their families. I will examine the marital status and family relations of the priestesses. Furthermore, I will deal with the image of priestesses as propagated by their epitaphs. Were priestesses praised for stereotypical female qualities like castitas and pudicitia and did their image resemble that of the ideal matrona (cf. chapter 1) or were they remembered in connection to their priesthood (section 1)?

The second section discusses the way a woman acquired a religious office. We have seen in chapter 1 (section 5.7) that the procedure of the appointment of priest(esse)s is not fully clear, and the question is whether the inscriptions in the catalogue shed some light on this problem and tell us something about the role of the *ordo* in this process. Another question concerns money matters: it is well-known that male magistrates and priests had to pay an obligatory sum (*summa honoraria*) on entering their (religious) office, but is there evidence that the same rule pertained to priestesses? The last topic connected with the appointment of priestesses is family relations. As municipal offices were often held by members of the socio-political elite that was made up of families who were – often closely – related to each other, the question can be asked whether the same applied to female priesthods: what role did family relations play in acquiring a priesthood and were priesthods held by women from particular families?

As a priestess, a woman had a special connection with her city: we have seen that she represented her fellow citizens in their relationship with the gods. This special relationship between priestess and community could be consolidated and strengthened by the system of euergetism. Like many other wealthy people, priestesses gave benefactions to their towns or acted as patronesses. A priestess who was benefactress or patroness usually received public honours in return. Being granted public honours resulted in an increase of prestige, and together with the fact that giving benefactions was simply very expensive, it can be expected that most priestess-benefactresses belonged to the local elite. In order to find out if this was indeed the case, section 3 deals with the social rank and standing of the priestesses and other women with religious offices. In the fourth section, I will discuss the priestesses who had acted as benefactresses or patronesses and the public honours they were granted.

All these topics lead to the question in how far dynastic politics played a role in the choice for women as sacerdotes. In the East, women were used by their male family members to increase the
prominence of the family in the public and ritual lives of the towns, by holding priesthoods and honorific magistracies.\textsuperscript{1} Can a comparable situation be found in the West or does the evidence point to other underlying mechanisms that influenced the presence of women holding religious offices? By discussing the family life of priestesses, their appointment, rank and standing, benefactions and public honours, I hope to come a step closer to answering this question.

1: *Family life and public image*

In chapter 4, I have dealt with the formal roles of priestesses, exercised in public. This section deals with aspects of the *private* life of priestesses, for it should not be forgotten that priestesses also had families. I will pay attention to the relatives that are recorded on the inscriptions and discuss the image of priestesses as propagated by funerary inscriptions.

1.1: *Marital status and the role of family members*

Despite the possible requirement of living a (temporarily) chaste life, we have seen in chapter 4 that many African *sacerdotes Cereris* seem to have had an ordinary family life as married women and as mothers. The inscriptions of other priestesses provide the same picture, though it has to be noted that recording commemorators on epitaphs was not common everywhere; it varied from one region to another.\textsuperscript{2} As a consequence, it can certainly not be concluded from the absence of family members on inscriptions that the priestess in question did not have living family members or had never been married.

In 93 inscriptions, (possible) male relatives are recorded. This number excludes filiations, for these were so common that they are meaningless in the context of this section, but includes former masters (patrons) and freedmen, considered by the Romans as family members. Sometimes, mentioning male relatives seems to have been used as an indicator of rank rather than as a way to stress the priestess’s role as wife and/or mother. It has been suggested that the frequent appearance of male relatives in the inscriptions of city patronesses can be explained by the fact that women did not have an independent claim to rank and that these male relatives were needed to show the honourable background of the patroness.\textsuperscript{3} I think it is likely that this holds for many priestesses as well, considering the fact that relatively many fathers, husbands and sons of priestesses were of high rank (decurial or equestrian) or held honourable offices, be it municipal, military or religious (*duumvir*, prefect of an *ala, flamen*).\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} Van Bremen (1996).
\textsuperscript{2} Saller and Shaw (1984) 130, 132, 133.
\textsuperscript{4} That is: if their offices are recorded, which is, regarding the sons, not very often the case.
Female relatives are recorded on 34 inscriptions of priestesses and women with other religious offices.\(^5\) Compared to the number of male relatives, this is surprisingly high, especially considering the fact that women are underrepresented in the epigraphic record in general (see chapter 1) and that they did not pass their rank to their family members – unless they were unfree and got daughters. When women are mentioned, they are mothers or daughters, and in a few cases patronesses (former mistresses) or \textit{libertas} of the priestesses (and once, a friend\(^6\)). Brothers are seldom mentioned, and sisters never (unless the ‘pious sisters’ of Caesia Sabina were her sisters by kin, see chapter 4 and below). This is in accordance with the general pattern in epitaphs as identified by Saller and Shaw.\(^7\)

In sum, apart from the relatively many female relatives recorded (but as often, the number is very small, and accordingly, one should not attach too much value to it), the evidence of family members of priestesses shows no deviations from what could be expected. Therefore, there is no reason to suppose that their family life differed from that of other women in the Roman Empire.

1.2: The public image of the priestess: death and remembrance

In the first chapter we have seen that the ideal woman was a chaste and modest \textit{matrona} who lived an unostentatious life with her family. From the evidence discussed so far, it can be concluded that priestesses did not really fit into this ideal: they had prominent positions in the public life of their towns. In this section, the public image of female religious officials will be discussed, based on grave monuments and epitaphs, which could, as a result of their visibility, be used in the same way as erecting a building as benefaction, i.e. to show of one’s standing and wealth, and to gain more prestige. The tombs built by priestesses will certainly have furthered this goal.

Like many other people from all over the Empire, priestesses could build their own grave monuments and had their own epitaphs inscribed. To mention a few examples: the short epitaph of Ulpia Secunda, \textit{sacerdos} in modern Ain Barouri in Africa Proconsularis ends with the words \textit{[se] viventi / /[s]ībī fēcīt}.\(^8\) And in Arelate (Galla Narbonensis) the \textit{antistes} Valeria Urbana built a grave monument for herself, her husband Sextus Mantius Eros, her freedwoman Charis and her friend (\textit{amica}) Octavia Hilara.\(^9\) Although the epitaphs themselves were often simple, the monuments to which they belonged could be very impressive. The best examples are provided by priestesses from Pompeii. The grave monuments that were erected by the rich women from the local Pompeian elite, several of whom held priesthoods, were as remarkable as those built by men. One of the most

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\(^5\) This number includes inscriptions in which the priestess is a \textit{liberta} of a woman, and the name of her patroness can be deduced from her own name.

\(^6\) Cat.no.253.

\(^7\) Saller and Shaw (1984) 136.

\(^8\) Cat.no.146.

\(^9\) Cat.no.253. Spickermann (1994a) 100; Spickermann (1994b) 238, nr. 15; he writes about Octavia Hilara: ‘Möglicherweise handelt es sich um eine mit Urbana eng ver-bundene Frau aus der Kultgemeinde, der sie vorstand.’

171
impressive Pompeian grave monuments was even built by a woman – Eumachia – but several other priestesses were well-matched to her and had built themselves or their families large grave monuments. The priestesses from Pompeii will figure again at the end of this thesis.

What is inscribed on stone shows how people wanted to present themselves when still alive, or wanted to be presented by others in front of a special group (the whole city, a collegium etc.). Alternatively, it shows how one wanted to be remembered after death or how those commissioning the stone wanted the deceased to be remembered. When the virtues were recorded of the person who was commemorated, these virtues were deliberately chosen, even though epitaphs were partly formulaic. This formulaic character and the often conventional characteristics can sometimes ‘obscure individual testimony.’ As the ideal for Roman women was to become the mother of sons and live a chaste life, women in general were praised for domestic virtues, like chastity, modesty and obedience, as I have pointed out in the first chapter. The image of women on inscriptions reflected on her husband and by way of praising her domestic virtues, the place of women in a men’s world was defined.

Women in general were praised on epitaphs as carissimae, amantissimae, desiderantissimae, obsequentissimae, honestissimae and castissimae, all domestic virtues. As they were generally honoured in relation to their male family members, for their chastity or other specific female qualities, Levison and Oswald speak of ‘the predictable continuity that existed between the manner in which wealthy Roman women lived and died.’ Many women were praised because of things they did not do (e.g. commit adultery), instead of ‘positive’ qualities and their own accomplishments or benefits for their cities, for which men were usually praised. The question is whether the evidence of the priestesses is in accordance with this general practice.

Indeed, on the epitaphs of priestesses virtually all qualities mentioned above can be found, though they are rare: on most funerary inscriptions no qualities at all are recorded, or only very

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11 Cf. Hemelrijk (2008a) 141.
16 For Spain: Navarro Caballero (2001) 196. Although they were also praised for their benefactions, Navarro Caballero (2001) 197, 198. In Africa, we find often the same qualifications (castitas and pudicitia) as those used for matrons in Rome, Corbier (2005) 263. Optimae, piissimae, and indulgentissimae were also often used, but these are more general qualities, also applied to men.
17 Levison and Ewald (2005) 636, 641. Cf. Sisigmond-Nielsen (2006) 206. Levison and Ewald base this statement on evidence mainly provided by Josephus (Ant. Jud. 1.237; 4.78), whose descriptions of public burials are adjusted to Roman practice and views, Levison and Ewald (2005) 637, 639, 640. CIL 10,1784 is an example of a woman from Puteoli who was granted a public funeral because of the qualities of modesty and chastity and her male family members.
18 Levison and Ewald (2005) 641, 642-644. Of course, this does not imply that men had more discontinuous transformations on their death than women.
general ones: a priestess is often circumscribed as *sacerdos pia*²⁰ (a common word in epitaphs, but not on honorary inscriptions²¹), and her epitaph was erected *bene merenti*. In the more elaborate epitaphs, priestesses are characterised as *optimae, castissimae, amantissimae, carissimae* and other comparable female qualifications. Several times, the common word *sanctissimae* was used.²²

Although much of what has been discussed in chapter 4 (and the rest of this chapter) shows that priestesses were very prominent and often very wealthy women, the general picture that emerges from the priestly epitaphs is standard. Like other women, they were praised for general female qualities: a priestess was a woman in the first place. The priestesses themselves, their relatives and social peers considered only female qualities appropriate. This confirms that most Latin epitaphs were formulaic and shows the power of convention.

2: Becoming a priestess

As for other municipal offices, there seem to have been special procedures to elect and invest a *sacerdos*. Whether a woman was perceived to be a suitable candidate depended on several aspects, very different from what according to a modern, Christian view makes someone fit for a religious office. No special devotion or vocation were needed to become *sacerdos*. Instead, wealth and standing were generally decisive factors, although we have seen in chapter 3 that the African priestesses of Ceres presumably did not belong to the decurial elite. In most cases though, the same people who made up the main political body of a town, i.e. the propertied classes, provided the candidates for priesthoods in the provinces.

2.1: Election and appointment

Generally speaking, in Republican Rome good parentage, a good reputation and proper behaviour were required of men and women who aspired to a religious office. However, there was a difference between men and women: proper behaviour and an unspoilt reputation were more important for candidate priestesses than for priests.²³ Furthermore, physical aspects could play a role: the Vestals had to be free from bodily defects.²⁴ Another element that could be of importance, was the geographical origin of the priestess: originally, *sacerdotes Cерерis* in Rome had to come from *Magna Graecia*, as has been discussed in chapter 3. Changes occurred in the imperial period and personal

²⁰ Cf. the nine years old priestess of Minerva from Butuntum we have encountered in chapter 4 who was praised *ob infatigabilem pietaetem eius. And cat.no.172 from modern Djenun in Africa Proconsularis.*

²¹ Forbis (1990) 505. In addition, it was generally used for parents and children, rarely for spouses, Saller (2001) 103. *Fides* and *pietas* were a good excuse for public activities, Hemelrijk (2004) 191.

²² E.g. cat.no.105; 180; 214.

²³ Schultz (2007) 11-12, 13. E.g. for the priestess of Fortuna Muliebris (Schultz, 20),

relations became more important, at least regarding male priests in the city of Rome. A connection to the emperor, whose influence was of ‘prime importance’ as Várhelyi writes, an important family and a role as patron were needed when one wanted to acquire a priesthood. There is no reason to suppose that this did not apply to priestesses as well, although family relations may have been more important to them.

Imperial influence was rare on the municipal level, but networks and family were also important in the provinces. An aspect that was crucial – in the provinces as well as in Rome – and that applied to both priests and priestesses, was wealth, as holding a priesthood was expensive (see section 2.3). In Pompeii, Alleia, daughter of Cnaeus Alleius Nigidius Maius, is a good example of the importance of both family relations and wealth for acquiring a priesthood. She was member of a rich family and likely became priestess because of the high social position of her father, Cnaeus Alleius Nigidius Maius (see the Epilogue).

Várhelyi writes that in Rome, members of the priestly colleges nominated the candidates. This was followed by the actual election, which was assigned to the senate in AD 20. Afterwards, the priest was ritually inaugurated. In Rome, women could be elected in a different way. The Vestals for instance, were appointed by lot from a group of girls already selected, and were therefore chosen by the gods themselves. As these priestesses were special, there is no reason to suppose that this procedure was common in Rome or in the provinces. Concerning the appointment of priestesses and priests of ‘foreign’ cults, the quindecimviri played a role in the process. This implies that they were involved in the investiture of the sacerdotes Cereris in Rome.

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27 Cf. Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 116. These aspects were important for male priests in the provinces as well. E.g., the priest recorded in ILT 720 may have acquired his priesthood because of the wealth of his family, Gascou (1987) 112.
30 This election procedure had changed over time. Velleius Paterculus 2.12.3 writes that after 104 BC, male priests in Rome were chosen by the people. Previously, they had been chosen by their colleagues: Quo anno Cn. Domitius tribunus plebis legem tulit, ut sacerdotes, quos antea conlegae sufficiebant, populus crearet. ‘In this year Gnaeus Domitius, the tribune of the people, passed a law that the priests, who had previously been chosen by their colleagues, should now be elected by the people.’ Transl. by F.W. Shipley. Cassius Dio 37.1 writes that this law was re-installed by Labienus. See also: Latte (1960) 395.
31 Várhelyi (2010) 58-59. After the inauguration a festivity was organised by the new priest, attended only by his new colleagues, Várhelyi (2010) 75.
32 Schultz (2007) 19, writes that in some cases special mechanisms existed for electing women in priestly functions, e.g., matrons choosing priestesses. In my opinion, there is not much convincing evidence for this. It can certainly not be used as evidence for the election procedure of priestesses in the provinces.
33 In Greece, assignment by lot was the usual procedure, Kunz (2006) 182.
34 Some modern scholars, e.g. Matthews (1973) 178, maintain that the quindecimviri also had to approve of the choice for the priests and priestesses of Magna Mater in the provinces, who for this reason were sometimes called sacerdos XVvirales. This would be very unusual if it were true, for normally Roman priests did not have jurisdiction in the provinces. Schultz (2006) 71, 175, note 82, writes that sacerdotes XVvirales were ‘members of the board of fifteen priestesses’, i.e. that they were part of a priestly collegium with fifteen members. Some probably served Magna Mater, but the priestess recorded in cat.no.104 is a sacerdos XVvirales who may have
The procedure of election in the provinces is not clear. In the lex Ursonensis it was decreed that the priestly colleges – i.e. the pontifices and augures – should be appointed by way of cooptation.  

Nothing is said about the way priests of individual gods were elected; as it is unknown whether they served in a priestly college, it cannot automatically be assumed that they were also coopted. Peterson writes that in Campania priests were appointed in the same way as magistrates, first by general election, then by the decurions, so it is possible that the procedure has changed over time, as in Rome. As flaminincae were appointed by the local senate or the provincial assembly, like their male colleagues, it is likely that this obtained to other priestesses as well. And indeed, some inscriptions refer to the ordo decurionum, though not in all cases it is certain that a role of the council in the appointment of the priestesses was meant.

Several examples come from Latium and Campania. These inscriptions contain the words sacerdos decreto decurionum (in this order). Savunen has interpreted this as proof of election by the ordo. According to her, the Pompeian priestesses Clodia and Lassia were both sacerdos publica Cereris decreto decurionum. She writes that this title is unique in Pompeii, but was used elsewhere in Campania as well. According to Savunen, it means that these women were not elected by popular assembly. However, other interpretations are also possible. Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba write that decreto decurionum could have been meant to indicate that the ordo had paid for the grave monument of the priestesses. This is equally possible and in my opinion much more convincing than Savunen’s interpretation, mainly because generally the formula decreto decurionum (or something similar) refers to a statue or grave monument that was erected with consent of the ordo, or to public land given by the decurions. When decreto decurionum (or a comparable phrase) referred to the way a priest(ess) was

acted in the Ceres cult, as Schultz proposes. For this reason, the sacerdotes XVvirales of whom it is not certain that they served Magna Mater, are included in the catalogue (cat.no.48 and 104). Also included are: cat.no.41 and 43; the sacerdotes XVvirales recorded here served Magna Mater and a local Minerva. Not included: CIL 10, 4726.


Peterson (1919), 33. However, Peterson writes that he found no examples of general election in Campania, so his statement cannot be proved. Castrén (1975) 68, writes that the election of priests was similar to that of magistrates: they were elected by the people at public assembly.


Delgado Delgado (1998) 147, 148, however, writes that there was no standard election procedure for the various priesthoods, and that election was the result of specific needs or circumstance in the cities. Usually the ordo played a role.

Cat.no. 101 and 102 respectively.

Savunen (1997) 138, 142. She bases this on Cicero and Castrén but does not give proper references which makes her statement dubious.


E.g., in CIL 8.1495=26590; CIL 8.26591=ILT 1427; CIL 8.10580=14472; CIL 10.6018=ILS 6293; CIL 10.7352; CIL 11.3933=ILS 3352; AE 1979. 670; CIL 2.7.303=2.5525; CIL 2.7.370=AE 1982.539; CIL 8.7119=ILAlg 2.1.693; CIL 10.6018=ILS 6293; CIL 11.415=ILS 6658; CIL 11.3013.
elected, in most cases additional words were added, like *decurionum decreto sacerdotium datum est.*\(^{43}\)

Alternatively, an unambiguous formula was used, like *ab ordine electus.*\(^{44}\)

This last formula is used in the inscription of a public priestess from Capua, whose name is partly lost. The inscription ends with the phrase *decreto decurionum,* in this case likely relating to the (place of) the priestess’s statue that was given by decree of the local senate:\(^{45}\)

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> [---]aber[iae] / C(ai) f(ilia) Tett[iae] / Prisc[ae] / s)jacerd(oti) pub[l(icae)] / n)juminis Cap[uae],
> 
> [/////] elect(ae) a splendid(idissimo)] / ordine / d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)

“To ?aberia Tettia Prisca, daughter of Caius, public priestess of the Capuan *numen,* [/////] appointed by the most splendid *ordo,* by decree of the decurions.”

Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba write that if this *sacerdos* indeed was a woman – which seems likely – the explicit reference to an election by the *ordo* is unique.\(^{46}\) However, there is another example\(^{47}\) from Cartima in Baetica:

> Valeria C(ai) f(ilia) Situllina / sacerdos perpetua d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) m(unicipii)
> 
> C/artimitani f(acta) / de sua pecunia solo suo f(ecit) / et epulo dato dedicavit

> “Valeria Situllina, daughter of Caius, made perpetual priestess by decree of the decurions of the *municipium* of the *Cartimitani,* made this on her own land of her own money and dedicated it after a banquet had been given.”

Even though the evidence is meagre, I think it is possible to conclude that, based on these two inscriptions from Capua and Cartima and on the parallels of *flaminicae* and male priests, the *ordo* could play a role in the appointment of a priestess. It does not mean though, that this applied to all priestesses, certainly not those acting in semi-public cults like those of *collegia.* In my opinion it is

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\(^{43}\) *AE* 1991. 514a from Larinum (region 2), recording a priestess of the imperial cult.

\(^{44}\) E.g., *CIL* 8.8995=20710=ILS 6874=AE 1956. 131.

\(^{45}\) Cat.no.55.


\(^{47}\) An uncertain one from Caesarea in Mauretania, *AE* 1902, 12 (not included in the catalogue, for the goddess seems to have been the eastern Ma-Bellona): *Deae Belloiae / Scantia C(ai) f(ilia) Peregrina sa/cerdos ex decreto ordinis area ad/signata aedem a fundamentis / d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit).* Here we find in fact the same problem as with the Pompeian inscriptions mentioned above: *ex decreto ordinis* can belong to the word *sacerdos,* or refer to the building. *CIL* 3, 14206,13 from Philippi in Macedonia (not included in the catalogue) is another example: *Valeria / Severa an(i)stes / D<\textipa{e}r\textipa{e}> an(i)ae / Cashoriae p[er]titu a sanctif\textipa{a} / simo ordine / et decreto d[/ecurionum)] imaginem [p(ecunia) s]ua s(ibi) et Atiar[i]o / Acmen(\textipa{a})eo nepot(i) / suo l(ibens) p(osuit).* The formula *petit\textipa{a} a sanctissimo ordine* could, but need not, point to a role of the *ordo* in the election of this woman.

\(^{48}\) Cat.no.285. Delgado Delgado (1998) 148, thinks this inscription is no proof of the election by the council, but that the decree of decurions refers to the grant of perpetuity and not to the priesthood in general. This could be possible, but there is no evidence to back this view.
possible that priestesses of *collegia* were chosen and appointed by the members of the *collegium* or its main officials, though there is no evidence in the catalogue to support this view.

2.2: The familial background of the priestess and hereditary priesthoods

As I have mentioned above, apart from a connection to the emperor, family relations played an important role in distribution of priesthoods in imperial Rome.\(^{49}\) Being appointed as a priestess in the City could in special cases depend on the office of her husband, as in the case of the *flaminica Dialis* and the *regina sacrorum.*\(^{50}\) The question is whether a comparable situation can be found in the provinces. For a long time, modern scholars have been convinced of a marital link between *flamines* and *flaminicae* in the provinces, but it has been demonstrated that they were usually not a married couple, although some *flamines* and *flaminicae* were members of the same family.\(^{51}\) It is worth investigating whether the priestesses acting in other cults were also members of families that often held priesthoods, and if so, what kind of priesthoods. In addition, the families themselves need to be examined: were they wealthy? Did they possess a large social network? And did the male members hold other municipal offices as well? Furthermore, it is interesting to recover whether a specific priesthood could be held by various female members of the same family, and again, in what kind of families these priesthoods were held. An aspect that is related to this is the size of the city in which the priestesses served, for it could be expected that in small towns fewer families were available that were wealthy (and prestigious) enough to pay for a priesthood, and that, as a consequence, many priesthoods were held within the same family.

Priestesses with relatives (including husbands) holding priesthoods

There is some epigraphic evidence of women with male or female relatives holding priesthoods. A few inscriptions attest to family members who were active within the same *collegium*, like the *Stlacci* from Putequi.\(^{52}\) Other examples are inscriptions that record freedmen and –women from the same household, who were, in Roman eyes, members of the same families (when they record *only* family members, these inscriptions are not included in the catalogue, as I consider them to be private, see chapter 1).\(^{53}\) The best examples of women with male or female relatives holding priesthoods are those

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\(^{49}\) Várheleyi (2010) 65, 71-72: From the Julio-Claudians onwards there was a trend towards familial continuity concerning the flaminates in Rome.

\(^{50}\) Schultz (2007) 18.

\(^{51}\) There is no evidence of *provincial* priests of the imperial cult who were members of the same family, Fishwick (2002) 190; Hemelrijk (2007) 322.

\(^{52}\) Cat.no.109. Dubois (1907) 134; Bruhl (1953) 294; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 113; North (2003) 210. Stlaccia’s *thiasos* had a mixed membership, while in the original Bacchic groups men and women were separated, according to North (2003) 205-206.

\(^{53}\) *CIL* 6, 409 (not included in the catalogue); cat.no.113: the man and woman could also have been father and daughter. See Spickermann (1994a) 201 about possible family relations in an inscription recording priestly offices of Magna Mater within the same family.
of priestesses who were active in municipal cults and were members of the local elite. As often Pompeii offers the best material: the Clodii, Eumachii and Alleii were the main gentes, all related to each other. Members of these families held the local priesthoods, i.e. those of Venus, Ceres and the flaminate, and various municipal offices. Besides, they were wealthy and several of them gave benefactions (see also the Epilogue).54

In most cases, the priestesses’ family members who held religious offices were male.55 This is, of course, unsurprising regarding the fact that many more priests have been attested on inscriptions than priestesses. The priesthoods of the male family members of the priestesses could vary from the traditional ‘Roman’ religious offices that can be found in many municipalities across the western part of the Empire (pontifices, augures), to flaminates of the imperial cult, and to local priesthoods that were confined to certain areas.56 In some cases, the priesthood(s) of the male family members were not recorded on the inscriptions erected by or in honour of priestesses.57 Holconia, sacerdos publica in Pompeii, mentioned her filiation, but the fact that her father had been sacerdos Augusti and flamen is omitted.58 Obviously, this was so well-known in Pompeii that it need not be repeated on Holconia’s inscription, and besides, her father’s priesthood was recorded on other inscriptions.59

Female priesthoods held within one family
Some examples can be found of women who had held the same priesthood as one of their female relatives. The evidence stems Italy, and for a great part from the Republican period and the first century AD.60 The priestesses acting in the Ceres (and Venus) cult of Sulmo and its surrounding area were members of a limited number of gentes. The gens Tet(t)ia provided the anac(eta) Cerr(ia) Tettia, daughter of Salvius, and Aula Tetia, daughter of Sextus and sacerdos Cereris.61 The Caiedii (or: Caieditii) supplied Sulmo with an anacta Ceri and a sacerdos Cereris et Veneris. Helvia Pothine (sacerdos Cereris in Corfinium) and Helvia Quarta (sacerdos Cereris et Veneris in Sulmo) originated from the gens Helvia, while Brata Pofennia and Brata Ania (the nomen and cognomen are reversed) were anacta Ceria and anacta Criei respectively in Sulmo. Poccetti writes that this limited number of

55 The data are based on inscriptions mentioning more than one individual (e.g. the one of Stlaccia) and on the prosopographical matching of names between different inscriptions (e.g. the Pompeian examples).
56 Some examples are cat.no.126; 128; 129; 178; 186; 215; 222; 238; 244.
57 It needs to be kept in mind though, that persons with the same nomen who lived in different ages did not necessarily have to be direct family members, Wiltschel (1995) 301. See e.g. M. Baebius Pulianus, sacerdos loci secundi templi Sittianae (CIL 8, 19512a) and Baebia Casta, sacerdos Iunonis (cat.no.167), both from Cirta. Both Marcellae from Antipolis – one flaminic et sacerdos, the other sacerdos Minerva et Diaene – are another example; cat.no.249 and 250. It is unknown whether these people were directly related to each other.
58 Cat.no.97. Father: CIL 10, 830 = ILS6361b; CIL 10, 837 = ILS6361; CIL 10, 838 = ILS6361a; CIL 10, 947; CIL 10, 948.
59 Cf. Manlia Severina, virgo Alba Maxima from Bovillae (not included in the catalogue) whose brother had been rex sacorum, fector of the pontiffs and quattorvir according to CIL 14, 2413; this was omitted on the inscription of Manlia Severina (CIL 14, 2410)
60 For the Republican inscriptions in the Pelignian dialect, see the appendix.
61 See also chapter 3.
families providing priestesses of Ceres is in accordance with the Greek tradition in Eleusis, where the priesthood was held by the *Eumolpidae* and *Ceryces*.62

However, examples can be found of priestesses from the same family and from the same area but acting in another cult: the *gens Varia* provided Vara from Teate Marrucinorum as *sacrarix Herentatia* (i.e. of Venus), while Varia, daughter of Caius was *sacerdos Ceres* in Sulmo. In Corfinium a certain Acca, daughter of Quintus, and Accia (without patronymic) were both *sacerdos Veneris*. In addition, in the same town Attia Mirallis had been *sacerdos Ceres*.63 In my opinion, these examples show that Poccetti’s suggestion that the limited number of *gentes* involved in the Ceres cult was based on the Eleusinian influences is questionable. I think an easier and better explanation is that there were simply a limited number of (elite) families able to afford the (costly) priesthoods of Ceres and Venus, which by all evidence were the most important ones open to women in Italy. This is supported by two passages in Ovid’s *Amores*, where Sulmo is described as a small town,64 with, accordingly, few wealthy (elite) families.

With one exception, all other evidence of priesthoods held within one family is also limited to the cults of Venus and Ceres. The only exception concerns two women who served Minerva. In Ticinum (region 11) and Butuntum (region 2) two female members of the *gens Petilia* were priestesses of this goddess. The *prenomen* of both women’s father was Quintus. The *gens Petilia* was a plebeian family that provided its first consul in 176 BC. In the imperial period Quintus Petillius Cerialis Caesius Rufus (born AD 30) held several important military offices, became consul in AD 74 and married Flavia Domitilla, the emperor Vespasian’s daughter. Another Quintus Petillius Rufus had been *consul ordinarius* in AD 83; he may have been the son of Cerialis.65 The inscriptions of both priestesses cannot be dated and it is unknown their exact consanguinity was. Considering the mother’s name of the priestess from Butuntum – Messia Dorcas – and the lack of any male relatives on the other Petilia’s inscription, it is likely that the two women were not close relatives of the prestigious Quinti Petilii mentioned above, and presumably of less high social standing.

Pompeii provides – again – a better example: Lassia, daughter of Marcus, and the oldest known priestess of Ceres from Pompeii, and Clodia, daughter of Aulus held the same priesthood. Likely, they were grandmother and granddaughter. Clodia built a tomb for several people, including Lassia.66 More about this tomb and the relationship between the persons buried here will be given below. In Beneventum, polyonymous Gaia Numnia Ceonia Umbria Rufia Albina, a girl of senatorial rank, held a public priesthood (likely of Venus, as is suggested by Raepsaat-Charlier).67 The name Nummia can be linked to that of Nummia Varia, who had been priestess of Venus Felix in Peltuinum

63 In Corfinium, several *Attii, Accii* and *Accaeii* are attested epigraphically. *CIL* 9, 3146 = *ILS* 4107 records an Acca Prima who had been *ministra* of Magna Mater.
64 In *Amor* 2.16, the word *parva* is used, and in *Amor* 3.15 the word *quantalumque*.
65 *PIR* 3, p.25.
66 Cat.no.101; 102. Clodia’s father had never held a priestly function, Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 104.
Vestinum (the elaborate inscription of this woman will be discussed below). Nummia Varia’s father had been cives et patronus of Beneventum, where Gaia Nummia Ceonia lived. Raepsaet-Charlier writes that Gaia Nummia Ceonia may have been the (grand)daughter of Nummia Varia. However the precise relationship between the two women may have been, it is clear that they were family members who both held a priesthood, to all likelihood of the same goddess. In the third century the gens Nummia, which had acquired patrician status possibly around AD 191/199, was a senatorial family that provided consuls (from AD 206 onwards) and proconsuls. It had links to other important families like the gens C(a)eionia, as is attested by the name of Gaia Nummia Ceonia. The fact that the gens Nummia was so influential may also explain why Gaia Nummia Ceonia was only a girl when she was appointed as priestess (see also chapter 4).

It seems there are various examples of priestesses who had male or female relatives who also held a priesthood, sometimes in the same cult. These priestesses varied from local ones of individual deities to (in case of male relatives) pontificates and flamines. In several cases the families of the priestesses were wealthy and prominent, with male members holding municipal offices. In addition, these families were part of a large social network like that of the Nummi. However, in many other cases this is unknown. The towns of the families who held more than one priesthood varied in size, though they were not very large, which seems to back the hypothesis that small towns had only a limited number of families willing and able to hold priesthoods.

2.3: Summae honorariae and gifts

When they took office, magistrates and (male) sacerdotes had to pay a summa honoraria, defined by Garnsey as ‘the compulsory fee fixed by municipal statute and payable by every magistrate, priest or councillor.’ For ‘priest’ also ‘priestess’ can be read, as we shall see. The summa honoraria was usually not recorded on inscriptions, because it was not honourable to mention something that was compulsory — and that was probably not set very high, as all potential candidates, which in many towns was presumably a very small number, had to be able to afford them. On inscriptions recording

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68 Cat.no.88. Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 195.
69 AE1969/70, 169.
71 Mennen (2010) 42, 43, 55, 61; see pages 96-99 for a list of the consular Nummi.
73 In Rome the summa honoraria was used as a ‘vehicle for the institutionalizing of euergetism towards the people of Rome, as a means of compelling the senatorial élite to imitate the emperor’s generosity.’ Gordon (1990b) 224. Suetonius, Calig. 22.3 mentions the use of wealth in the competition for priesthoods.
75 Garnsey (1971) 117. The average ordo decurionum seems to have consisted of one hundred members, but smaller examples can be found, Edmondson (2006) 272.
flaminicae, summae honorariae are only mentioned when the priestesses paid more than usual——in which case the gift can partly be seen as more or less ‘spontaneous’ entergeticism (see section 4). In those cases the formula ob honorem flamonii was used to show their ‘spontaneous’ munificence. The same seems to have been true for priestesses serving in other cults, although in these cases the words sacerdoti or sacerdotalem instead of flamonii were used. In Baetica, two women paid for public banquets in honour of their election to the priesthood ob honorem sacerdoti. Sometimes, the inscriptions referring to ‘spontaneous’ munificence on the occasion of the inauguration as priestesses were very elaborate. On entering her priesthood Iulia Paulina from Capena (region 7) had performed ‘the most honourable ceremonies’, which she probably financed from her own resources as summa honoraria. When she became a priestess of Venus she gave twice a meal and sportulae to the decuriones and to the municipes as the inscription on her statue base announces.

Juliae Ti(beri) fil(iae) Paulinae / sacerdoti Ceres municipii / Capenatium foederatorum / ob honorem sacerdotalem / honestissimis caerimoniiis / praebitum decuriones / item municipes / et postea sacerdoti Veneris / bis epulum et sportulas decur(ionibus) / et municipibus praebuit / l(ucus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) // Dedicata VI Kal(endas) Mar(tias) / Glabrione II [co(n)s(ule)] / curat(ore) L(ucio) Mucio Muciano / marito eius

“To Iulia Paulina, daughter of Tiberius, priestess of Ceres of the municipii of the federate Capenians, in honour of her priesthood, undertaken with the most honourable ceremonies, the decurions and the citizens [gave this statue]. And afterwards as priestess of Venus, she gave a banquet and sportulae to the decurions and citizens twice. The place is given by decree of the decurions. Dedicated on the sixth Kalend of March, when Glabrio was consul for the second time and Lucius Mucius Mucianus, her husband, was curator.”

76 Hemelrijk (2006a) 88. Or when a mother promised extra benefactions if her daughter was appointed as flaminica, CIL 8.1495. The same was true for priests or magistrates, see e.g., AE 1979. 670 and CIL 8, 858 = ILS 5073.
77 Peer pressure played an important role, so it was never really spontaneous or voluntary. Contra Veyne (1990) 10-11. See also Garmsey (1991) for a critique on the simplified model of voluntary entergeticism versus entergeticism connected to office holding.
78 However praiseworthy the payment of large summa honoraria may have been, it was supposed to be a great honour when a priestess was allowed to hold her religious office without paying summa honoraria, according to Hemelrijk (2006a) 88. Apart from some flaminicae, there is only one example – and very uncertain at that – of a priestess of Ceres who did not have to pay when entering her religious office (cat.no.131). The inscription, which is badly damaged, contains a name, the priesthood of Ceres and ends with the words publica summa. Perhaps these words meant that the summa honoraria were paid for with public money (summa could then have been followed by remissa), but this is only speculation. It is also possible as I have pointed out above, and in my opinion more likely, that the word publica belongs to the priestly title, as several ‘public’ priestesses of Ceres have been attested epigraphically.
79 Hemelrijk (2006a) 88.
80 Cat.no.242 and 246.
81 Unless the word bis refers to her priesthood of Venus, which, in that case, she held twice.
82 Cat.no.52. See also Clark (2011) 354 footnote 32. Often those honouring a benefactor, and those receiving his or her gifts were the same, as in this inscription, Mouritsen (2006) 246.
The clause *ob honorem sacerdotalis honestissimis caerimonii praebitum* in Iulia Paulina’s inscription, which dates from AD 186, resembles that in cat.no.53. This inscription was also erected in Capena by a priestess of Ceres, named Flavia Ammia, who was honoured publicly ‘because of the honour of the magnificent ceremonies given’ (*ob honorem caerimoniiorum honestissime praebitorum*). Possibly, the ceremonies that were paid for by Flavia Ammia were given on assuming her priesthood, which might imply that they were meant as extras to the *summa honoraria*. Providing additional gifts was not uncommon, but admirable and worth imitating by other women appointed as priestesses. This is shown by the elaborate honorific decree erected for Agusia Priscilla, who lived in Gabii:⁸³

*Agusiae T(iti) f(iliae) Priscillae / sacerdoti Spei et Salutis Aug(ustae) / ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) Gabini statuum publice po/nendam curaverunt quod post / inponsa exemplum inlustrium feminar(um) / factas ob sacerdotium etiam opus partic(us) / Spei vetustate vexatum pecunia sua refecturam se promiserit populo cum pro / salute principis Antonini Aug(usti) Pii / patris patriae liberorumque eius / eximio ludorum spectaculo edito / religioni, veste donata, / universis satis fecerit / cuius statuae honore contenta / inponsam populo remiserit / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)*

“To Agusia Priscilla, daughter of Titus, priestess of Spes and Salus Augusta. By decree of the decurions, the Gabinians took care of erecting a statue publicly. After paying the expenses on account of her priesthood, following the example of illustrious women, she also promised the people that she would repair the *porticus* of Spes which was dilapidated by age, from her own money. And for the wellbeing of the *princeps* Antoninus Augustus Pius, father of the country, and of his children, she gave a magnificent set of games,⁸⁴ funding the rituals and providing costumes, enough for everyone. Content with the honour of her statue, she would return to the people its costs. The place is given by decree of the decurions.”

By erecting this inscription, the *ordo* obviously hoped to ensure that Agusia Priscilla kept her promises. On an inscription dating from the reign of Septimius Severus, another formula indicating the munificence of a priestess who entered her office is used (if indeed her gift was related to her priesthood, which is uncertain). Stlaccia, who had been priestesses of the *Cereres* in Puteoli, provided the *thiasus Placidianus* with a (unfortunately unknown) gift *introitus causa*.⁸⁵

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⁸³ Cat.no.78.
⁸⁴ Giving different kinds of games was a common liturgy for (provincial) priests of the imperial cult, see Fishwick (2004) 305-349.
⁸⁵ Cat.no.109.

“For the wellbeing? of the emperor Caesar Lucius Septimius Severus Pius Pertinax Augustus and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Pius Augustus and Publius Septimius Geta, most noble Caesar and Iulia Domna, mother of the Augustes and of the army. Stlaccia, priestess of the Cereres, gave this to the thiason Placidianus because of her inauguration, when Flavius Eclectianus, son of Titus was priest, and Titus Stlaccius Soter and Titus Stlaccius Reparator...

Perhaps the uncommon formula introitus causa86 was inscribed because this woman was appointed as priestess of a thiason, which was, after all, a semi-public community in which people ‘entered’.87 However, I think it is illogical that she would have served the Cereres as priestess in a cult organisation devoted to Liber-Dionysus. A second possibility is that Stlaccia, already being priestess of the Cereres, was initiated in the cult of Liber-Dionysus and became a member of the thiason, on which occasion she made her donation. Another option is that she made her donation on account of her inauguration into the municipal priesthood of the Cereres and that the gift to the thiason was simply what most needed funding in the town.88

Apart from priestesses, it is possible that other religious officials also made gifts on account of their office, although there is only one example in the catalogue.89 This inscription was erected in Fidenae (region 1).90 The liberta Italia dedicated something, probably a sanctuary ob magisterium Bonae Deae to the Numen of the donus Augustae. She did so together with the freedmen Blastus Eutactianus and Secundus, also because of this last man’s sexvirate (ob honorem Vtiviratus). On the day of the dedication which marked the restoration of probably a sanctuary that was destroyed by fire, they also

86 In Claudius 9, Suetonius uses the word introitus in connection to a priesthood: Postremo sestertium octogies pro introitu novi sacerdotii coactus impendere – ‘At last he [Claudius] was forced to pay eight million sestercus to enter a new priesthood.’ Transl. by J. C. Rolfe.
87 A thiason was a group of people devoted to Liber; the name was based on that of the founder, the patron or most important member, in this case a certain Placidianus, Dubois (1907) 135; Peterson (1919) 145.
88 I would like to thank Professor Greg Woolf for suggesting this.
89 Another example, concerning a ministra of Isis Augusta, is CIL 11, 1916 = ILS 4366 = SIRIS 577. See also chapter 4, footnote 44. In addition, there is a relevant inscription (CIL 3, 1969) from Salona in Dalmatia, where a certain Aurelia Renata erected an unidentified object magisterio suo (because of her office). However, we do not know whether this woman was a ministra attached to a temple, deity or cult, or to something else, and whether her gift was voluntary, so this inscription can certainly not be taken as proof for a standard procedure, and is not included in the catalogue.
90 Cat.no.70.
held a banquet.\textsuperscript{91} Although donations on account of a religious office were usually provided by priestesses, it seems that at least in the cult of Bona Dea, \textit{magistrae} could do the same. A main difference is though, that the priestesses whose gifts are recorded, seem to have been women of high social standing who received public honours in return.

3: Priesthoods and social rank

As has often been mentioned in this thesis, priesthoods and social standing were closely connected. In the first chapter I have explained that social standing is partly made up of rank. This section deals with the relationship between rank, standing and priesthoods. In Rome, the prestige a priesthood gave to the person who held it was used by Augustus to provide the nobility with the opportunity to acquire honour, for they had lost their political influence since the end of the Republic. Freedmen were more and more restricted from holding priesthoods, although they could acquire important religious offices within groups like the \textit{Augustales}\textsuperscript{92} and could hold ancillary functions as several examples mentioned in the second chapter show.\textsuperscript{93} Still, in general, the most important priesthoods in Rome were reserved for senators, and the less important ones for equestrians.\textsuperscript{94} It is remarkable that many prestigious priests in Rome did not explicitly record their priesthoods on inscriptions; on dedications for example, their priesthoods are only rarely mentioned.\textsuperscript{95} This was different regarding the priests – and priestesses! – in the provinces who proudly announced their religious offices on inscriptions, even while their social rank often remains obscure.\textsuperscript{96}

3.1: The rank of the priestesses in the provinces

We have seen in chapter 4 that women could hold many different religious offices. In this section I will give an overview of the social rank to which the priestesses belonged and link this to the kind of religious office they held, in order to see if these offices held reflected the social hierarchy, as one would expect.

\textsuperscript{91} Brouwer thinks that this may show that Secundus was a \textit{sexvir Augustalis}, because giving banquets was one of their tasks, Brouwer (1989) 60, 378.

\textsuperscript{92} Hoffman Lewis (1955) 17-18; Eck (1989) 25-26, 34; Rüpke (2005a) 283-284. A parallel from the provinces may be the Carthaginian Ceres cult. We have seen in chapter 3 that the two freedmen-priests were among the first men to hold the priesthood that afterwards was held by men of (much) higher social standing; Cadotte (2007) 355. Fèvrier(1975) 40, 41, though, claims that the inscriptions recording these \textit{liberti} show that in \textit{coloniae liberti} were allowed to hold magistracies. See also Whittaker (1996) 605.

\textsuperscript{93} In Rome several freedwomen acted in ancillary functions and one was even a \textit{sacerdos}, though likely in a \textit{collegium}, cat.no.270.

\textsuperscript{94} Hoffman Lewis (1955) 164; Eck (1989) 22.

\textsuperscript{95} Rüpke (2005a) 284-287.

\textsuperscript{96} The omission of information about social rank may have been the result of a smaller gap (than in Rome) between the top and bottom of the social order in provincial towns.
Many inscriptions recording priestesses do not mention their rank. As we have seen in chapter 3 in relation to the African *sacerdotes Cereris*, this is probably an indication of a social background that was not very high. In general though, most priestesses of whom the social rank is known, belonged to the *decuriales*, although also some *libertae* have been attested. Other priestesses were of equestrian rank, and a very small number belonged to the senatorial elite.97

The rank of circa 67% of the women recorded in the catalogue is unknown. Of the others, only eight may have been unfree. Three acted as *ministra* or *magistra* in the cult of Bona Dea.98 One was (possibly) *magistra* of Mercurius Iunarius in Arpinum (region 1), another had been *sacraria* in Verona (region 10) and a certain Doris from Rome held office as *aeditua* in the cult of Diana.99 The last two were *servae Veneris* in Gades (Baetica), although it is uncertain whether these religious slaves were really unfree, as we have seen in chapter 4.100 About forty-one women recorded in my database were *libertae*, which may seem quite a large amount, compared to that of the priestesses of (possibly) decurial rank (thirty-one), but most of these women held no priesthood but lower religious offices: only thirteen of them were *sacerdotes*, while the others were *magistrae* or held other low religious offices.101 This shows the greater prestige of priesthoods compared to ancillary functions.

Some of the freedwomen who were *sacerdotes* acted in unknown cults, but three *sacerdotes* of Bona Dea,102 a *sacerdos Cereris* (from Corfinium), a *sacerdos Veneris* (from Casauria or Teate Marrucinorum) and a freedwoman who held the combined priesthood of those two deities (from Sulmo) have also been attested.103 This last woman, Helvia Quarta, deserves some extra attention, for as the only Sulmonan priestess (except one, who served Ceres alone) she lived in the first century AD, while the other priestess attested in this town lived in the second and first century BC. This shows that Augustus’s restrictive policy towards freedmen holding religious offices was not followed everywhere in Italy, or that it did not concern women.104

As has been remarked, thirty-one women were of decurial rank.105 Virtually all lived in Italy and acted in respectable Romano-Italian cults like that of Venus, Ceres, Fortuna and Juno. A large percentage of the women of decurial rank, circa 32%, were *sacerdotes publicae* (often of Ceres or

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97 This pattern is largely comparable to that of *flaminicae*, Hemelrijk (2006a) 86; Hemelrijk (2006b) 189.
98 Brouwer (1989) 292, 293. Cat.no.71; 134; 267.
99 Cat.no.272; 139; 6.
100 Cat.no.287; 288.
101 This is in accordance with Schultz (2006) 74: Freeborn women usually held more prestigious offices than freedwomen or slaves. The tomb stones of the *sacerdotes* were usually no part of group tombs in contrast to those from women with lower religious offices. This shows that in general the *sacerdotes were richer. Brouwer* (1989) 281 writes that both freeborn and freed women could hold the office of *magistra or ministra* in the Bona Dea cult. He lists these women on pages 282-289, 382.
102 Brouwer (1989) 280. One priestess was a freedwoman of the empress Livia, Brouwer (1989) 282; the others were freedwomen of private people, Brouwer (1989) 285-287.
103 Cat.no.67; 58; 120. The priestesses from Corfinium and Sulmo were both named Helvia. Freedwomen also acted as *sacerdos* in the cult of Magna Mater, see e.g. *CIL* 6, 2260; *AE* 1989, 192; *CIL* 6, 496.
104 Unfortunately, the rank of the other priestesses from Sulmo is unknown, so we do not know if the priesthood of Ceres in which most of them served, was generally held by freedwomen.
105 Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 194, writes that there were fewer priestesses of equestrian rank recorded than could be expected, regarding the number of equestrians active at a local level.
Venus), which may lead to the conclusion that this type of priesthood was more prestigious than one that was not explicitly called publica. This is supported by the fact that relatively many other ‘public’ priestesses were of equestrian rank.\textsuperscript{106} Five, which is nearly half of the equestrian priestesses in the catalogue, were sacerdotes publicae, the others served goddesses like Juno Populona and Venus Iovia.\textsuperscript{107} This last one from Abella, however, is uncertain for the woman was mother of an equestrian, which does not necessarily imply that she was of the same rank.\textsuperscript{108} One of the very few senatorial women – Gaia Nummia – also held a ‘public’ priesthood.\textsuperscript{109} We have seen in chapter 2 that sacerdotes publicae probably served the most important deities of their towns, so it is unsurprising to see so many women of high rank carrying the title sacerdos publica.

Only four of the total of the total 296 priestesses and other women with religious offices were of senatorial rank. Nummia Varia (cat.no.88) served Venus Felix, likely the same goddess as served by Gaia Nummia, sacerdos publica. The third priestess was lampadifera of Ceres. She is one of only a few women who were called clarissima femina on an inscription.\textsuperscript{110} According to Raepsaet-Charlier senatorial women were active in provincial or municipal priesthoods; these women took part in local life, mainly by euergetism and religion.\textsuperscript{111} This was a general trend, starting in the middle of the first century AD: senators and equestrians felt stronger connections with their area of descent, which was expressed by holding local priesthoods.\textsuperscript{112} As may be clear the small number of senatorial priestesses does not reflect this trend at all. It seems that the municipal priesthoods held by senatorial women were those of the imperial cult, which shows the importance of this specific priesthood.

Regarding the numbers mentioned so far, we can conclude that the social hierarchy was reflected in a priestly hierarchy for women. Senatorial women held the most prestigious priesthoods like that of flaminica or sacerdos publica, equestrian women were endowed with ‘public’ priesthoods of city goddesses or important Roman deities; decurial women served sometimes as sacerdotes publicae, and otherwise in various cults of important Roman deities and ‘middle class’ women served local deities or Roman deities that were influenced by indigenous traditions (e.g., the African Ceres). Generally, libertae and servae held ancillary religious offices. It may be clear that this is a very rough outline and hat there were several exceptions to it (e.g., libertae serving as sacerdotes) but a trend is clearly visible.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{106} Cat.no.116, commagistra of Bona Dea, is an exception, see Brouwer (1989) 275.
\textsuperscript{107} Rives (1994b) 299 writes that this particular Venus was a peculiar and very old form of the goddess.
\textsuperscript{108} Cat.no.15.
\textsuperscript{109} Cat.no.40.
\textsuperscript{110} Cat.no.200; Chastagnol (1979) 20.
\textsuperscript{112} Eck (1989) 45; Várhegyi (2010) 32, 46.
\textsuperscript{113} This supports Schultz’s statement that ‘(...) the division of religious responsibility (…) reflected the stratification of Roman society along the lines of social status (...)’, see Schultz (2006) 146.
3.2: *Multiple and joint priesthoods, social rank and standing*

The accumulation of priesthoods in Rome was ‘considered a mark of great honor.’\(^{114}\) Regarding the limited number of priesthoods available and the costs involved in holding a priesthood, it could be expected that this was also true for priests – and priestesses – living in towns in Italy and the provinces of the Empire. Accordingly, it may have been reserved for a select group only – likely one of high social standing and in the possession of a certain amount of wealth.\(^{115}\) In this section I check whether this is backed by the epigraphic evidence.

There is only one example of a woman who explicitly recorded that she had held more than one separate priesthood, indicated by a repetition of the word *sacerdos*. Iulia Paulina from Capena had been priestess of Ceres and also priestess of Venus – probably even twice. Her inscription (quoted in full above\(^ {116}\)) underlines the prestige she possessed. Iulia Paulina’s standing and priesthood may even have influenced the career of her husband, see below. Apart from this priestess who served in two separate cults, there are several examples of women who served more than one deity in what I will call a ‘joint cult’, like that of Ceres and Venus in Italy. Two of the ten *sacerdotes Ceres et Veneris* were of equestrian rank of a total of only ten equestrian women in the catalogue, while four others seem to have been of decurial or maybe higher rank.

An example of a woman who served in a totally different ‘joint cult’ is attested in Antipolis in Gallia Narbonensis. She was *sacerdos Minervae et Dianae* and was honoured with a statue by the *Augustales*:\(^ {117}\)

\[Ma[----] / Ma[rek]ellae / sa[ce]rdot(i) Mi/n[fe]rvae et Dia/nae, in honor(em) / Calpurni(i) Her/metis, marit(i) eius / IIIIIIvirii Aug(ustales) cor(porati) A(ntipolitani)\]

“To Ma… Marcella, priestess of Minerva and Diana, in honour of Calpurnius Hermes, her husband, the sevirs Augustales corporati of Antipolis (erected this).”

The *IIIIVirii Aug(ustales) cor(porati)* were probably an association of *seviri* who had finished their year of duty; they are the dedicators of the inscription. It is likely that Calpurnius Hermes was a *libertus* (as the *seviri* usually were) and accordingly that his wife was not of higher social rank. This is *not* to say that the priestess did not possess a reasonably high *standing*, for the *Augustales* – who

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\(^{114}\) Hoffman Lewis (1955) 23. Generally in Rome, one person held one priesthood at the same time, Rüpke (2011) 30. There were some exceptions though, Várhelyi (2010) 66-67.

\(^{115}\) In small towns though, this might have been different: here, wealthy individuals of lower social standing could not be excluded from priesthoods because in that case a shortage of candidates would be the result.

\(^{116}\) Cat.no.52.

\(^{117}\) Cat.no.250.
owned a certain amount of wealth\textsuperscript{118} – were a group of people that often received publichonours.\textsuperscript{119} Ostrow writes that becoming an \textit{Augustalis} was ‘a path to civic esteem parallel to, and perhaps only just below, that enjoyed by members of the local \textit{ordo}.’\textsuperscript{120} This shows that the priestess of Minerva and Diana was probably a highly regarded citizen of Antipolis, and therefore a suitable candidate for the joint priesthood.

Of some priestesses who served in a ‘joint cult’ their formal rank is unknown, for example Agusia Priscilla, \textit{sacerdos Spei et Salutis} in Gabii. I have found no other \textit{Agusii} recorded on inscriptions from Gabii, nor from other towns around Rome. However, Agusia’s inscription seems to suggest that she was an esteemed member of her community (see above). This backs the suggestion, also provided by the other inscriptions mentioned here, that ‘joint cults’ were often held by women of considerable social standing. The fact that most inscriptions of priestesses acting in ‘joint cults’ were honorary and belonged to statue bases also suggests that the standing of the women was relatively high. However, as often, the evidence is too limited and the difference with other priestesses too small to state that the priestesses serving more than one deity were \textit{generally} of a higher social standing than the others, or that they belonged to a select group.

3.3: \textit{Holding a priesthood as a way to consolidate or enhance one’s standing}

Apart from \textit{consolidating} one’s social standing, holding a priesthood was a way to \textit{enhance} one’s standing. At the same time, holding a priesthood was a \textit{result} of that standing, for a certain ‘amount’ of at least one of the elements that made up social standing (see chapter 1) was needed to obtain a religious office.\textsuperscript{121} This is illustrated by the few \textit{libertae} who had been priestess; presumably they derived their standing from their wealth. Kleiner and Matheson aptly write: ‘The office of priestess brought distinction both to the woman who held it and to her family, and it was generally a reflection of the prominence her family held in the community in which she served.’\textsuperscript{122} Therefore, it can be said that religion did not only reflect the socio-political order, but also formed it.\textsuperscript{123} That a priesthood brought distinction to the family of a priestess is nicely illustrated by an epitaph from Thubursicu Numidarum in Numidia.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{119} Ostrow (1985) 71-72; Mouritsen (2006) 243, 245-247. They organised their own finances, membership and possessions. It has been stated that the \textit{Augustae} formed a second \textit{ordo}, below the \textit{ordo decurionum}. D’Arms (2000) 129. Ostrow (1985) 71 calls the \textit{Augustales} a ‘second town council’. This is disputed by Mouritsen (2006) 244-245.
\textsuperscript{120} Ostrow (1985) 64. However, as Mouritsen (2006) 245, points out, this varied between towns.
\textsuperscript{121} Spickermann (1994b) 189. Cf. Hemelrijk (2006b) 189, writing about \textit{flaminicae} of the imperial cult.
\textsuperscript{122} Kleiner and Matheson (2000) 3.
\textsuperscript{123} Cf. Whittaker (1997) 148.
\textsuperscript{124} Cat.no.231.
D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Calpurnia Se/data Asprena/tiana Calpur/ni Gemini nepos / Calpurni Seda/t(i) / et Vasiae Ru/fillae sacerdo/tis filia pia vi/xit annis XXXII / mensibus III / monum(entum) f(ecit) caris/simae et fidelissim ae / coniugi C(aius) Ann(ius) L() / maritus h(ic) s(ita) e(st).

“Dedicated to the spirits of the deceased. Calpurnia Sedata Asprenatiana, granddaughter of Calpurnius Geminus, pious daughter of Calpurnius Sedatus and of the priestess Vasia Rufilla, lived thirty-two years and three months. Her husband Caius Annius L() made this monument for his dearest and very faithful wife. She is buried here.”

In this inscription the relationship of the deceased to the priestess is clearly stressed; unfortunately we do not know in which cult this Vasia Rufilla served. It is noteworthy that no municipal offices of both male Calpurnii are recorded, and neither any functions of the husband of Calpurnia Sedata Asprenatiana. This might imply that they had not had any, which would increase the importance of the priesthood of Vasia Rufilla for her family even more.\textsuperscript{125} Another example is the priesthood of the above mentioned Iulia Paulina. Dondin-Payre convincingly argues that Iulia Paulinus’s husband, L. Mucius Mucianus acquired his office as curator as a result of his wife’s priesthood. Mucius Mucianus had not held any important offices, yet he was appointed as curator of Capena twice in his life. This is shown by two inscriptions, the first that of Iulia Paulina from AD 186, the second a dedication erected during the reign of the emperor Pertinax in the spring of 193.\textsuperscript{126} As a result of his wife’s prestigious office he became curator for the first time, while he was probably appointed for the second time because he had done so well seven years before.\textsuperscript{127}

In sum, apart from reflecting the social hierarchy, which has been discussed in section 5.3.1, priesthoods also helped to shape the socio-political order. This connection between religious offices and social hierarchy was consolidated by the system of euergetism. Euergetism institutionalised power relations, and incorporated both the rich – in this case the priestesses – and the poor in the same value-system.\textsuperscript{128} By using her (his) social network or spending her (his) own money to the benefit of others, the benefactress (benefactor) demonstrated her (his) higher standing, while those who received the gifts expressed their gratitude publicly.\textsuperscript{129} In the next section, priestesses who acted as benefactresses will be discussed.

\textsuperscript{125} On the other hand, the long name of the deceased might indicate a higher rank. PIR’1, p. 67 mentions various Anni L() who had held high magistracies; a Calpurnius Aspemas (without further information), p. 170 and a Calpurnia, married to L. Nonius Aspemas and mother of a man with the same name as his father. Both were consuls, p. 290. They may have been related to Calpurnia Sedata Asprenatiana, but this is unknown. Still, even if the men in Calpurnia Sedata’s inscription were high-ranking, the fact remains that the priesthood of her mother was explicitly recorded, stressing its value.

\textsuperscript{126} CIL 11, 3873=ILS 409.

\textsuperscript{127} Dondin-Payre (1981) 226.


4: Priesthoods, euergetism and public honour

We have seen in the previous chapter that priestesses literally entered the public sphere when fulfilling their religious duties. Apart from this physical presence in public, priestesses were also present in the centre of their town and of municipal life in a few other ways: they played a role in the system of euergetism as benefactresses or patronesses and as the recipients of public honours. While in the city of Rome, euergetistical priesthoods were relatively unimportant, financial generosity of private persons holding religious offices, played an important role in many Italian and provincial towns. Euergetism could be either in the form of giving benefactions, or in the form of assisting people – individuals or groups – by acting as patron(ess). Women from the local elite also paid their share. In this section I will discuss firstly the priestesses who were also benefactresses and secondly those who were patronesses.

4.1: Benefactions and patronage

There were several ways in which women could gain public recognition. Acting as benefactress or patroness was reserved for the richest and best connected women, while priesthoods were open to a wider circle. These roles often overlapped each other. In order to gain more insight into the phenomenon of priestess-benefactresses I will start with a discussion of the relation between priesthoods and benevolence. This is followed by an overview of the geographical spread of the priestess-benefactresses. We have seen in chapter 1 that Roman influences played an important role in shaping civic religion, but the system of euergetism had also strong links with Romanization. Therefore, it can be supposed that priestess-benefactresses appear in those areas that were the most Romanized; we shall see whether the epigraphic evidence supports this hypothesis. Furthermore, the type of benefactions will pass under review in order to investigate whether priestess-benefactresses provided their towns with gifts that had a close relation to their priesthoods.

Priesthoods and benevolence

Euergetism and (some kinds of) patronage required money, and at the same time money was needed to acquire a priesthood which in its turn often imposed on its holder the obligation to provide benefactions. This was no problem for wealthy women who possessed Roman citizenship, because in many cases they had a de facto control over their possessions, as has been explained in the first

130 See also chapter 1, footnote 31.
132 Beneficence and patronage were not identical, Hemelrijk (2004) 222.
133 Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 207.
chapter. As these women held most priesthoods, the appearance of priestesses-benefactresses need not surprise us, and we may put aside Gold’s view that women “were rarely in a position to give or receive substantial gifts.” It has been estimated that in the second and third centuries AD, about 30 to 45% of all private property belonging to the local elites was owned by women. Often, certain benefactions were attached to a priesthood, like providing public banquets or organising festivals in honour of a god or goddess, but priestesses could also be expected to act “spontaneously” as benefactresses. In section 5.2.3 several priestesses have been discussed who gave benefactions ob honorem sacerdoti(i), so here I will mainly concentrate on “voluntary” benefactions (which was presumably never really voluntary). Benefactions of this kind could be much grander than (obligatory) gifts paid for on account of being appointed as priestess.

Despite the fact that several priestesses acted as benefactresses, there was not necessarily a direct link between “voluntary” benefactions and priesthoods: not all benefactresses may have chosen (or have been entitled) to hold a religious office. And, which is more important: nor may all priestesses have been able to afford great gifts, for wealth was usually very unequally distributed. Some towns had a broad curial elite that provided the possible candidates for priesthoods, because it was useful to maximise the number of suitable office-holders available. This implies that not all curiales were wealthy. Only the richest, who were very few in number, could afford to give lavish benefactions; others had problems even paying for the minimum required summa honoraria. In addition, we do not know whether the benefactions were given before (perhaps with the purpose to get the office?) or after acquiring a priestly office.

**Priestess-benefactresses**

Circa 13% of all inscriptions record women who either list their benefactions (or those carried out in their name by someone else) or are praised ob merita eius or ob munificentiam. This number of priestess-benefactresses is about 9% of the circa 354 epigraphically attested benefactresses that have been collected by Emily Hemelrijk. It has to be noted that this number of 354 includes women who

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141 The same holds true for men, and for the relationship between priesthoods and patronage, and between patronage and benefactions.
142 Duncan-Jones (1990) 141: A very small part of the population owned a relatively large territory.
143 Duncan-Jones (1990) 161. A shortage of candidates could be a reality, see Duncan-Jones (1990) 171.
144 Duncan-Jones (1990) 171.
146 Cat.no.114.
147 Cat.no.289.
148 Hemelrijk, forthcoming.
gave gifts to *collegia*, but excludes women who gave relatively small gifts like a statue. If these smaller gifts would be included, the number of benefactresses would be much higher, which implies that many more women could acquire prestige by spending their money for the public good than by holding a religious office. This illustrates not only that priesthoods were relatively rare, limited to a smaller group of people and therefore probably extra valuable, but also that being both benefactress and priestess was very exceptional.

The priestess-benefactresses from the catalogue all lived in Italy and Baetica except two, who were from Hispania Tarraconensis and Africa. This African exception is Valeria Concessa, priestess of Ceres; she was praised because of her merits (see chapter 3). The concentration of priestess-benefactresses in Italy and Baetica diverts partly from the spread of benefactresses in general. In the first century AD most benefactresses that are attested lived in Italy; in the second century they could still be found in Italy, but epigraphic evidence shows that they also were active in northern Africa and Spain. In the third century, benefactresses are attested mainly in Africa, to a lesser degree in Italy and only a few times in Spain. As Hemelrijk has stated, generally speaking, the inscriptions of benefactresses have been found in the provinces that were most Romanized. This pattern of inscriptions can be connected with the spread of Roman citizenship, combined with urbanisation and economic prosperity.

The lack of African priestess-benefactresses in my sample is striking, especially considering the fact that many African *flaminicae* were benefactresses. Hemelrijk suggests that the large number of *flaminica*-benefactresses may be the result of local or regional habits. As only one of the African priestesses in my database had acted as benefactress these ‘regional habits’ were certainly not a closer link between priesthoods and benevolence than elsewhere in the Roman Empire. Likely, the standing of the priesthood and the social rank and wealth of its priestesses were more important. We have seen in chapter 3 that the African priestesses of Ceres were probably not of a high social rank; they seem to have belonged to the ‘middle class’. Regarding the other African priestesses in my database, they were probably part of the same social group, for the same reasons as the *sacerdotes Ceres*: in none of the relevant inscriptions, a reference is made to social rank and all inscriptions were either funerary or dedicatory. In addition, only in a few cases something is known about the male relatives of the priestesses. So possibly the large number of benefactions given by *flaminicae* in Africa can be explained by a concentration of prestige and wealth within an elite group that held the most important priesthood, i.e. the flamineate, and possessed most money.

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150 Hemelrijk (2008b) 14; Hemelrijk, forthcoming 2012. The spread of male benefactors is wider, Hemelrijk (2008b) 14 (who lists several works about male benefactors); Hemelrijk, forthcoming 2012.
151 Hemelrijk (2008b) 14-15; Hemelrijk, forthcoming 2012. However, it needs to be kept in mind that for much of this we rely on inscriptions, and these are not an independent variable.
152 Hemelrijk (2006a) 91.
This link between high social rank and acting as benefactress seems to be backed by the fact that of relatively many priestess-benefactresses in the catalogue their social rank is known. Furthermore, the priestesses whose rank is known were relatively often of decurial rank (likely, fourteen of all thirty-one decurial priestesses), of the equestrian order (one of all ten equestrians) or of senatorial rank (two in four). These numbers show the important link between social rank and benefactions.\textsuperscript{153} This link between social rank and benefactions is also visible when we take into account the priestesses who gave small – and cheaper – gifts to a deity.\textsuperscript{154} Ten other women (apart from the thirty discussed above) spent their own money on gifts for a goddess. Their rank is either unknown – which might indicate that it was not very high – or they were libertae. Additionally, most of them were\textit{ magistrae} and no priestesses. In sum, priestess-benefactresses who gave impressive gifts were usually of high social rank, while their humbler colleagues tended to spend smaller amounts of money on gifts.

\textit{Types of benefactions}

There is no straightforward link between the priesthoods held by the priestess-benefactresses and the specific type of their benefactions, for many\textit{ sacerdotes} erected buildings that had nothing to do with religion, or they gave\textit{ sportulae} and public banquets. This fits with Hemelrijk’s statement that gifts with a religious connotation were not more common among\textit{ flaminicae}-benefactresses than other benefactions.\textsuperscript{155} A good example of a priestess who gave benefactions that had nothing to do with her priesthood is Caesia Sabina from Veii, mentioned above. She had given benefactions to the women of her town, at the same day her husband entertained the men:\textsuperscript{156}

\textit{Caesiae Sabinae / Cn(aei) Caesi Athicti / haec sola omnium / feminarum / matribus Cvir(orum) et / sororibus et filiab(us) / et omnis ordinis / mulieribus municipib(us) / epulum dedit diebusq(ue) / ludorum et epuli / viri sui balneum / cum oleo gratuito / dedit / sorores piissimae

\textsuperscript{153} The\textit{ magistrae Bonae Deae} who gave benefactions are exceptions: two of these four women were freed and the other two belonged to the\textit{ plebs ingenua}; this seems due to the special character of the cult in which freedwomen and women of low social rank played such an important role. Clark (2011) 364: Brouwer (1989) 277, 278, 284, 287.

\textsuperscript{154} However, it has to be noted that the difference between gifts for the public good and dedications to a deity is not always clear, only in cases when a vow was solved. When a god was presented with a gift, did the public profit at the same time? In cases of a religious building, the answer seems yes, but what about smaller gifts? Several\textit{ magistrae Bonae Deae} for instance, gave the goddess objects like clothing, probably meant to clothe the cult statue, a mirror, chests and a silver statue (cat.no.72; 83; 115. Brouwer (1989) 379). One can hardly maintain that the general public profited\textit{ directly} from these gifts, but\textit{ indirectly} it did. By presenting such gifts, a proper relationship between the deity and the people was maintained. In addition, the money that otherwise had to be spent by the temple or the community (which could be a city or a\textit{ collegium} for such religious equipment, could now be used for something else. Therefore, I consider these inscriptions of the\textit{ magistrae Bonae Deae} and the others in which small gifts are mentioned, as benefactions.

\textsuperscript{155} Hemelrijk (2006a) 97-99; Hemelrijk (2008b) 16.

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{CIL} 11, 3811. Four inscriptions in Veii (\textit{CIL} 11, 3807-10) honour her husband, who was adlected in the local senate because of his benefactions to the city of Veii and his\textit{ pietas} to the imperial house.
“To Caesia Sabina, (daughter/wife of) Cnaeus Caesius Athictus, who alone of all women gave a banquet for the mothers and Cviri and sisters and daughters and citizen-women of every order, and who provided bathing and free oil on the days of the ludi and a banquet given by her husband. Her most pious sisters [erected this].”

The fact that her priesthood is not recorded on this inscription implies that Caesia Sabina either had not acquired her religious office yet, or that it bore no relation whatsoever to her benefactions. In other cases though, the benefactions of priestesses seem to have been related to their religious office or to local religion in general. There were several priestesses who paid for statues of gods, shrines and temples.157 The magistrae of Bona Dea and their gifts have already been mentioned, but there were many others: Caesia Sabina’s husband paid in her name for the schola of the collegium of Fortuna; Staberia, sacerdos in Corfinium paid for the porticus in front of a sacarium158, Claudia Persina, priestess in Tarragona, paid for a sanctuary,159 and in Pompeii the public priestess Mamia provided her town with a temple (either of the Genius of the colony or that of Augustus).160 In Arucci-Turobriga in Baetica a certain Baelia Crinta paid for a temple of Apollo and Diana, possibly the same deities she served as priestess.161 The temple cost 200 hundred thousand sesterces; according to Curchin these are the highest specified building costs in Spain.162 Junia Rustica from Cartima (Baetica) erected a bronze statue of Mars on the forum, amongst many other more mundane things, e.g. a banquet.163

Banquets were given by three priestesses (or four, if Caesia Sabina’s inscription on which her priesthood is omitted, is included).164 Only two priestesses gave sportulae.165 In Iulia Paulina’s inscription from Capena the word sportulae is explicitly used (see above).166 Antia Cleopatra, priestess on Sicily, gave to all members of the plebs one denarius, two denarii to the children of the decurions and five denarii to the decurions themselves.167 Giving sportulae was not limited to sacerdotes; women with other religious offices provided them as well: in Ameria, a magistra of Fortuna, rejoiced the members of a collegium with money.168

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157 In Africa and Italy, circa ¼ of all public benefactions were building structures with a religious character, Duncan-Jones (1982) 75, 90-93, 157-162; Nichols (2006) 46.
158 Cat.no.61.
159 Cat.no.247.
160 Cat.no.96.
161 Cat.no.240.
162 Curchin (1983) 228. This public building activity was of course supervised by the decurions, who authorized private persons to build or restore temples and altars, and place votive gifts in temples, Castrén (1975) 60.
164 Cat.no.52; 242; 246. Caesia Sabina: CIL 11, 3811 = ILS 6583.
165 Usually, giving sportulae was less expensive than erecting a public building, but this was not the case in bigger cities, except when only the decurions were endowed with the gift. Therefore, in the northern part of Italy where the biggest Italian cities could be found, giving sportulae was rare, Patterson (2006) 172.
166 Cat.no.52.
167 Cat.no. 145.
168 Cat.no.21.
Iuliae M(arci) f(iliae) Felicitati, / uxor / C(ai) Curati Eutychetis / IIIvir(i), magistrae Fortu/nae Mel(ioris), coll(egium) centonarior(um) / ob merita eius; quo honore / contenta sumptum omnem / remisit et ob dedic(ationem) ded(it) sin/gulis HS XX n(ummmum), et hoc amplius / arkae corum intul(it) HS V m(ilia) n(ummmum), / ut die natalis sui V Id(us) Mai(as) / ex usuris eius summae epu/lantes i<n=M> perpetuum divider(unt); / quod si divisio die s(upra) s(cripta) celebrata non / fuerit, tunc pertineb(at) om(na) summa / ad familiam publicam

“To Iulia Felicitas, daughter of Marcus, wife of Caius Curatius Eutyches, quattorvir, magistra of Fortuna Melior, the college of the centonarii (gave this) because of her merits. As she was content with this honour she gave back all that was spent and because of the dedication she gave to each member twenty sestertii, and besides this she put in their cash 5000 sestertii, so that they could celebrate her birthday on the fifth Ide of May from the interest of this sum in perpetuity with a meal and a distribution; when the distribution on the day above described is not celebrated, then the total sum will fall to the public familia.”

To enforce the celebration of her birthday, Iulia Felicitas who was one of only three known female patrons of all collegia centonariorum, had included the clause that if this banquet was not held on the stipulated day, the money would fall to the familia publica. All benefactions of Iulia Felicitas consisted of money, but we have already seen that several other priestesses gave more than one type of benefactions, for instance Agusia Priscilla, the sacerdos Spei et Salutis Augustae from Gabii we have encountered above. She promised to restore the porticus of (the temple?) of Spes which was damaged by old age. Furthermore, she gave great shows (judi) for the health of the emperor Antoninus Pius and she gave clothes. Another example is the often mentioned Caesia Sabina, priestess of Fortuna Redux in Veii, whose inscription has already been quoted on above. She provided a banquet and free oil to go with free bathing. Furthermore, her husband Cnæus Caesiæus Attichtus restored the schola of a collegium and adorned it with porticoes and statues in her name.

In sum, priestesses and women with other religious offices could give a variety of benefactions to their town or to a selected group of its inhabitants, to a collegium or to a deity. These gifts could have a religious character and be related to the cults in which the women served, but equally as often the gifts were not religious at all. In this, the priestesses did not differ from other wealthy women (and men), although these could obviously not give benefactions related to their religious office.

170 Cat.no.78.
171 CIL 11, 3811.
172 CIL 11, 3810.
Priestesses and patronage

Like benefactresses, women who acted as patronesses to individuals, collegia and towns were not uncommon in the Roman Empire,\textsuperscript{173} especially in the West.\textsuperscript{174} Patronage and priesthhoods were closely linked, certainly regarding male priest.\textsuperscript{175} Patterson has stated that priestesses-benefactresses-patronesses were important, not only in the third century – although that is the period when most are attested – but also earlier, in the first and second centuries AD.\textsuperscript{176} Therefore, we can expect to find some priestesses in the catalogue who had acted as patronesses. And indeed, they have been attested, though compared to priestesses-patronesses who acted in the imperial cult, their number is very small.

All priestesses in the catalogue were patronesses of their \textit{liberti} (which was very common, of course), except one. Nummia Varia, priestess of Venus Felix in the Italian town Peltuinum is the only example of a priestess-patroness of a town who was no \textit{flaminica}. In AD 242 she had been patroness of her native town Peltuinum, while her parents had supported the town before her.\textsuperscript{177} That she is the only example may seem surprising at first sight, because in Italy and Africa patronage of cities by women was not uncommon, mainly in the third century,\textsuperscript{178} but this can be explained by the social rank of the priestesses in the catalogue. Most city patronesses came from families with a high social rank\textsuperscript{179} like Nummia Varia who was of senatorial descent, but only very few other priestesses in the catalogue were \textit{clarissimae feminæ} or women of equestrian rank.

Often, patronesses also gave benefactions.\textsuperscript{180} Many times however, the benefactions given by them are not listed in full, according to Nichols because the title of patron was so prestigious that nobody wanted to give the impression that they had ‘bought’ their position as patron.\textsuperscript{181} In case of Nummia Varia this is true indeed; she is praised for her \textit{adfectio, benevolentia} and \textit{pronus animus}, words that indicate ‘a general attitude of goodwill and emotional involvement’, but which are ‘usually interpreted as referring to financial generosity.\textsuperscript{182}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{173} Dixon (2001) 102.
\bibitem{175} Nichols (2006) 36, 40, 41.
\bibitem{176} Patterson (2006) 220.
\bibitem{177} Cat.no.88; Patterson (2006) 219-220. In honour of this woman a certain Marcus Nummius Iustus, a relative (or freedman?) of hers, was honoured as a patron of the same city Peltuinum and was granted \textit{bisellium} and \textit{cubitum}, \textit{CIL} 9, 3436 = \textit{ILS} 6528. Hemelrijk (2004) 217 note 38. Her father had also been patron of Beneventum, \textit{AE} 1969/70, 169. Sometimes, city patronesses were related to each other, but the patronage of a city was not hereditary, Hemelrijk (2004) 216-217.
\bibitem{178} Nichols (1989) 120; Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 201.
\bibitem{179} Nichols (1989) 128; Hemelrijk (2004) 215. In general, patronesses were even from a higher rank than male patrons. Hemelrijk convincingly argues that this was the result of restrictions imposed on women, Nichols (1989) 129; Hemelrijk (2004) 215-216.
\bibitem{180} Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 201.
\bibitem{182} Hemelrijk (2004) 221.
\end{thebibliography}
Motives and rewards

By acting as priestess-benefactress and/or priestess-patroness women could gain extra public attention and the respect of their local community.\textsuperscript{183} This respect was sometimes expressed in a statue or other public honours (see below section 4.2). In addition, inscriptions, buildings and other durable benefactions reminded later generations of the generosity of the priestesses.\textsuperscript{184} This ‘perpetual’ remembrance could also be achieved by clauses like that determined by the \textit{magistra} of Fortuna Melior, who wished her birthday to be celebrated in perpetuity (see above). Acquiring ‘perpetual’ fame was one of the ways to gain symbolic capital, which in its turn could result in a higher social standing, while the formal social rank of the priestess-benefactress-patroness stayed the same.\textsuperscript{185} This interaction can be seen as a sign of Romanization, because it fitted well into the Roman pattern of values, in which benefactions given for the public good were highly regarded. ‘Public generosity (…) was part of what it meant to be a good and responsible citizen’, as Hemelrijk writes.\textsuperscript{186} Benefactresses showed their wealth, the love for their city and their own civic identity. Besides, benefactions stressed the prestige of the elite and of the city in general.\textsuperscript{187}

Furthermore, benefactions could help to enlarge the prestige of the \textit{family} of the priestess-benefactress.\textsuperscript{188} A good example is Iunia Rustica from Cartima in Baetica. She had been \textit{sacerdos perpetua et prima}. Statues of herself and her son Caius Fabius Linianus had been decreed by the local \textit{ordo}, but she paid the costs. She also erected a statue of her husband Caius Fabius Fabianus.\textsuperscript{189} Presumably, the statues of the priestess and her son were granted because of the multiple benefactions of Iunia Rustica, who had restored the public colonnades, donated land for a bath-house, used her influence so the public taxes were returned, erected a bronze statue of Mars on the Forum, built porticoes at the bath-house on her own land with a swimming-pool and a statue of Cupid and gave a banquet and spectacles on top of it.

Like giving benefactions, acting as patroness resulted in public visibility\textsuperscript{190} – not only directly at times when the patroness was asked for favours, but also indirectly. \textit{Tabulae patronatus}, for instance that of Nummia Varia which is the only one for a city patroness that has been preserved,\textsuperscript{191} could be

\textsuperscript{184} Hemelrijk (2008b) 18; Hemelrijk, forthcoming 2012.
\textsuperscript{185} Gordon (1990a) 194; Hemelrijk (2006) 87-88. In contrast to men, who could be promoted to the equestrian and senatorial orders.
\textsuperscript{186} Hemelrijk (2006a) 90, 91 (quotation). Cf. Veyne (1990) 43-44.
\textsuperscript{187} Patterson (2006) 171-172, 175-176; Hemelrijk (2008b) 17. In Africa many cities may even have been financially dependent on the local elite; this meant that ‘the possession of wealth and the willingness to spend would certainly hold the key to both the acquisition and the retention of power,’ Garnsey (1971) 116.
\textsuperscript{189} Cat.no.283.
\textsuperscript{190} Raepsaet-Charlier (2005) 201.
\textsuperscript{191} Cat.no.88; Hemelrijk (2004) 222.
displayed on public buildings, and be constant reminders of the patroness and her benevolence.\textsuperscript{192} Apart from social pressure – which may partly have been hostility from the crowd or their peers because of the women’s extreme wealth – and the ideology of good citizenship, motives for women to become patronesses were mainly prestige and acknowledgement of their standing.\textsuperscript{193} This is very clear in Nummia Varia’s inscription: becoming patron of Peltuinum is described as the highest honour a citizen of the town could receive (\textit{magis magisque hoc honore qui est aput nos potissimus}), and the patronage was offered ‘for the enhancement of her standing’ (\textit{pro splendore dignitatis suae}). Nummia Varia is a perfect example of a typical Romanized euergete. She was a prestigious high-ranking woman who was benefactress, patroness and priestess at the same time. Her high rank and membership of an important family enabled her to gain favours for her town that honoured her for her benevolence. It may be clear though that Nummia Varia’s example is exceptional, compared to the other priestesses-benefactresses-patronesses in the catalogue. However, there is one major similarity: they all were ‘perpetually’ remembered as benevolent priestesses.

4.2: Public honours

As a reward for their munificence, their patronage or the liturgies attached to their priesthood, \textit{sacerdotes} could be granted several public honours.\textsuperscript{194} As visibility was important in the self-representation of the elite,\textsuperscript{195} these public honours were desirable. Furthermore, because in the provinces statues and public burials were connected to the level of Romanization, not only the generosity of the priestesses was stressed, but their adherence to Roman values as well.\textsuperscript{196} Presumably, this gave an impetus to the prestige they already possessed (and which they needed to be granted public honours).\textsuperscript{197} Regarding the connection to Romanization, it is unsurprising that the further from Rome one goes, the less honorary inscriptions can be found.\textsuperscript{198} Forbis writes that most Italian honorary inscriptions were erected in the Augustan region 1; the others are from south and central Italy.\textsuperscript{199} This spread is not surprising, because region 1 was not only close to Rome; it was also densely populated, was home to many rich towns and had the highest epigraphic density.\textsuperscript{200} This is in accordance with the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{192} Nichols (2001) 104. However, Hemelrijk (2004) 212, 221, writes that most inscriptions in which patronesses are recorded, were erected for their benevolence instead of their patronage.
\item \textsuperscript{194} In one case, a woman was honoured because of her religious office: the epitaph of Veturia Sennae from Rome shows that she had been honoured \textit{of[b] / magistratum / colleg(i) Bonae deae}, cat.no.10. Brouwer (1989) 376; Clark (2011) 354 footnote 32.
\item \textsuperscript{195} Fouët (2010) 38.
\item \textsuperscript{196} Hemelrijk (2006a) 100, 102.
\item \textsuperscript{197} Cf. Alföldy (1984) 61.
\item \textsuperscript{198} Cf. Forbis (1996) 99, 101. Although of course the \textit{general} epigraphic density is lower, the further from Rome one goes.
\item \textsuperscript{199} Forbis (1996) 32-33. The honorary inscriptions collected by Forbis (1996, 99) follow the epigraphic habit, although no sharp decline in the third century can be seen; this decline can neither be traced in my catalogue.
\item \textsuperscript{200} Forbis (1996) 99.
\end{itemize}
data I have collected. Of the twenty-one Italian honorary inscriptions in the catalogue, seven were erected in region 1; four in region four; three in region 7; two in regions 2 and 3; one in region 6 and two on Sicily. The other thirteen honorary inscriptions stem mostly from Baetica (6), the African provinces, Narbonese Gaul and the rest of Spain.

Who honoured the priestess?
People could be honoured publicly by groups or by individuals. The more prestigious this group or individual, the more honour the recipient acquired, and accordingly the higher his or her standing became. Members of the decurial elite were generally honoured by their family members or collegia, while equestrians and senators tended to be honoured by larger and more important groups of people, like the ordo and the plebs. In order to recover the place of priestesses in this ‘rank of honour and standing’, in this section I will pay attention to the persons who paid for the public honours given to the priestesses. It has to be noted though, that in all cases when someone received a public statue or a grave monument built on public ground, the consent of the ordo was needed, which was an honour in itself.

Like other men and women, female religious officials were honoured by private persons, often family members. To mention a few examples: Valeria Concessa, sacerdos Cererum, from Bulla Regia (Africa Proconsularis) was honoured by her sons, while the husband of Publicia Similis, magistra Matris Matutae from Praeneste (region 1) erected her honorary inscription and statue. Flavia Coelia Annia Argiva who had been priestess of Juno Populona in Teanum Sidicinum (region 1) was honoured by her father. In all three cases it was explicitly stated that the place (presumably for a statue) was given by decree of the decurions. A sacerdos (or magistra) could also be honoured by a collegium, as six examples in the catalogue show. The Pompeian ‘public priestess’ Eumachia received a statue from the fullers (cat.no.95) and Iulia Felicitas, magistra Fortunae Melioris from America, was honoured by the collegium centonariorum (cat.no.21). The sacerdos Minervae et Dianae Ma? Marcella from Antipolis and Voconia Severa, priestess of Ceres in Velia were both honoured by the Augustales (cat.no. 250 and 137).

In two – possible – cases, women decided to honour a priestess. Caesia Sabina’s statue and accompanying inscription were erected by her ‘pious sisters’ (sorores piissimae) after she – as the only woman – had given a banquet for the mothers, sisters and daughters of the decurions and for the citizen-women of every order (see above). It is not clear who these ‘pious sisters’ were, but

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201 It is also similar to that of other types of inscriptions, e.g. the municipal decrees collected by Sherk (1970).
204 Women in general were often – for example in Hispania – publicly honoured by their husbands, who accordingly shared in the honour, Navarro Caballero (2001) 195-196; Hemelrijk (2004) 228. E.g. CIL 14, 2997 and AE 1939, 111.
205 Cat.no.155; 105; 128 respectively.
206 Cat.no.13; 21; 80; 95; 137; 250.
considering the fact that Caesia’s special donation was given to the women of Veii, it is likely that the ‘sisters’ were the Veian women, and not Caesia’s kinswomen, if she had any. The other priestess who was honoured by women lived in Surrentum during the reign of Tiberius. The local matrons provided her with a statue.\(^{207}\)

---s]acerd(oti) public(ae) Vener(is) / [et Cereris? h]uiic matronae statuam /[ex aere coll]ato in aedem Veneris / [ponendam cu]raverunt huic /[decuriones p]ublice locum sepulturae et /[in funere quinque milia nummum?] et statuam decreverunt / (…)

“To ?, public priestess of Venus and Ceres (?), for her the matrons took care of erecting a statue in the temple of Venus after collecting money, and for her the decurions decreed a burial place in public and five thousand sesterces for the funeral and a statue. (…)”\(^{208}\)

Being honoured by a group of matrons\(^{209}\) was rather exceptional, and was therefore probably quite prestigious.\(^{210}\) As the ordo paid for the funeral and a statue, the honos this priestess from Surrentum acquired, must have been even higher.\(^{211}\)

In at least ten cases, a priestess was honoured by the ordo,\(^{212}\) though it is likely that another seven honorary inscriptions were also erected by the ordo. Alföldy writes that when no dedicatee was mentioned, it is likely that the ordo had fulfilled this role.\(^{213}\) Sometimes the ordo honoured a priestess together with the cives or with all people. Two sacerdotes Cereris et Veneris received their statues from the ordo and citizens of Capena, while Iulia Aemilia Callitta, sacerdos in Regium Iulium, and Antia Cleopatra, sacerdos in Thermae Himeraeae on Sicily, were honoured by the ordo and populus.\(^{214}\) Priestesses could also be honoured by the citizens alone, for instance Agusia Priscilla from Gabii,\(^{215}\) or by the plebs, like Lcinia Rufina from Ipsca in Spain.\(^{216}\)


\(^{209}\) There are several (Republican) examples of matrons who decided to act collectively, see Schultz (2006) 33-33; a supplicatio in 212 BC, Schultz (2006) 38; the matrons of Rome established and paid for the temple of Fortuna Muliebris, Schultz (2006) 54-55. However, it does not seem to have been common.

\(^{210}\) When fund-raising was needed, money was usually collected from the plebs, Alföldy (1984) 40.

\(^{211}\) Together with this priestess a certain Lucius Cornelius M? was honoured for his benefactions that consisted, amongst other things, of circus and gladiatorial games. Like the priestess, he received a public funeral and a statue. See also Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 109.

\(^{212}\) This number includes only honorary inscriptions; those inscriptions in which the ordo granted the use of public land for a burial are excluded.


\(^{214}\) Cat.no.51; 52; 114; 145.


\(^{216}\) Cat.no.78 and 290 respectively.
In sum, priestesses and other women with a religious office were relatively often honoured by groups instead of individuals, which resulted in a higher social standing and showed that they were considered very prestigious and were important members of their local communities.

**Kinds of public honour**

The public honours women in general received, could vary from crowns and reserved places in the theatre to statues and public burials; these honours were the same as those granted to men.\(^1\) In Rome, Augustus had given the Vestals privileged seats at the gladiatorial games,\(^2\) while Nero allowed the Vestals to watch athletics, a privilege originating from Greece, where the priestesses of Ceres [i.e. Demeter] were allowed to watch the contests in Olympia.\(^3\) Despite the fact that special seats at the games were provided for *flamines* and *flaminicae* of the imperial cult, according to the *lex Narbonensis*,\(^4\) there is no epigraphic evidence in the catalogue of priestesses who were granted the same (Greek) honours as the Vestals.

Nevertheless, other Greek public honours could be bestowed on priestesses, as an inscription from *Magna Graecia* shows (not included in the catalogue). In the Greek text, dating from AD 71, that records the decree of the local Neapolitan *proskletos*, the honours granted to Tettia Casta are, in the words of Lomas ‘a curious mixture of Greek and Roman’.\(^5\) It was decided that the recently expired priestess should receive public mourning, a silver statue that was to be adorned with a crown in honour of the gods, a statue of herself and inscribed shields. Furthermore, the costs of her funeral were to be paid by public money (though the funeral had to be organized by her family), and a place for the grave monument and the costs for the monument itself were also publicly given. I have found no comparable Latin inscriptions of Greek honours granted. Below, I will discuss the two public honours that were most often granted to the priestesses in the catalogue: statues and public funerals.

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\(^1\) Cf. Dixon (2001) 106 about benefactresses.

\(^2\) Suetonius, Aug. 44, transl. J. C. Rolfe: *Feminis ne gladiatores quidem, quos promiscue spectari sollemne olim erat, nisi ex superiore loco spectare concessit. Solis virginibus Vestalibus locum in theatro separatim et contra praetoris tribunal dedit* – ‘He [Augustus] would not allow women to view even the gladiators except from the upper seats, though it had been the custom for men and women to sit together at such shows. Only the Vestal virgins were assigned a place to themselves, opposite the praetor's tribunal.’

\(^3\) Suetonius, *Nero* 12: *Ad athletarum spectaculum invitavit et virgines Vestales, quia Olympiae quoque Cereis sacerdothibus spectare conceditur.* The Vestals had other privileges, like the right to have lictors. Seneca, *Controv.* 1.2.3 also mentions a lector as attendant of a priestess, he had many similarities with a Vestal. Examples of Greek priestesses of Demeter who were granted comparable honours: the priestess Chamyne from Elea was, as only woman, allowed to visit the games, Pausanias, 6.20.9. The priestess of Demeter Kourotrorphos Achaia was granted place in theatre of Dionysos, *RE* s.v. Demeter, 2738.

\(^4\) *CIL* 12, 6038 = *ILS* 6964. The *lex* records several other privileges of (ex)*flamines*, but these – e.g. those related to a role in the local and provincial council – do not seem to have been shared by *flaminicae*. See Van Andringa (2002) 216 about the privileges and prescriptions of the *flamines*.

\(^5\) *IG* 14, 760; Lomas (1993) 180. The words used to justify the honours she received after her death are a mixture of Greek and Roman (Tettia Casta is praised as a lover of honour, which was typically Greek, while being an exemplary wife and citizen was a combination of Roman and Greek praise). This makes the decree a good example of acculturation, according to Lomas (1993) 177, 179-180. Cf. Bielman and Frei-Stolba (1998) 23.
Statues

Statues and public funerals are frequently mentioned in inscriptions of other priestesses. Twenty-four of the forty-three priestesses who received public honours were granted a statue, either during their lifetime, or after their death.\(^{222}\) Several examples have been mentioned in the previous section. These statues, that were probably at least life-sized,\(^{223}\) were in nine cases given by the ordo, sometimes together with others groups.\(^{224}\) Only a few times, priestesses were honoured with a statue by private persons.\(^{225}\) Like other kinds of public honours (see above) statues erected by the local or provincial council were more honourable than those erected by private persons.\(^{226}\)

Statues were erected on the forum according to social standing; their order and size was a direct representation of the existing power relations.\(^{227}\) Unfortunately, the inscriptions belonging to the statue bases of the priestesses in the catalogue are not found in situ. The only certain exception is inscription belonging to the statue of Eumachia, which was erected and found inside her aedificium on the forum of Pompeii; obviously in this case no approval of the ordo was required. Besides, it is possible that the statue of the Surrentine public priestess of Venus (and Ceres?) whose name has been lost (see above), was erected in the temple of Venus. Likely, the approval of the decurions was needed here.\(^{228}\)

In half of the inscriptions (probably) belonging to statue bases, the formula (locus datus) decreto decurionum was used, so these statues were erected on public land. The other statues of the priestesses in the catalogue may have been set up in more private areas like atria of houses or semi-public buildings of collegia. It has to be noted though, that several inscriptions are damaged, so the part recording the approval of the ordo may have been lost and, as has been mentioned above, the consent of the ordo was not always inscribed.\(^{229}\)

Public burials

The largest honour someone could acquire was a funus publicum. Accordingly, this was reserved for a limited number of women – and men – only.\(^{230}\) Still, several examples can be found of women – very often priestesses – who were publicly buried, or usually: were granted public land for their graves.\(^{231}\) Of the priestesses in the catalogue a possible eleven received a public funeral. Like other public

\(^{222}\) Only one preserved statue has been identified as belonging to a priestess in the catalogue, i.e. that of Eumachia.

\(^{223}\) Alföldy (1984) 38.

\(^{224}\) Cat.no.51; 52; 53; 126; 145; 283; 284; 289; CIL 11, 3811, which records the priestess of cat.no.136.

\(^{225}\) Cat.no.105; 130; 200; 244; it is unknown whether all these inscriptions belonged to statue bases.

\(^{226}\) Hemelrijk (2006a) 94.

\(^{227}\) Whittaker (1997) 146-147.

\(^{228}\) See Müller, forthcoming, for a discussion of the statues of priestesses.


\(^{230}\) Savunen (1997) 153; Levison and Ewald (2005) 635; Hemelrijk (2006a) 94, 96. This happened most frequently when a magistrate or a member of his family died during his time of office, Castrén (1975) 61-2. It cannot be recovered whether the same applied to priestesses.

\(^{231}\) Apart from the land for the tombs that was donated by the decurions, the expenses of the burial were sometimes also paid by municipal funds, Castrén (1975) 61.
honours, a public burial seems to have been linked primarily to merits, rank and standing and not to priesthoods. This can be concluded from the fact that of twenty-six of the forty-three priestesses who were publicly honoured their rank is known, which is higher than the average, and from the fact that this rank is relatively high (see below).

Virtually all priestesses in the catalogue who were honoured with a funus publicum lived in Campania (the few others in Latium, also in the Italian region 1) and this suggests that regional habits may have played a role (and of course a high epigraphic density which in itself can also be seen as a result from regional habits). And indeed, in Campania in general many public burials have been attested. Most information concerning public funerals of priestesses stems from Pompeii; the Pompeian sacerdotes and their funerals will be discussed in the Epilogue.

Here I will only mention the role of a priestess from Surrentum in the funus publicum of one of her family members. A sacerdos publica Veneris et Cерeris, whose name has partly been lost, is mentioned on an inscription that records the deaths of several members of a family who lived in the Augustan period. One of them – the priestess’s son who was a boy of little more than a year old – was granted a public burial, i.e. both the place and a sum of money for the funeral. The grave contained the bodies of the boy, his mother and – probably – his stepfather, a certain Titus Clodius Proculus. Like this man, the priestess did not receive a public burial herself (that is to say: there is no clear evidence for this), although obviously she shared in the honour of being buried on the same (previously) public land as her little son. Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba write that the decurions granted a public funeral to the son of the priestess, ‘par ce geste ses parents, en premier lien sa mère, la prêtresse de Vénus et de Céres.’ Obviously the boy could not have been granted this honour because of his own merits. In my opinion it is unlikely that the rank and career of Titus Clodius Proculus played a role, even though he had had an impressive military career and had been pro-censor in Lusitania. However, he does not seem to have adopted the boy. Furthermore, the priestess held a locally important office (in contrast to Titus Clodius Proculus), and therefore I think it is likely that Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba are right and his mother’s priesthood was an important factor in granting the honour to the boy.

The link between public honours and holding a priesthood
Although in many cases women member – called ‘intermediaires’ by Bielman and Frei-Stolba – were publicly buried because of a prestigious male family they were also honoured because of their own merits, for example as benefactresses or priestesses. The example from Surrentum, mentioned above shows that men (or, in this case: a boy) could also be honoured as ‘intermediary’ for a priestess.

233 See Bielman and Frei-Stolba (1998) 19, about the regions in which women were granted public burials.
Bielman and Frei-Stolba write that the Campanian priestesses – most of whom stemmed from important gentes, possessed a lot of money and were rewarded with the same honours as men - are the best examples of women who belonged to the group that was honoured publicly because of its public activities.

According to Hemelrijk, public honours could be granted both as a reward and as an encouragement to give (more) benefactions, as only a few flaminicae were honoured because of their gifts. And indeed, even though some priestesses were granted their statues ob munificentiam or ob merita, terms generally used to indicate benefactions, in most cases, no reason for the honour is mentioned. In case of the flaminicae acting in the imperial cult it was the priesthood and/or the social position of the priestess and her family that was the reason to be honoured. This seems to be supported by the fact that ‘special’ flaminicae – those acting in the provincial cult and the flaminicae perpetuae – were more often granted a statue than common flaminicae, obviously, they were held in higher esteem (and were useful tools in inter community rivalry).

Regarding the forty-two priestesses in the catalogue whose inscriptions explicitly record public honours, relatively many of them were of a high social rank, which backs Hemelrijk’s argument. Five were of equestrian rank, possibly two were clarissimae feminae and probably eighteen belonged to the local elite (the decuriones). In addition, although many different kinds of priestesses were publicly honoured, a relatively large part (12) was made up by public priestesses (sacerdotes publicae), which may lead to the conclusion that it were indeed the most ‘special’ priestesses of a high social standing who were granted public honours.

4.3: The cause and result of acting in public: auctoritas

So far, we have seen that many priestesses were clearly ‘visible’ in their cities: in the first place because they had to represent their community as part of their religious office (see chapter 4); secondly because they often belonged to the local elite that lived in the middle of society; thirdly because priestesses frequently acted as benefactresses and/or patronesses and fourthly because several of them were granted public honours. All these factors contributed to and at the same time resulted from, a certain amount of power. Power in this context means what the Romans called auctoritas, i.e.

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243 Hemelrijk (2006a) 100.
244 The difficulty is obviously to answer the question how far priesthoods changed a priestess’ (or her family’s) standing and how far they recognised it. I do not agree with Marshall (1975) 125-126, who writes: ‘Money and social standing secured office, but not vice versa, and it was the realities of the former which earned Roman respect.’ I think it worked both ways. Forbis (1996) 4: People who were publicly honoured could claim a certain
no direct political control that was a consequence of the right to vote, but unofficial influence, practiced through social networks. Acting in roles and religious offices that were limited to a small number of people led to auctoritas stretching beyond religious matters.

On one inscription in the catalogue, the word auctoritas is even explicitly mentioned. It is the much-quoted inscription of Nummia Varia from Peltuinum Vestinum (cat.no.88), certainly the woman who appeals most to the imagination of all priestesses in the catalogue. It is said that that Nummia Varia ‘by interceding with her authority and standing, guarantees safety and protection’ (intercedente auctoritate dignitatis suaeutos defensosque praestet) to the ‘state’ of Peltuinum, both to individual members and to the city as a whole (singulosuniversosque nosenremquepublicamnostrum). The reciprocity of rank and standing, acting in public (in this case as priestess and as patroness of a town) and auctoritas is voiced in this inscription by the choice of words in the final part about the reasons given to co-opt Nummia Varia as a patroness: firstly, her priesthood of Venus Felix is mentioned, followed by the statement that her standing will be enhanced because of her cooptation as patroness (see also above) and then the authority by which she will exercise her patronage is recorded. Obviously, as a senatorial woman Nummia Varia must have possessed a reasonable amount of authority before she got her priesthood and patronage, but it is clear that her auctoritas in her community was enhanced by both, and that all elements had to be mentioned to stress the soundly based prestige of this impressive woman.

Conclusion

Even though they were not commemorated as such, for they were characterised by common female qualities in their epitaphs, priestesses were women who played prominent roles in their local communities. Like their religious tasks, discussed in the previous chapter, their non-religious roles in public life show their importance. They were highly regarded inhabitants of their towns and were keen on keeping and strengthening their prestigious positions. Although their families may have profited from the prestige of the priestesses, family members were not more present in the inscriptions of priestesses than in those of other women.

The consent of the ordo was needed to be elected and invested with a priestly function, apart from money to pay the summa honoraria. Furthermore, it was often helpful (and in many cases probably even essential) to have an influential family, of which several other members already held civic offices and priesthoods. All this implies that priesthoods could not be obtained by everybody, which is unsurprising regarding the important position a priestess had as mediator between gods and men. Priestesses were often members of the local elite, which was connected through ties of kinship.

authority. Cf. Veyne (1990) 44: The elite had political power because of its prestige that resulted from wealth, and this wealth gave them power elsewhere as well.
Several priestesses showed their prestige and wealth by acting as benefactresses or patronesses. In turn, they were honoured with statues and public burials. Therefore, the relationship with their city can be termed active and reciprocal.

This relationship between priestess and town, and priesthood and prestige may hint at the use of female priesthoods as devices whereby powerful families increased their collective prominence in the public and ritual lives of the towns – a comparable situation with that in the East. At first sight that is, for the priestesses in the West seem to have played a far more active role in these dynastic politics than their eastern colleagues. Of course, various priestesses (like priests) were honoured after their death, which implies that not they themselves but only their relatives profited from the honour. Furthermore, they could continue the role other family members had had before them, like Nummia Varia as patroness of Peltuinum, or help their husband in gaining an office, like Iulia Paulina from Capena, but there is no sign of daughters being put forward by their fathers, or wives by their husbands, and of male family members paying for their relatives’ priesthoods. In some cases the priestesses were even the last surviving members of their family, and accordingly they decided how to act and how to show their own prominence and that of their families (we see this situation in Pompeii, see below).

After all, women in the West who were *sui iuris* could dispose of their own possessions, and the power of guardians was limited (see chapter 1). This implies that in this respect there was no major difference with their male family members: everyone who belonged to an important *gens* will have taken his or her share in promoting the family. This situation may have fuelled the wish of local communities to make as much use of the available wealth as possible, by providing women with a chance to hold priesthoods and to pay for the accompanying liturgies. However, as women could only hold office as priestesses, and not as (honorific) magistrates, as was the case in the East, it seems that female priesthoods in the western part of the Empire must have had a special significance of their own, and were considered as proper religious offices, contributing to the *pax deorum*. 
Epilogue: Priestesses in Pompeii

This thesis has been ordered more or less thematically – not only for the sake of clarity, but also because in most cases the sources do not permit us to sketch a picture of the lives of individual priestesses. The evidence available in Pompeii however, provides us with the opportunity to bring together several important themes of this study and shows how these might have worked together in reality. We can get a glimpse of women who held important priesthoods and acted as benefactresses; of priestesses who were members of a local elite that was closely connected by ties of kinship; of women who were conscious of their own prestige, and whose standing was recognized by others. Therefore, the final part of this thesis is virtually exclusively devoted to the famous priestesses of Pompeii.

Pompeii and the main priesthoods held by to women

Pompeii was no important town, but it was relatively wealthy. Both Ceres and Venus, the two goddesses of whom various priestesses have been attested in Campania, were worshipped in Pompeii and had their own official cults. The cult of Ceres was pre-Roman, and was influenced by the Greek Demeter cults of southern Italy. Although archaeological evidence shows that Ceres was worshipped in many domestic shrines, no temple has been excavated in Pompeii. Possibly, it was not built in the city centre, but was extra-urban (cf. Vitruvius, chapter 1).¹ The worship of Venus (or Herentas – the Oscan Venus) was probably also pre-Roman, and the goddess combined local Pompeian traits with universal Roman characteristics.² Venus was more important in Pompeii than the Capitolian traits and than Ceres and therefore, her priesthood was a very prestigious position.³ Venus’ cult was promoted by Sulla; she became the patroness of the colony and was known as Venus Fisica or Venus Pompeiana.⁴ The shrine of Venus was likely located at the Via Marina, to the south-west of the forum. It was richly decorated and built on large terrace overlooking the Gulf of Naples.⁵

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² Peterson (1919) 6, 19, 236, 285; Castrén (1975) 92; Beard (2008) 280.
Various priests and priestesses have been attested on inscriptions from Pompeii.\(^6\) The important priesthoods were all reserved for members of the most prominent local families.\(^7\) Apart from a priestess of the imperial cult, several *sacerdotes Cereris* and *sacerdotes publicae* and one *sacerdos Veneris et Cereris* are attested on inscriptions.\(^8\) In chapter 2 I have suggested that the Pompeian *sacerdotes publicae* served Venus\(^9\) because the priestesses of Ceres were explicitly called *sacerdotes Cereris*. This is another argument in favour of the importance of the priesthood of Venus, for *sacerdotes publicae stricto sensu* likely served the most important local deities, as I have suggested in chapter 2.\(^10\) The greater importance of the *sacerdotes Veneris* is also supported by the fact that none of the Pompeian priestesses of Ceres seems to have acted as benefactress,\(^11\) while the women who served Venus – Eumachia being the most famous – did give benefactions. However, the other Italian *sacerdotes Cereris* were no benefactresses either.\(^12\) Only Flavia Ammia, *sacerdos Cereris* in Capena (cat.no.53), may have used her money for the public good (see chapter 5). Furthermore, the two Capenan women serving Ceres and Venus were praised for their benefactions.\(^13\) It seems that the priestesses of Ceres (and Venus) from Capena were more involved in the system of euergetism than their Pompeian and other Italian colleagues in service of Ceres, but the reason remains unclear.

*Sacerdotes publicae and a collegium of Pompeian priestesses?*

On one Pompeian inscription, several priestesses of Ceres and Venus are mentioned together. This inscription is the best proof of the supposition that the Pompeian *sacerdotes publicae* served Venus, for I cannot see why, if a *sacerdos publica* served Ceres (instead of Venus), the name of this goddess would not also be included in Eumachia’s title, like in that of Aquvia Quarta and the Heiai Rufulai.\(^14\) The inscription – a painted text – was found in the building of Eumachia.\(^15\)

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\(^6\) Maybe also on fresco’s: some depict women who may have served Ceres, because of – amongst other thing – the torches they are carrying, Rumpf (1941) 25-30. Bernstein (2007) 533: depiction of a priestess of Venus.

\(^7\) Savunen (1997) 143; Van Andringa (2009) 82; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 96, 97, e.g. all *male* priests from Pompeii had been important local magistrates; Beard (2008) 300.

\(^8\) In addition, a Greek inscription records a priestess of Demeter Thesmophoros, *IG* 14, 702; see chapter 3, footnote 77. This Terentia Paramone seems to have been no public priestess. There is no other evidence for the cult of Demeter Thesmophoros in Pompeii, Savunen (1997) 136. Cf. Castrén (1975) 72.

\(^9\) Castrén (1975) 71; Savunen (1997) 130.


\(^12\) Tettia Casta from Naples had also acted as benefactress, but she served Demeter instead of Ceres. Furthermore, the Puteolan Stilaccia had made some gifts. As she served the *Cereres* instead of Ceres and lived as the only Italian priestess of Ceres in the third century AD, she cannot simply be compared to the other Italian *sacerdotes Cereris*.

\(^13\) Cat.no.51 and 52.

\(^14\) It could also be a dative singular, meaning ‘for Heia Rufula’.

\(^15\) Cat.no.94; Savunen (1997) 133.
Eumachia [L(uci) f(ilia)] / sacerd(os) publ(ica) / et / Aqvia M(arci) [f(ilia)] Quarta / sacerd(os) Cерерis publ(ica) / [et] / [Heiа Ru]фулаи! / [M(arci) et L(uci) f(iliae)] sacerdotes / [Cерерis publ(icae)]

“Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess and Aqvia Quarta, daughter of Marcus, public priestess of Ceres and the Heiа Ruфулаи, daughters of Marcus and Lucius, public priestesses of Ceres.”

Not much is known about the women mentioned here, except from Eumachia. The Heiа are mentioned only one other time on a Pompeian inscription, probably from a later date.\(^\text{16}\) Aqvia Quarta stemmed from a very old gens, perhaps an Etruscan one.\(^\text{17}\) Likely, she was a contemporary of Eumachia.\(^\text{18}\) Savunen writes that Aqvia Quarta may have been the colleague of Eumachia in a collegium of sacerdotes Cерерis and sacerdotes Veneris. Chronologically, they would have been organised in pairs as follows: Lassia and Mamia; Eumachia and Aqvia Quarta; Holconia and Clodia; Istacidia Rufilla and Alleia Decimilla. Finally, Alleia, daughter of Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius (Alleia Nigidia), held the combined priesthood of both Ceres and Venus.\(^\text{19}\)

We have seen in chapter 3 that supposition of a college of priestesses in itself is not unlikely, and that there is some evidence that may point to the existence of collegia of sacerdotes of Ceres. There is also epigraphic evidence for colleges in the Venus cult: from Corfinium stems an inscription that records two women as sacerdotes Veneris.\(^\text{20}\) However, mixed collegia of priest(esse)s active in different cults have not been attested, as far as I know. Furthermore, there is no Pompeian evidence that backs Savunen’s suggestion, and the inscription quoted above in which Eumachia is mentioned together with Aqvia and the other priestess(es) of Ceres (how would these fit in Savunen’s theory?) is no proof of a collegium. It only shows that they could be recorded together on the same inscription.

**Priestesses of Ceres**

The names of three Pompeian women who had been sacerdotes Cерерis (apart from Aqvia Quarta and the Heiа Ruфулаи), and of one who served Ceres and Venus together, have been preserved on stone.\(^\text{21}\) Lassia, *sacerdos publica Cерерis*, is the earliest attested Pompeian priestess.\(^\text{22}\) She belonged to one of

\(^{16}\) NS 1961, 200; Castrén (1975) 71; Savunen (1997) 138.


\(^{20}\) Cat.no.64.

\(^{21}\) Cormack (2007) 597 suggests that a certain Vesonia who was buried in a tomb near the *Porta Nocera* together with M. Cerrinius Restitutus, may also have been a priestess of Ceres. The grave monument contains a statue of Vesonia, depicting her with a torch and a small animal in her hands. Therefore, a link to Ceres is easily made. As there is no further evidence of the possible priesthood of Vesonia, I will not discuss her.

\(^{22}\) Savunen (1997) 137.
the most prominent pre-Roman gentes in Campania that owned estates in the peninsula of Surrentum and was related to the Eumachii. Lassia was born sometime between 80 and 70 BC. She was the heiress of the family, and via her and her granddaughter Clodia the possessions of the family probably passed into the hands of the Clodii. Lassia was married to the scribes A. Clodius, who was possibly of low birth and had been magister pagi after 27 BC. Their son, A. Clodius Flaccus, who had links to other famous Pompeian families like the Holconii, was the father of Clodia. Clodia was, like her grandmother, sacerdos publica Ceres. She was wed to Cellius Calvus, son of the equestrian Lucius Cellius and member of one of the most powerful local families in Augustan times.

The gens Clodia presumably originated from Puteoli or Rome, and was involved in agriculture and the production of wine. A. Clodius Flaccus was a member of the Pompeian aristocracy. He had been duumvir (twice; the second time together with M. Holconius Rufus in 2 BC) and quinquennalis. In addition, he had been military tribune – and was therefore of equestrian rank – and gave benefactions on the occasion of his election. Clodia, who survived all her family members and inherited a great amount of wealth, had been former owner of a freedwoman whose function is described as porcaria publica (public pig keeper). Because of the priesthood of her patroness, it is possible that the freedwoman bred and kept the pigs that were used as sacrificial victims for Ceres (cf. chapter 4).

The gens to which Alleia Decimilla, the third sacerdos publica Ceres, belonged, was linked to the Eumachii and the very wealthy Nigidii from Capua. The Alleii were active in trade. Alleia Decimilla’s father, M. Alleius Minius, had possibly adopted her future husband, Marcus Alleius Luccius Libella. Alleia Decimilla herself, who – like Clodia – survived all her family members, had been sacerdos publica Ceres in the years around AD 25-30, while her father and husband had been aedilis, duumvir, praefectus quinquennalis and decurio respectively. Alleia’s son was very young when he became decurio, something which was very honourable.

The last Pompeian priestess who served Ceres, Alleia (Nigidia) held the only joint priesthood of Ceres and Venus attested in the town. Several explanations for the creation of this new combined

25 According to Castrén (1975) 65, the office of scriba was very respectable.
26 Franklin (2004) 24-25; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 104. Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba suggest that political aspects played a role in the appointment of Lassia: ‘La préïse de Lassia, exercée peu après la création de la colonie romaine de Pompéi, pourrait être interprétée comme un geste de réconciliation politique de Rome envers l’aristocratie indigène.’ However, there is no evidence to support this.
27 Demougin (1988) 667, writes that Lassia was wed to A. Clodius Flaccus.
30 Castrén (1975) 94, 95.
31 Van Andringa (2009) 84.
33 Castrén (1975) 104.
priesthood have been offered, but none is convincing.\textsuperscript{34} Alleia (Nigidia) descended from another branch of the \textit{Alleii} than Alleia Decimilla.\textsuperscript{35} She lived during the reign of Nero\textsuperscript{36} and became priestess as a result of the high position of her father Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius,\textsuperscript{37} according to Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba.\textsuperscript{38} Alleius Nigidius Maius, who was adopted by Cn? Alleius Nobilis, (son of a?) freedman, and Pomponia Decharis, freedwoman of the important commercial family of the \textit{Pomponii},\textsuperscript{39} had been \textit{flamen Caesaris Augusti} in AD 55/56 and was called – perhaps unofficially – \textit{princeps coloniae}. Additionally, he had acted as benefactor to his town.\textsuperscript{40} Mouritsen writes that Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius was ‘by far the most successful’ of the magistrates who descended from freedmen.\textsuperscript{41} He ‘enjoyed one of the most brilliant careers we have documented in the last generation before the Vesuvian eruption.’\textsuperscript{42} Alleia was granted a burial paid with public money (see below). Nothing is known about a husband or children she might have had.\textsuperscript{43}

\textit{Priestesses of Venus}

Four \textit{sacerdotes} of Venus are attested epigraphically – that is: if the Pompeian \textit{sacerdotes publicae} indeed served this goddess. The priestess Mamia descended from a family that belonged to the group of the first non-colonial families acquiring decurial rank in Pompeii. However, nothing is known about her close family members.\textsuperscript{44} Mamia is the earliest \textit{sacerdotes publica} attested epigraphically in Pompeii. She had a temple built of either the \textit{Genius Augusti}, or – which is the most recent view – of the \textit{Genius Coloniae}.\textsuperscript{45} Of the priestess Eumachia no fewer than six inscriptions recording her name have been

\textsuperscript{34} Peterson (1919) 251 argues that as a result of the growing popularity of Venus the priestesses of Ceres had fewer tasks to fulfil and started to pay more attention to Venus. Castrén (1975) 72; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 98, write that the joint priesthood of Venus and Ceres could have been the result of a decline of one (perhaps both?) of the cults. Savunen (1997) 139-140, thinks that the joint priesthood can be linked to a shortage of money after the earthquake, which made it difficult to find women who were able to hold an (expensive) priesthood. She writes that the fact that Alleia was no \textit{sacerdotes publica} but only \textit{sacerdos}, in contrast to the former priestesses of Ceres and of Venus, is an argument for this hypothesis, but it remains rather speculative.


\textsuperscript{36} Savunen (1997) 139.

\textsuperscript{37} Via his parents, Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius was linked to the \textit{Eumachii}, though the exact nature of this link, which is only based on Eumachia’s tomb, is not known. His adoptive mother Pomponia Decharis was buried in the tomb of Eumachia. His adoptive father Alleius Nobilis, probably a freedman was buried there as well; D’Ambrosio and De Caro 11OS nr.13. Several of Maius’ own freedmen were also buried in this tomb, Mouritsen (1997) 68-69; Franklin (1997) 436.


\textsuperscript{39} Castrén (1975) 109; Franklin (2004) 92.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{CIL} 4. 1177b; Castrén (1975) 69; Franklin (1997) 437, 444; Mouritsen (1997) 68; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 106; Franklin (2004) 93, 94.


\textsuperscript{42} Mouritsen (1997) 68. Cf. Franklin (1997) 434; Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius ‘grew to be arguably the most important Pompeian of his day.’

\textsuperscript{43} Ward (1998) 331.

\textsuperscript{44} Franklin (2004) 36. The \textit{gens Mamia} is not further attested in Pompeii, though it was prominent in Herculanenum, Gold (1993) 283.

preserved, on three of which she is called *sacerdos publica.*\(^{46}\) The *Eumachia* were an old Campanian *gens* that had been living in Pompeii for a long time. The family possessed much wealth, in the form of vineyards and potteries. Eumachia herself was also very rich, probably as a result of the double heritage she received from her father and her husband.\(^{47}\) The well-known statue of Eumachia, a gift from the cloth-cleaners, was found in the *aedificium* that was built by her (see also below).\(^{48}\)

Holconia held her public priesthood of Venus some time after Eumachia. There is no evidence that she was married.\(^{49}\) Holconia’s *gens* is only attested in the town of Pompeii and nowhere else. In Augustan times, the family was probably the one held in greatest esteem in the town. It was involved in the production of wine and of roof tiles.\(^{50}\) Holconia’s father was the benefactor Marcus Holconius Rufus, an important man with an impressive career; apart from several municipal offices, he had held the priesthood of Augustus Caesar. Holconia’s uncle or brother, M. Holconius Celer had been *Augusti sacerdos* and *sacerdos divi Augusti.*\(^{51}\) These two Holconii had been the first priests in the imperial cult of Pompeii.\(^{52}\) Holconia herself had likely been honoured with a statue, but its location is unknown.\(^{53}\)

*Istacidia Rufilla* lived a little later than Mamia, Eumachia and Holconia. She only left behind a short epitaph, on which – again – no husband is mentioned.\(^{54}\) Like the other priestesses, *Istacidia* stemmed from a rich and influential local family, which members were buried in an impressive mausoleum.\(^{55}\) Savunen suggests that *Istacidia* as *sacerdos publica* may have served in the imperial cult instead of that of Venus, for various *liberti* of the *Istacidii* had been *ministri Augusti.*\(^{56}\) However, in my opinion this is highly unlikely, considering the fact that the other Pompeian *sacerdotes publicae* were most likely *not* involved in the imperial cult.

What is clear from this short overview of the familial ties of the Pompeian priestesses is that they all belonged to the most important decurial *gentes,*\(^{57}\) that most of them were related to each other and that

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\(^{46}\) Cat.no.93 (containing two inscriptions); 94; 95; *AE* 1992, 277; D’Ambrosio and De Caro (1983) 11OS nr. 13. Savunen (1997) 133.


\(^{48}\) Moeller (1972) 324; Savunen (1997) 53; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 100; Zanker (1998) 97. The nature of the link between the priestess and the *collegium* is uncertain. It has been suggested that Eumachia was patroness of the fullers, but this is debated, Savunen (1997) 56; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 100.


\(^{51}\) Castrén (1975) 69, 97; D’Arms (1988) 53 56-58; Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 102; Franklin (2004) 20; Ling (2007b) 69. As these two *Holconii* were involved in the imperial cult, Savunen (1997) 134-135, thinks that possibly Holconia was also priestess of the imperial cult. In my opinion this is unlikely, regarding the title of Eumachia.


\(^{53}\) Cat.no.97. Savunen (1997) 134. See also Mühr, forthcoming.


\(^{55}\) Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 103. Castrén (1975) 71, 100 however, writes that *Istacidia* was probably related to N. *Istacidius Cilix,* who did not belong to the highest elite.

\(^{56}\) *CIL* 10, 910. Savunen (1997) 135. Several other *liberti* of the *gens Istacidia* were *ministri* of Mercurius, Maia and Augustus together, *CIL* 10, 888 = *ILS* 6390.

their male family members were important civic magistrates. This shows that all members of the main families – both men and women – played important roles in consolidating the position of the local elite. Municipal offices, be they religious or political, were divided between the most prominent families who governed the town.

Pompeian priestess-benefactresses

As we have seen in the previous chapter, religious offices were closely linked to the system of euergetism. No wonder that the four main benefactors in Pompeii had held priesthoods.58 Two of these four Augustan benefactors were women and their generosity consisted of considerable gifts. The large buildings of Eumachia and Mamia in the centre on the forum show clearly the prominence of these priestesses-benefactresses in their town.

Mamia’s temple, which is much smaller than the building of Eumachia though still impressive,59 shows many similarities to the temple of Divus Julius and Venus Genetrix in Rome.60 Perhaps this choice for copying parts of the Roman Venus temple was made to stress Mamia’s priesthood of Venus Pompeiana. The carvings on the altar of the temple are related to the Augustan images of the Ara Pacis.61 The building of Mamia’s temple on the forum presumably led to an increase of the priestess’ social prestige, which was also reflected in her burial place that was granted by decree of the decurions (see below).62

Of Eumachia, two gifts are known. The first is a sigillum, mentioned on a marble plaque found in several fragments under the temple of Venus.63 The inscription continued on another plaque, which was fastened to the first on the right-hand side. Perhaps this second plaque contained the words sacерdos publica, for Eumachia’s priesthood is missing in the first part of the inscription. Otherwise, the sigillum could have been erected before Eumachia acquired her religious office. Savunen suggests that the sigillum may signify a statue of Eumachia herself, or any other statue erected by her.64 Erecting a statue for oneself, or paying for a statue granted by others, was not uncommon (see chapter 5). However, as the word sigillum generally refers to small figurines or reliefs, I think that it is more likely that Eumachia’s sigillum was an object with a religious connotation, something that is also suggested by its find-spot.65

58 Savunen (1997) 60.
59 She may have built the temple on her own land, Ling (2007a) 122-123; Ling (2007b) 69. For a short discussion of the temple, see Dobbins (2007) 163-164 and Van Andringa (2009) 49-53.
60 Cf. Ling (2007b) 69. Castrén (1975) 96, writes that Mamia’s temple was not constructed without consent of the princeps himself.
63 AE 1992, 277: Eumachia L(uci) f(ilia) / sigillum (posuit). Not included in the catalogue, for Eumachia’s priesthood is not mentioned.
64 Savunen (1997) 134.
65 Sigilla could for instance be depictions of the Lares, Dubourdieu (1989) 88, 267-278.
Eumachia’s other gift was – and still is – very impressive: her aedificium was the largest building on the Pompeian forum, together with the basilica. The precise date of the building and its function are contested, but this is of no importance here. The aedificium shows similarities to the Porticus Liviae on the forum Augusti in Rome and to the temple of Concordia that was restored by the later emperor Tiberius in AD 10. In front of Eumachia’s building in the Via dell’Abbondanza stood a fountain with a depiction of Concordia, which may also have been built by Eumachia. Both the fountain and the aedificium emphasize abundantia and concordia. It seems that Eumachia wanted to show her loyalty to the imperial house and wished to be connected with Livia and with Augustan ideology. Additionally, the building was in accordance with the expectations that people had from wealthy priests and priestesses. Furthermore, it reminded the Pompeians of the family of Eumachia’s husband, the Numistrii, mentioned on two identical inscriptions attached to the building. Modern scholars have noted another possible reason for the building of Eumachia’s aedificium and have linked it to the career of Eumachia’s son, who is mentioned in the building inscriptions:

Eumachia L(uci) f(ilia) sacerd(os) public(a), nomine suo et / M(arci) Numistri Frontonis fili, chalcidicum, cryptam, / porticus Concordiae/ Augustae Pietati sua pequinia fecit / eademque dedicavit

“Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess, in her own name and that of Marcus Numistrius Fronto, her son, made the colonnade, the covered passage and the porch for Concordia Augusta and Pietas of her own money and also dedicated them.”

The dedication of Eumachia’s famous building must have taken place shortly before her son Fronto acquired his duumvirate, and therefore it has been suggested that this impressive gift may have helped to promote his career (which makes it likely that the building was erected around AD 3 or 4). This view is contested by Ward, who stresses the fact that Eumachia’s name stands first in the inscription

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69 Benefactions given by men could be used to advance one’s own career, Ando (2000) 307. Edmondson (2006) 274 writes about benefactresses: ‘(…) many female benefactresses clearly hoped that their munificence would help further the careers of male members of their family; their husbands, sons, or brothers were often named on the monuments that honored such women for their generosity.’ However, we have seen in chapter 5 that women did not have an independent claim to rank and that this may be another reason why (the positions of) their male relatives are often recorded elaborately.

70 Cat.no.93.

and that she must have been he one ‘at the center stage’, and not her son. However that may be, the building is proof of Eumachia’s prominent role in the public life of Pompeii.

The benefactions of both Mamia and Eumachia can be compared to those of the other priestesses-benefactresses discussed in chapter 5. They show that these priestesses, even though they were never able to hold formal political power in Pompeii, had found a way to enhance their public prestige and both consolidate and show off the high standing they already possessed.

*Grave monuments built by Pompeian priestesses*

In section 4.2 of the previous chapter I have discussed the public honours that could be bestowed on priestesses. Public burials were the most important; they were less often granted than statues. Several Pompeian priestesses were honoured with a public burial. Alleia Nigidia might be the only priestess in the catalogue whose funeral (instead of only the place for the grave monument, which was much more common) was paid with public money. However, this is highly uncertain. Alleia’s grave monument was built sometime between AD 62 and 79. In contrast to Alleia’s epitaph, that of Mamia leaves no doubt about the role of the ordo in her funeral; she was granted public land for her tomb:

*M[a]miae P(ublil) f(iliae) sacerdoti / publicae locus sepulture(ai) datus / decurionum decreto*

“To Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess, the burial place is given by decree of the decurions.”

The inscription belonged to a *schola*-tomb, of which eight have been discovered in Pompeii. Three of these tombs were the grave monuments of women, and all (except perhaps one, lacking an inscription) were built for members of the local elite who had received a public burial. Mamia’s tomb, probably erected between AD 14 and AD 25, stood outside the *Porta di Ercolano* and was built near those of other prominent Pompeians. Both the type of the grave monument as well as its location near the tombs of other important members of the elite and the fact that the place had been granted by the *ordo*, reflected and enlarged Mamia’s social standing. As nothing is known about Mamia’s direct family members (parents, husband or children) it seems that she had acquired this great honour because of her own merits. Zimmermann and Frei-Stobla write: ‘Les tombeaux individuals étaient alors beaucoup

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74 In Pompeii, burials in impressive monumental tombs like those of the priestesses’ were often carried out on the initiative of the ordo, Mouriisen (2005) 46.
76 Cat.no.98. Franklin (2004) 36.
plus rares que les tombeaux destines à une famille ou à un clan familial; on peut donc en déduire soit que Mamia n’avait plus de parenté proche soit que les honneurs funèbres lui étaient explicitement et personnellement destinés en récompense de son sacerdoce et non au tant que membre d’une famille éminente.79 Apart from her priesthood, Mamia’s benevolence will certainly have helped to be granted a public burial place.

The priestess Clodia also received public land for her grave monument, as the accompanying inscriptions show us.80 The first of these inscriptions was Clodia’s own81 and the second was the priestess Lassia’s,82 Clodia’s grandmother who was likely married to the scriba Aulus Clodius, mentioned on the third inscription.83 Lassia was also buried decreto decurionum.84 The fourth inscription records Clodia’s father, Aulus Clodius Flaccus.85 This inscription ends with the statement that Clodia had built this monument sibi et suis. The last epitaph mentions Lucius Cellius Calvus, Clodia’s husband, who had been decurio.86 In the inscriptions set up by Clodia the offices of her male relatives are extensively enumerated, which shows the social prominence of her family. We should not forget though, that Clodia’s name was inscribed in much bigger letters than the others, and as Ward rightly remarks, in ‘a world in which inscriptive public relations mattered, this must not be passed over lightly. Clodia was obviously seeking public recognition.’87

The inscription recording the priestess Istacidia does not mention a public burial, and the epitaph belonging to the aedicula-grave of the Istacidii has not been preserved. Nevertheless, because the grave monument may have been built within the pomerium of Pompeii, it is possible that this elite family was also granted a funus publicum. The grave monument that was located behind Mamia’s schola-tomb, was about ten metres high, which made it clearly visible.88 Like Istacidia, the priestess Alleia Decimilla did not receive a funus publicum – that is to say, her epitaph has not been preserved – but took care of the burial of her relatives in a tomb built on public land near the Herculanean gate (see figure 9).89 She buried her husband Marcus Alleius Luccius Libella, duumvir and quinquennial prefect, and her son Marcus Alleius Libella, who was already decurio when he was seventeen. Alleia Decimilla’s father Marcus Alleius Minius was buried on public costs elsewhere, near the Stabian

80 Clodia is also commemorated in the necropolis of the Porta Nocera by one of the freedmen of the family, Mourtisen (2005) 49.
81 Cat.no.101.
82 Cat.no.102. Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 103.
83 CIL 10, 1074c: A(ulus) Clodius / M(arci) f(ilius) Palatina scriba / magist(eri) pag(i) Aug(usti) / fel(iciis) sub(urbanus). Patterson (2006) 238: in Pompeii many descendants of liberti were members of the ordo.
84 Although we have seen in the previous chapter that the words decreto decurionum might have been linked to her priesthood, instead of her burial place.
85 CIL 10, 1074d = AE 2003, 312.
86 CIL 10, 1074e: L(uci)us Cellius L(uci) f(ilius) Men(enia) Calvos(f) / decurio / Pompeis. Franklin (2004) 25 writes that Clodia may have recorded Calvus’ position as decurio as an ‘attempt to add distinction to her rather unaccomplished husband in the presence of her remarkably distinguished father.’
89 Cat.no.100.
gate.\textsuperscript{90} Even if Alleia Decimilla herself was not publicly buried, having close family members who were granted a \textit{funus publicum} and having her name recorded on the epitaph of her husband and son, certainly underlined the priestess’s social prominence and let her share in the honour granted to her husband and son.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Epitaph erected by Alleia Decimilla}
\end{figure}

Eumachia’s eye-catching mausoleum was located near the Porta Nocera.\textsuperscript{91} It was ten times as big as a normal tomb and had alternating niches, containing reliefs and free-standing sculpture. Carved altars stood on a terrace in front of the tomb.\textsuperscript{92} Mouritsen argues that Eumachia’s tomb ‘whose scale and décor broke all precedents’, may have been a key factor in ‘speeding up’ and finally ending the process of elite competition using grave monuments.\textsuperscript{93} This would imply that it was a woman who ‘won’ this competition. The accompanying epitaph was plain and did not mention Eumachia’s priesthood; it could be either incomplete or the mausoleum was built before she was appointed as priestess and before the \textit{aedificium} on the forum was erected.\textsuperscript{94} Eumachia’s tomb contained several bodies, though no other \textit{Eumachii}.\textsuperscript{95} The inscriptions that have been preserved mention several \textit{Alleii}—for example Alleius Nobilis, adoptive father of Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius— and therefore, Savunen suggests that Eumachia was possibly remarried to an Alleius.\textsuperscript{96} Together with her \textit{aedificium} on the

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{AE} 1891, 166 = \textit{EE} 8, 318.
\textsuperscript{91} Zimmermann and Frei-Stolba (1998) 101; Cormack (2007) 586. Most tombs near the Porta di Nocera were built by freedmen, so Eumachia’s mausoleum is an exception.
\textsuperscript{92} Cormack (2007) 592.
\textsuperscript{93} Mouritsen (2005) 50. The \textit{forum} was a better location for this elite competition, Mouritsen (2005) 54, 55.
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Eumachia L(ucia) f(ilia) sibi et suis}; D’Ambrosio and De Caro (1983) 11OS nr. 13. Mouritsen (2005) 47 suggests that this omission is in line with the simple character of many epitaphs of the Pompeian elite.
\textsuperscript{95} Though other \textit{Eumachii} are known, e.g., a possible brother of Eumachia, L. Eumachius Fuscus, who was aedile in AD 31/32 (\textit{CIL} 10,899; 900).
\textsuperscript{96} Savunen (1997) 62-63.
forum, Eumachia’s mausoleum shows the self-confidence, pride, wealth and influence of this priestess.  

Again, the picture that emerges from the burials of the Pompeian priestesses is that of prominent elite women who were conscious of their own social standing and that of their family, and who spent their money on extravagant grave monuments to consolidate and enlarge this standing. As may be clear, the Pompeian priestesses are a perfect example of elite women who were related to each other, held the available municipal priesthoods, acted as euergetes and tried to be remembered in perpetuity – which they managed fairly well.

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Conclusion

Lucius Valerius was wrong – that can safely be stated. The “woman's world” in Roman antiquity was not confined to ‘elegance of appearance, adornment’ and ‘apparel’. Women could hold priesthoods and other religious offices during the Republican period and under the Emperors. A wealth of epigraphic evidence shows that the official role of women in Roman religion was much more extensive than has often been thought. Women were not just ‘chaste matrons’, who were devoted entirely to their families and were virtually absent from public life.

Many modern scholars have approached the appearance of women who held positions in Roman religious life that did not fit with the ‘standard’ picture emerging from the literary sources, as something that needed to be ‘explained’ by extraordinary circumstances. However, the epigraphic evidence shows that the everyday standard was different from what most literary texts want us to believe. Admittedly, options to acquire a priesthood were more limited for women than for men, but that does not imply that being a priestess was anomalous, nor that the existence of female religious officials needs a special explanation. Both men and women were part of the same socio-religious system, and an individual’s position in this system was not simply determined by his or her sex, but by his or her position within a social network, by the possession of money, and by family relations. Additionally, the availability of offices and the pool of potential candidates determined whether someone could acquire an office.

Nevertheless, there were differences between men and women regarding the possibilities they had for acquiring a religious office. The range of priesthoods held by women was much smaller than that of men, who served in virtually all cults for which female religious officials have been attested on inscriptions. The opposite was not the case: the deities served by women were mainly goddesses related to fertility, although women also served some male divinities. However, the number of gods served by priestesses was relatively small. In the cults discussed in this thesis, there seems to have been no absolute exclusion of the other sex. For some cults though, women were clearly preferred over men as religious officials – and vice versa. In Italy for example, only women are attested as sacerdotes of Ceres and Venus, while the epigraphic evidence for female religious officials of a deity as Saturn is very small. Clearly, both women and men were not entitled to hold all religious offices in all places at all times. However, in principle, both were permitted to hold the priesthoods of the most important (local) deities.

Like men, women could fulfil a wide range of religious tasks, including carrying out animal sacrifices. Nevertheless, priestesses were often remembered for their ‘female’ qualities, and not for their public or semi-public religious roles, reflecting the current idea(l)s about their proper place in
society. Furthermore, even though women could become priestesses of the most important (local) deities and represent their communities in the eyes of the gods, in the end their appointment had to be sanctioned by an exclusively male group, the local *ordo*. All this shows that in religion women came secondary after men – but also that they were certainly no complement to them and that in many cases their religious offices were as important for their towns as those held by men.

Lucius Valerius was not only wrong where it considered women’s religious offices in Rome, but also – and especially – regarding those in the provinces. In Rome not many inscriptions attesting to female religious officials have been found, but this is made up by the literary sources. This is a major contrast to the situation in Italy and the provinces, where virtually everything that is known about priesthoods of women stems from inscriptions.

The image these inscriptions provide is two-sided. On the one hand, they show the unifying effect of influences from Rome, while on the other hand they are proof of the diversity of local religious life. This diversity can be seen in many different things – sometimes within the cult of a single deity. Various influences – Greek, Roman, and native – present in different places in various proportions, contributed to the creation of a great variety of local cults and priesthoods. This resulted in a wide range of religious offices open to women, the use of different titles or additions to titles, the presence of certain prescriptions or habits regulating ritual behaviour, age and clothing, and the in- or exclusion from either men or women as religious officials. The cult of Ceres, of which many female *sacerdotes* have left their traces in the epigraphic record, is an excellent example of this. This cult, that had Greek, Punic and Roman roots and was mostly limited to Italy and North Africa, shows many local peculiarities. These concern both the focus of the cult – in Africa concentrated on the *Cereres*, in Italy on Ceres alone and in both areas sometimes with specific epithets pointing to local or ritual aspects – and the *sacerdotes*. Gender, rank and standing varied not only between the religious officials found in Italy and Africa, but also between those living in different Italian communities.

Despite this diversity, influences from Rome had a unifying effect on cults and priesthoods and resulted in acculturation: the Latinised titles of the priestesses, the role of the local elite, the habit of erecting inscriptions and their general spread – mostly in northern Africa and Italy – are all clear signs of or results from Romanisation. Furthermore, their role in blood sacrifices, the central element in Roman religion, shows that the priestesses, the cults in which they acted and the communities they represented were influenced by habits from the City. Romanisation can also be detected in the role priestesses could play as benefactresses, mainly in the cases they belonged to important local families. These priestesses-benefactresses used their own money to advance their own prominence and that of their family, likely of their own accord. In these cases, they played an even more significant role in their local society than by exercising their religious office alone, which was expressed by the reciprocal relation they had with their fellow citizens, who could decide to honour them publicly.
However, this role as benefactress was limited to a relatively small number of the most prominent priestesses. Most female religious officials were not such prestigious high-ranking ladies. Instead, they appear to have come from various social backgrounds: some were slaves or freedwomen, while others were of decurial, equestrian or even senatorial rank. Many belonged to a ‘middle class’. In principle everyone could acquire a more or less official place in the religious hierarchy, although of course not every office was open to everyone. Generally, the priesthoods were held by members of the local elite, while ancillary functions were fulfilled by lower ranked people. But this was not always the case, as is illustrated by the cult of Ceres. The priesthood of this goddess was held by women who were freed, women who seemed to have belonged to a middle class, and by women from decurial rank. So again, the picture that emerges is one of variety. ‘The female religious official’ did not exist, which reflects the diversity of Roman religious life in an Empire which was home to so many different cultures and peoples.

Secondary though important, Roman but local, and all different from one another – this seems the best way to characterize female religious officials in the western part of the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, they all had one thing in common: pride in their office. From high to low, prestigious to inconspicuous and rich to poor, they all proudly and dutifully recorded their offices on stone. Rightly, they can be called sacerdotes piae.
Summary

This thesis investigates priesthoods and other religious offices held by women in the western part of the Roman Empire, from the last centuries of the Republic to the third century AD. Although it has been stated that women could not hold (important) priesthoods, there are many Latin inscriptions – mainly from Italy and the provinces – that attest to the existence of priestesses. This epigraphic evidence has been recorded in a catalogue and includes not only priestesses, but also women holding ancillary offices. These female religious officials either served in the cults of Graeco-Roman divinities or acted in unknown or local cults. Women who held offices in cults that originated in the near-East are excluded from this study.

Despite the fact that, in Italy and the provinces, the evidence for women acting as priestesses is quite abundant, modern scholars have not paid much attention to the role of women in provincial religion; there is no in-depth study of priestesses in the Roman Empire. Apart from filling this gap, this thesis has another goal: to provide an exhaustive review, enabling us to check, and in some cases correct, our understanding of the public roles of women in Roman religion. It has been thought for a long time that women’s role in Roman religion was unimportant, or even marginal. This view is based on literary sources and is focussed on the city of Rome, where, it is said, only a few women held a religious office. However, inscriptions provide a different picture, both in and outside Rome.

As a result of socio-cultural differences between Rome, Italy and the provinces, and the fact that most gods and goddesses served by priestesses were Roman deities (or at least: had the same names as those worshipped in Rome), the concept of Romanization figures prominently in this thesis. Chapter 1 provides a discussion of this term as well as a short overview of the most relevant modern studies on women in Roman society – particularly with respect to their place in religion. It is shown that when female religious roles are discussed by modern authors, their priesthoods in the provinces are mostly neglected. This is partly due to the literary sources, which propagate an image of women, ideally labelled as chaste matronae, who possessed a secondary or marginal position in society. Nevertheless, in practice many women could dispose of their own (often considerable) wealth, and held a relatively strong position in private law. When Roman law spread as a result of Romanization, wealthy women in the provinces could enjoy the same legal advantages as the women in the City.

Furthermore, in chapter 1 attention is paid to civic religion, which forms the religious context of most local priesthoods. Despite the spread of the Roman concept of religion, in the provinces it was still very much a local affair in which the local elites were influential; they held the main priesthoods and made decisions about the organisation of the cults. The terms ‘public’ and ‘private’ are closely linked to both civic religion and to women in Roman society; they should be viewed as positioned on a sliding scale. As a result of this, I have included in this study all female religious officials who did not
act in private familial cults. Thus, women serving in collegia are recorded in the catalogue; they held ‘semi-public’ offices. Excluding women serving in familia leaves enough inscriptions – mainly epitaphs, honorary inscriptions and votives – for a study of female religious officials in the western part of the Roman Empire. The possibilities and limitations of epigraphic evidence for the study of priestesses are discussed in the last section of chapter 1.

In chapter 2 several questions that explain some basic aspects of the phenomenon of female priesthoods pass under review: in which cults did women serve, what titles did they carry and where were their inscriptions found? The picture that emerges from this chapter is one of diversity on one side, and broad patterns on the other. Priestesses could carry various titles, the exact meaning of which is not always clear. The most common was that of sacerdos. According to local preferences, this title could be slightly changed or specific qualifications could be added. Sometimes a woman was called ‘priestess of a city’. In these cases, it is not clear whether she served in a specific cult, or whether she served as ‘general’ priestess. Frequently, priestesses were simply referred to as sacerdotes, without any reference to a deity in their titles. In some instances the cult in which they served can be traced by looking at the text of the inscription, accompanying reliefs, local religious life and the archaeological context.

The distribution of female religious officials roughly fits the general pattern of inscriptions and reflects the spread of Romanization. By far the most are attested in Italy – mainly in Campania – and northern Africa. In Rome the number of priestesses attested epigraphically is relatively small; this is made up for by the literary sources that provide some evidence of priesthoods held by women in the City. Deviations from the epigraphic habit, both chronological and geographical, can usually be explained by exceptional circumstances. In case of the Ceres cult, the distribution of priestesses reflects the popularity of the cult, which in its turn was linked to the production of grain, Greek and Punic roots and Romano-Italic influences.

Although this view is more nuanced nowadays, it has often been assumed that women served goddesses and men served gods. This chapter shows that this supposition is rightly contested. Women could hold religious offices in the cults of male deities and men could serve female divinities in an official function. However, the range of priesthoods held by men was much wider than those held by women, and the number of priests attested epigraphically is much higher than that of priestesses. Men served in virtually all cults of which female religious officials are attested, but the opposite was not the case; female priesthoods were mostly, though certainly not exclusively, limited to goddesses concerned with fertility. Only when individual cults or areas are examined does it become apparent that in some cases women were clearly preferred over men as the best choice for the religious offices available.
The third chapter provides a discussion of the role of women in the cults of Ceres. The character of Ceres, her cults and religious personnel in Italy, Africa and Rome, where the priesthood of Ceres was one of the few of which women have been attested epigraphically, pass under review. In many Italian – mainly Campanian – towns where the Ceres-Demeter cults were very ancient, priestesses served the goddess. In northern Africa both men and women are attested as *sacerdotes*. The inscriptions they left behind offer some insight into their rank, social standing and background. These varied between the two main areas where priestesses and priests have been attested, and between the sexes of the religious officials. In Africa, the priestesses belonged to the middle classes while many male priests were members of the local elite, whereas in Italy most priestesses of Ceres were of relatively high social rank and standing.

The inscriptions of the Ceres priestesses illuminate local preferences and peculiarities that resulted from the blending of Roman, Greek and native influences. Superficially similar cults were managed in different ways in the towns of Italy and North Africa, their individuality even surviving unifying factors like colonization. This shows that the cults of Ceres and the goddess’ priesthoods were on the one hand local but on the other hand products of acculturation, implying that the women who held the priesthood where very much involved in local life but at the same time clearly part of the large cultural changes that were brought about first by Hellenization and later by Romanization.

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the daily lives of priestesses in local towns. The subject of chapter 4 is the religious side of holding a priesthood. This chapter deals with the various religious tasks of priestesses and women with ancillary offices, from dedicating to sacrificing. Holding a religious office usually required an active attitude; it was not just a ceremonial role. A priestess was the representative of her community – or sometimes a special group within it – that she had to embody during sacrifices and other rites. Her tasks were manifold and assured her a position in the public eye. Other members of the cult personnel had a great variety of tasks that were probably held in less high esteem, but these tasks were still necessary to enable the worshipping of the deity they served in the proper fashion.

But there could be more to a priesthood than performing religious tasks. The person and the behaviour of the priestesses could become a focus of ritualization. In their outward appearance, at least when they were fulfilling their religious duties, priestesses looked different from other women. As some priestesses seem to have held their priesthood for many years, they will have been clearly visible during a long time of their life. Sometimes priestesses were very young when they were appointed, which shows both the value attached priesthoods and the importance of family relations in acquiring a religious office. Others, i.e. the African *sacerdotes Cercis*, may have been of a ripe age, but there are many uncertainties concerning the age when these women held their priesthoods. The same priestesses of Ceres may have had to live (temporarily) separated from their husbands and remain chaste during their time of office, but this is controversial. Even more debatable, is the topic of religious prostitution.
in the cult of Venus - there is no convincing evidence which shows that slave women in service of this goddess had to act as prostitutes.

Chapter 5 focuses on the place of priestesses in their local society, both as women and as public persons. Even though they were not commemorated as such, for they were characterised by common female qualities in their epitaphs, priestesses were women who played prominent roles in their local communities, shown by their non-religious roles in public life. They were highly regarded inhabitants of their towns and were keen on keeping and strengthening their prestigious positions. Although their families may have profited from the prestige of the priestesses, family members were not more present in the inscriptions of priestesses than in those of other women.

The consent of the local council was needed to be elected as a priestess, apart from money to pay the *summa honoraria*. Furthermore, it was often helpful to have an influential family, of which several other members already held civic offices and priesthoods. This implies that priesthoods could not be obtained by everybody. Priestesses were often members of the local elite, which was connected through ties of kinship, while ancillary functions were generally held by lower ranked women. Several priestesses showed their prestige and wealth by acting as benefactresses or patronesses. In turn, they were honoured with statues and public burials. Therefore, the relationship with their city can be termed active and reciprocal. In contrast to their colleagues in the eastern part of the Empire, priestesses in the West played an active role in the dynastic politics in which priesthoods were used as devices whereby powerful families increased their collective prominence in the public and ritual lives of their towns. In some cases the priestesses were even the last surviving members of their family, and accordingly they decided how to act and how to show their own prominence and that of their families.

The abundant evidence for priestesses available in the Campanian town of Pompeii provides the opportunity to bring together several important themes of this study and shows how these might have worked together in reality. The picture that emerges from the Pompeian material is that of prominent elite women, who were often related to each other and who were conscious of their own social standing and that of their family. They acted as benefactresses and spent their money on sometimes extravagant monuments to consolidate and enlarge their standing and to be remembered in perpetuity.

Based on the findings discussed in this thesis, it can be concluded that female religious officials in the western part of the Roman Empire can be characterized as follows: they were secondary though important, Roman but local, and all different from one another. Nevertheless, they all had one thing in common: pride in their office. From high to low, prestigious to inconspicuous and rich to poor, they all proudly and dutifully recorded their offices on stone. Rightly, they can be called *sacerdotes piae.*
Nederlandse samenvatting

Sacerdotes piae. Priesteressen en andere vrouwelijke religieuze functionarissen in de westelijke helft van het Romeinse Rijk, van de eerste eeuw v.Chr. tot en met de derde eeuw n.Chr.

Dit proefschrift behandelt priesterschappen en andere religieuze functies die bekleed werden door vrouwen in de westelijke helft van het Romeinse Rijk tijdens de laatste eeuwen van de Republiek tot en met de derde eeuw na Christus. Hoewel er beweerd is dat vrouwen geen (belangrijke) priesterschappen konden bekleden, zijn er veel Latijnse inscripties die aantonen dat er priesteressen waren, met name in Italië en in de provincies. Dit epigrafische materiaal is opgenomen in een catalogus; naast priesteressen bevat deze ook vrouwen met lagere religieuze functies. Al deze vrouwen dienden in de culten van Grieks-Romeinse goden, in onbekende culten en in locale culten. Vrouwen die godheden dienden die oorspronkelijk afkomstig waren uit het nabije Oosten, zijn niet opgenomen in deze studie.

Ondanks het feit dat er in Italië en de provincies veel bewijs is voor vrouwen die een priestersfunctie vervulden, hebben moderne auteurs weinig aandacht besteed aan de rol van vrouwen in de provinciale religies; er is nooit een breed georiënteerde studie naar priesteressen in de westelijke rijkshelft verricht. Dit proefschrift vult dit tekort aan. Daarnaast heeft deze dissertatie als doel het bestaande beeld van publieke rollen van vrouwen in de Romeinse religie te controleren en in sommige plaatsen te corrigeren door het bieden van een gnuanceerder beeld. Men heeft lange tijd gedacht dat de rol van vrouwen in de Romeinse religie onbelangrijk of zelfs marginaal was. Deze visie is gebaseerd op literaire bronnen en heeft betrekking op de situatie in Rome, waarvan men verondersteld heeft dat er slechts enkele vrouwen een religieuze functie bekleedden. Inscripties echter verschaffen een ander beeld van religieuze rollen van vrouwen, zowel in als buiten Rome.

Omdat er socio-culturele verschillen tussen Rome, Italië en de provincies waren, en vanwege het feit dat de meeste goden en godinnen die gediend werden door vrouwen, Romeinse godheden waren of tenminste een Romeinse naam hadden, speelt het begrip Romanisering een belangrijke rol in dit proefschrift. Hoofdstuk 1 behandelt dit begrip. Verder biedt dit hoofdstuk een kort overzicht van de belangrijkste moderne studies over vrouwen in de Romeinse samenleving en speciaal over hun positie in de godsdienst. Als religieuze rollen vervuld door vrouwen worden behandeld door moderne auteurs, heeft men hun priesterschappen in de provincies over het algemeen niet in dat onderzoek betrokken. Dit komt deels door de literaire bronnen, die een beeld schetsen van vrouwen – idealiter kuise matrones – die een secundaire of marginale positie in de samenleving bekleedden. In de praktijk echter konden vrouwen vrijelijk beschikken over hun eigen, soms aanzienlijke, rijkdom en bezaten zij een relatief sterke positie in het privaat recht. Als een gevolg van Romanisering verspreidde het Romeinse
recht zich naar de provincies, en daardoor konden rijke vrouwen in de lokale gemeenschappen genieten van dezelfde voordelen als de vrouwen in Rome.

Voorts wordt in het eerste hoofdstuk aandacht besteed aan stedelijke religie, dat de achtergrond vormt van de meeste lokale priesterschappen. Ondanks de verspreiding van de belangrijkste religieuze gebruiken uit Rome, was godsdienst in de provincies een lokale aangelegenheid, waarin de plaatselijke elites een belangrijke rol speelden. De leden van de lokale elites bekleedden de meeste priesterschappen en namen besluitlen over de organisatie van culten. De termen ‘publiek’ en ‘privé’ zijn nauw verbonden met zowel stedelijke religie als met vrouwen in de Romeinse samenleving; deze begrippen moeten beschouwd worden als de twee uitersten van een glijdende schaal. In deze studie zijn alle vrouwelijke religieuze functionarissen opgenomen die niet actief waren in private familieculten. Dit betekent dat ook de vrouwen die dienden in collegia in de catalogus vermeld staan; deze vrouwen bekleedden ‘semi-publieke’ functies. Het uitsluiten van vrouwen die dienden in een familiecultus laat genoeg inscripties over om vrouwelijke religieuze functionarissen in de westelijke helft van het Romeinse Rijk te bestuderen. Deze inscripties kunnen onderverdeeld worden in grafschriften, ere-inscripties en wijdingen. In de laatste paragraaf van hoofdstuk 1 worden de voordelen en beperkingen van het gebruik van epigrafisch materiaal voor de studie van priesteressen besproken.

In hoofdstuk 2 komt een aantal algemene vragen aan de orde dat licht werpt op de religieuze functies bekleed door vrouwen in hun totaliteit. In welke culten dienden vrouwen? Welke titels hadden zij? Waar zijn hun inscripties gevonden? Het beeld dat aldus verkregen wordt, is dat van diversiteit enerzijds, en het optreden van algemene patronen anderzijds. Priesteressen konden verscheidene titels dragen, waarvan de exacte betekenis niet altijd duidelijk is. De meest gebruikelijke titel was sacerdos. Naargelang lokale voorkeuren kon deze titel enigszins worden veranderd, of konden speciale kwalificaties worden toegevoegd. Soms werd een vrouw ‘priesteres van een stad’ genoemd. In deze gevallen is het niet duidelijk of ze diende in een specifieke cultus of dat ze fungeerde als ‘algemene’ priesteres en haar taken moest vervullen in alle of meerdere culten van de stad. Regelmatig worden vrouwen in inscripties alleen sacerdos genoemd, zonder dat een godennaam was toegevoegd aan hun titel. Soms kan de cultus waarin zij dienden achterhaald worden door de tekst van de inscriptie, eventuele begeleidende reliëfs, het lokale religieuze leven en de archeologische context te analyseren.

De verspreiding van vrouwelijke religieuze functionarissen komt grofweg overeen met het algemene patroon van de verspreiding van inscripties en weerspiegelt de verbreiding van Romeinse invloeden. Verreweg de meeste inscripties stammen uit Italië, met name uit Campanië, en uit Noord-Afrika. In Rome is het aantal op inscripties geattesteerde priesteressen relatief gering, maar dit wordt goedgemaakt door de literaire bronnen die het bewijs leveren voor een aantal priesterschappen bekleed door vrouwen in de Stad. Afwijkingen van het algemene patroon der inscripties, zowel in chronologisch als geografisch opzicht, kunnen gemeenlijk worden verklaard door uitzonderlijke
omstandigheden. In geval van de Cerescultus weerspiegelt de verspreiding van priesteressen duidelijk de populariteit van de cultus, die op haar beurt was verbonden met de productie van graan, en een gevolg was Griekse en Punische invloeden enerzijds en Romeins-Italische anderzijds.

Vaak is aangenomen dat vrouwen godinnen dienden en mannen goden, hoewel deze visie momenteel wat omstreden is. Het epigrafisch materiaal toont aan dat deze veronderstelling terecht betwist wordt. Vrouwen konden religieuze functies bekleden in de culten van mannelijke goden en mannen konden godinnen dienen als religieuze functionaris. De verscheidenheid aan priester schappen die openstonden voor vrouwen, was echter veel kleiner dan die voor mannen, en het aantal priesters dat is geat testified op inscripties ligt vele malen hoger dan dat van vrouwen. Mannen dienden in vrijwel alle culten waarin vrouwen religieuze functies bekleedden, maar het omgekeerde was niet het geval. Priester schappen bekleed door vrouwen waren meestal, doch zeker niet uitsluitend, beperkt tot godinnen die zich bezighielden met vruchtbaarheid. Alleen als individuele culten of geografische gebieden afzonderlijk onderzocht worden, blijkt dat in sommige gevallen de voorkeur werd gegeven aan vrouwen voor het bekleed van bepaalde religieuze functies.


De inscripties van de Cerespriesteressen illustreren het bestaan van lokale voorkeuren en eigenaardigheden die het resultaat waren van het samensmelten van Romeinse, Griekse en inheemse invloeden. Culten die oppervlakkig gezien gelijk waren, werden in de steden van Italië en Noord-Afrika op verschillende manieren georganiseerd. Ondanks het optreden van unificerende factoren zoals kolonisatie bleven deze verschillen bestaan. Dit toont aan dat de culten van Ceres en haar priester schap enerzijds erg lokaal waren, maar anderzijds een duidelijk product waren van acculturatie. Dit betekent dat de vrouwen die het priester schap bekleedden niet alleen hecht betrokken waren bij het lokale leven in hun stad, maar tegelijkertijd duidelijk beïnvloed werden door de grote culturele veranderingen die teweeg werden gebracht door eerst een proces van vergrieksing en later van Romanisering.

Het vierde en vijfde hoofdstuk handelen over het dagelijkse leven van priesteressen. Het onderwerp van hoofdstuk 4 is de religieuze kant van een priester schap. Besproken worden de verschillende
religieuze taken van vrouwen met ondersteunende functies, variërend van het doen van wijdingen tot het uitvoeren van bloedoffers. Het bekleden van een priesterschap vereiste een actieve houding; het was zeker geen puur ceremoniële rol. Een priesteres was degene die haar gemeenschap, of soms een deel daarvan, vertegenwoordigde tijdens offers en andere riten. Haar taken waren veelvuldig en verzekermen haar van een positie in het openbare leven. Andere leden van het cultus personeel hadden taken die waarschijnlijk minder prestigieus waren; deze taken waren echter wel noodzakelijk om de goden op de juiste wijze te kunnen vereren.

Maar niet alleen het uitvoeren van religieuze taken was onderdeel van een priesterschap. De persoon en het gedrag van een priesteres konden het doelwit zijn van ritualisering. In hun uiterlijke verschijning, tenminste wanneer zij hun taken uitvoerden, zagen priesteressen er anders uit dan andere vrouwen. Aangezien sommige priesteressen hun ambt lange tijd bekleedden, moeten zij gedurende een groot gedeelte van hun leven als zodanig duidelijk zichtbaar zijn geweest. Soms waren priesteressen erg jong wanneer zij benoemd werden, hetgeen enerzijds het belang toont dat aan een priesterschap werd gehecht, en anderzijds de rol die familiebanden konden spelen in het verkrijgen van een religieus ambt. Anderen, namelijk de Afrikaanse Cerespriesteressen, zijn mogelijk op leeftijd geweest tijdens het uitoefenen van hun functie, maar dit is onzeker. Diezelfde Cerespriesteressen waren mogelijk verplicht om celibatair en (tijdelijk) apart te leven van hun echtgenoten, maar ook dit is onzeker. Even controversieel is de al dan niet bestaande religieuze prostitutie in de Venuscultus. Er is geen overtuigend bewijs dat aantoont dat slavinnen in dienst van deze godin moesten optreden als prostituées.

Hoofdstuk 5 besteedt aandacht aan de plaats van priesteressen in hun lokale samenleving. Ook al werden zij op hun grafschriften gekarakteriseerd door de in Romeinse ogen gebruikelijke “vrouwelijke” kwaliteiten, toch waren priesteressen vrouwen die een belangrijke rol bekleedden. Dit is te zien aan hun niet-religieus optreden in het stedelijk leven. Zij waren aanzienlijke inwoners van hun steden en waren beducht op het behouden en versterken van hun prestigieuze posities. Hoewel hun families geprofiteerd zullen hebben van het aanzien van de priesteressen, zijn de familieleden van deze vrouwen niet prominenter aanwezig in hun inscripties dan in die van vrouwen zonder religieuze functie.

De instemming van de stadsraad was nodig om tot priesteres verkozen te worden, naast genoeg rijkdom om de verplichte summa honoraria te betalen. Daarnaast was een invloedrijke familie van wie de leden magistraturen en priesterschappen bekleedden van belang voor het verkrijgen van een religieus ambt. Dit betekent dat priesterschappen niet voor iedereen verkrijgbaar waren. Priesteressen waren vaak leden van de lokale elite, die onderling verbonden was door familiebanden, terwijl de ondersteunende functies over het algemeen bekleed werden door vrouwen van lager rang. Verscheidene priesteressen toonden hun prestige en rijkdom door op te treden als weldoenster of patrones. Als dank werden zij geëerd met standbeelden en publieke begrafenisissen. Hierom kan de
verhouding die zij hadden met hun stad actief en wederkerig genoemd worden. In tegenstelling tot hun collega’s in het oosten van het Rijk, speelden priesteressen een actieve rol in de dynastieke politiek waarbij priesterschappen werden gebruikt door machtige families om hun belangrijke positie in het publieke en religieuze leven van hun stad te vergroten. In sommige gevallen waren de priesteressen de laatst overlevenden van hun familie, en hebben zij aldus zelf besloten hoe te pronken met hun eigen prominentie en die van hun familie, en hoe deze te vermeerderen.

De grote hoeveelheid gegevens over priesteressen die beschikbaar is de Campaanse stad Pompeii, verschaft de mogelijkheid om verschillende belangrijke thema’s uit dit proefschrift samen te brengen. Het beeld dat spreekt uit het Pompejaanse materiaal is dat van belangrijke elitevrouwen, vaak onderling verbonden door bloedbanden, die zich duidelijk bewust waren van hun eigen aanzienlijke sociale status en die van hun familie. Zij traden op als welvarenden en gaven hun geld uit aan soms extravagante monumenten, niet alleen om hun status te verzekeren en te vergroten, maar ook om tot in eeuwigheid herinnerd te worden – waarin zij zeker geslaagd zijn.

Gebaseerd op de bevindingen, gedaan in dit proefschrift, kan geconcludeerd worden dat vrouwelijke religieuze functionarissen in het westelijk deel van het Romeinse Rijk als volgt gekarakteriseerd kunnen worden: zij waren secundair, maar ook belangrijk, Romeins en tegelijkertijd lokaal, en onderling allemaal verschillend. Zij hadden echter één ding gemeenschappelijk, en dat was de trots op hun religieuze ambt. Van hoog tot laag, van prestigieus tot onopvallend en van rijk tot arm, allemaal maakten zij trots en vol plichtsbesef gewag van hun functie in hun inscripties. Met recht kunnen zij dan ook *sacerdotes piae* genoemd worden.
## List of Abbreviations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AE</strong></td>
<td>L'Année Épigraphique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AfrRom</strong></td>
<td>Africa Romana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AJA</strong></td>
<td>American Journal of Archaeology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AJP</strong></td>
<td>American Journal of Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANRW</strong></td>
<td>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BCTH</strong></td>
<td>Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIL</strong></td>
<td>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CILA</strong></td>
<td>Corpus de Inscripciones Latinas de Andalucía</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CI</strong></td>
<td>The Classical Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLE</strong></td>
<td>Carmina Latina Epigraphica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CPh</strong></td>
<td>Classical Philology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CR</strong></td>
<td>The Classical Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Digesta seu Pandectae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EE</strong></td>
<td>Ephemeris Epigraphica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emarsi</strong></td>
<td>Letta, C. and S. d'Amato, <em>Epigrafia della regione dei Marsi</em> (Mailand 1975)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epigraphica</strong></td>
<td><em>Epigraphica. Rivista italiana di epigrafia</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hep</strong></td>
<td>Hispania Epigraphica</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IG</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones Graecae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IGUR</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IIBenevento</strong></td>
<td>Cavuto, P., <em>Iscrizioni inedite di Benevento, Epigraphica 30</em> (1968) 126-155</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ILAfr</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones latines d'AFrique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ILAlg</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones latines d'Algérie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ILBulg</strong></td>
<td>Gerov, B., <em>Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria repertae</em> (Sofia 1989)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ILER</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones latinas de la España romana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ILJug</strong></td>
<td>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Jugoslavia repertae et editae sunt</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**ILLRP** Degrassi, A., *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae* (2nd edition; Florence 1965)


**ILN** *Inscriptions Latines de Narbonnaise*


**ILPGranada** Pastor Muñoz, M., and A. Mendoza Eguaras, *Inscripciónes Latinas de la Provincia de Granada* (Granada 1987)

**ILS** *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*

**ILTun** *Inscriptions Latines de la Tunisie*


**IncrItt** *Inscriptiones Italie*

**IPSSTA** *Inscriptiones Pannoniae Superioris in Slovacia Transdanubiana Asservatae*

**IRC** *Inscriptions romaines de Catalogne*

**IRPCadiz** Gonzalez, J., *Inscripciones Romanas de la Provincia de Cádiz* (Cadiz 1982)

**IsCM** *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae*

**JRA** *Journal of Roman Archaeology*

**JRS** *Journal of Roman Studies*


**MDAI(R)** *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Romische Abteilung)*

**MEFRA** *Mélanges d’Archéologie et d’Histoire de l’École Française de Rome, Antiquité*

**NS** *Notizie degli Scavi dell’ Antichità*

**OCD** *Oxford Classical Dictionary*

**PIR** *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*

**Poccetti** Poccetti, P., *Nuovi documenti italici a complemento del Manuale di E. Vetter* (Pisa 1979)

**RA** *Revue Archéologique*

**RE** *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*

**REL** *Revue des Études Latines*

**RIB** *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*

**RIT** Alföldy, G., *Die römischen Inschriften von Tarraco, Madrider Forschungen* 10 (Berlin 1975)

**Rüpke** Rüpke, J., *Fasti Sacerdotum. Die Mitglieder der Priesterschaften und das sakrale Functionspersonal römischer, griechischer, orientalischer und jüdisch-
christlicher Kulte in der Stadt Rom von 300 v. Chr. bis 499 n. Chr. (Stuttgart 2005)

**SEL**  
Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico

**SIPSurrentum**  

**SupIt**  
*Supplementa Italicca*

**InscrIt**  
*Inscriptiones Italicae*

**Vetter**  
Vetter, E., *Handbuch der Italienischen Dialekte* (Heidelberg 1953)

**ZPE**  
*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*
# APPENDIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corfinium</td>
<td>Italy (4)</td>
<td><em>CIL</em> 1, 3226</td>
<td>End of the 2nd cent. BC-beginning of the 1st century BC</td>
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*Saluta Scaifi V(ibi) / Anceta Cerri(a)*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corfinium</td>
<td>Italy (4)</td>
<td>Vetter 213</td>
<td>1st century BC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpromium</td>
<td>Italy (4)</td>
<td><em>CIL</em> 1, 3257 = Poccetti 205</td>
<td>Shortly after the Hannibalic wars</td>
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*Saluta Saluta / Salus*

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*Tettia Sa(lvi filia) / anac(eta) Cerri(a)*

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*Anaceta / Cerria*

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*Anacta / Ceria*

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<td><em>CIL</em> 1, 3213a</td>
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*Brata Ania / Ancta Criei*

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*Brata Poli(ennia) Sa(lvi) / Anacta Cerri(a)*

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*Saluta Musesa Pa(ci) / Anceta Ceria / et aisis santo*
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<td><strong>Ancet(ă) / Cer(ă)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sulmo</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Pocetti in <em>Studi e saggi linguisticì</em> 22 (1982) 171-182</td>
<td>End of the 2nd cent. BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Saluta Caiedia C(ai) Il(ilia) / Anceta Ceri</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teate Marrucinorum</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td><em>CIL</em> 1, 3260 = Pocetti 204 = <em>CIL</em> 9, 3032</td>
<td>Shortly after the Hannibal-lic war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>[Sacr]acrix / Herentatia Vára / sonì salas vali</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Catalogue

The catalogue is divided into five parts of which four cover the main areas in which the relevant inscriptions have been found. The first part lists the evidence from Rome; the second part the inscriptions from Italy, the third those erected in northern Africa and the fourth those set up in all the other provinces of the Empire that I have included in this study. The last part records the uncertain cases. In each of the five parts of the catalogue, the inscriptions are listed alphabetically according to the name of the town they were found – generally the Roman name, but in case no Roman name is known, the modern one is used. The inscriptions of which only the province is known, are listed before all others in each part. When several inscriptions stem from the same town, the numbers of the corpora determine the order of the inscriptions listed. Inscriptions recording women, known from other epigraphic evidence (which is included) to have held a priesthood, are excluded.

The entries are recorded as follows: after the place where the inscription is found, the province – and in case of Italy the region as well – is listed, followed by its entry number(s) in the CIL, ILS or other corpora. Of the inscriptions from Rome, only their entry numbers in the corpora are listed. When the inscription is datable, a period or date is provided next to the corpus number(s). Below, the inscription itself is provided.

ROME

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AE 1928, 78</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Dis] Manibus / Rubria Philusa sibi et / sacerdoti suae / sanctissimae</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CIL 6, 68= ILS 3513=Brouwer 44</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Felix publicus / Asinianus pontific(um) / Bonae Deae agresti Felicu(lae?) / votum solvit iuniciem alba(m) / libens animo ob luminibus / restitutis derelictus a medicis post / menses decem beneficio(!) dominaes(!) medicinis sanatus per / eam restituta omnia ministerio Canniae Fortunatae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The uncertain cases include a.o. inscriptions in which the name of the religious official has not been preserved, so her or his gender cannot be established – but who was likely a woman, considering the cult together with the area in which she served. The category also includes those inscriptions in which the nature of the (possible) religious office is uncertain.

2 The Pompeian Eumachia is a good example: in some inscriptions recording her name, her priesthood is omitted. Therefore, these inscriptions are not included in this catalogue. However, when relevant, they are mentioned or even quoted in full in one of the chapters of this thesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2177 = ILS 5018</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / Flaviae Ver(a)e praesul(a)e / sacerdot(i) Tusculanor(um) / vix(it) ann(is) VI me(n)s(ibus) XI die(bus) [---] / fecit Fl[avi]</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2181 = CIL 6, 32443</th>
<th>3rd quarter of the 1st cent. BC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Casponia P(ubli) f(ilia) / Maxima / sacerdos C[er]eris / publica / populi Romani / Sicula</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2182 = CIL 1, 974 = ILLRP 61 = ILS 3342</th>
<th>3rd quarter of the 1st cent. BC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Favonia M(arcit) f(ilia) / sacerdos C[er]eris / publica p(opuli) R(omani) Q(uirimum)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2209 = ILS 5002 = Rüpke 1497</th>
<th>End of the 1st cent. BC- first half of the 1st cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Doridi Asinii Galli / aceditua a Diana / Antiochus conser(vus) / b(ene) m(erenti) f(ilia) f(ecit)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2213 = Rüpke 2277</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lollia Urbana aceditua / ministra / vix(it) ann(os) XXX / Felicio f[ilio] fecit</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2236 = Brouwer 25</th>
<th>3rd or 4th cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) Aelia N[ice] / sacerdos B[ona]e d[eae] / se biva(?) conparavit sibi et / a[lumn(a)e] suae C[l(audiae)] Nice et / Ael(iae) Thalasse et Ael(iae) Serapiae et / C[l(audiae)] Fotunat(a)e et Lucciae Felicitati et / Valerio Menandro et [</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2237 = AE 2001, 169 = Brouwer 26</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / Terentiae Amp[l(iae)] / sacerdoti B[ona]e d[eae] / Petroniae [---] / Teren(t)a / Tha[l(nusa)] / b(ene) [m(erenti) f(ecit)] / [</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2239 = Brouwer 35</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / Veturiae S[enn(a)e] / honoratiae of[b] / magistratum / colleg(i) B[ona]e d[eae] / Tyndaris lib(ertae) / patronae b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit) / [</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>11</th>
<th>CIL 6, 2243 = Rüpke 1865</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>] / Aetria C[---] / sacerdos / ditis pa[tres] / Hateria / Helpis / mater</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CIL 6, 33970 = ILS 5240
Fulvia (mulieris) l(iberta) / Copiola tibicen / annos vixit XV

CIL 6, 37170 = ILS 4438 = AE 1893, 79
Flaviae Epicha[ridi] / sacerdotiae / deae Virginii Caelestis / praesentissimo numini / loci montis Tarpei / Sextia Olympias h(onorifica) f(eminina) / et Chrestina Dorcadius h(onorifica) f(eminina) / honorificae feminae / coniugi luni Hyle sacerdot(i) / una cum sacratus et canistrar(i) / dignissimae// (on left side) dedicata/ idib(?)/ nov(?)/ Aemiliano et Basso co(n)s(ulibus)

CIL 6, 9181 = AE 2000, 138

ITALY AND SICILY

Italy

Abella  Italy (1)  CIL 10, 1207 = ILS 3186

Abellinum  Italy (1)  AE 2004, 409  Julio-Claudian
praef(ecto)] equit(um) alae Moesicae F[elici---] / [---] Q(uinti) f(iliae) Secundae sa[cerdoti ---] / [---] P[rocula f[ra]tri

Aeclanum  Italy (2)  CIL 9, 1084 = ILS 3345
Lolliae / Primae / sacerdoti / Cereria

238
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesernia</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>[D(is)] M(anibus) [s(acrum)] / Afraniae / Stasidi / <strong>sacerdoti</strong> / QQ(uinti) Trebelli / December et Op/tatus b(ene) m(erenti) i(ecerunt)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesernia</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Viva fecit / Suellia C(ai) f(iliiia) / Consanica / <strong>sacerdos Cerialis</strong> / Deia Libra / h(oc) m(onumentum) h(eredem) n(on) s(equetur)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allifae</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sontiae <strong>sacerdoti</strong> / Veneris / ex testamento</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ameria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Iul(iae) M(arci) f(iliae) Felicitati / uxor(i) / C(ai) Curati Eutychitis / IIIIvir(i) magistrae Fortu/nae Mel(ioris) coll(egium) centonaria(ri) / ob merita eius quo honore / contenta sumptum omnem / remisit et ob dedicatio/numem ded(it) sin(gulis) HS XX n(umnum) et hoc amplius / arcae eorum intul(it) HS V m(ilia) n(umnum) / ut die natalis su/ii V Id(us) Mai(as) / ex usuris eius summae epw/lantes i&lt;n=M&gt; perpetuum divider(unt) / quod si divisio die s(upra) s(critpa) celebrata non / fuerit tunc pertineb(at) omn(i)a summa / ad familiam publicam</em></td>
</tr>
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<th>22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amiternum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / M(arci) Caesi M(arci) f(iliai) Pal(atina) Magni / Ilvir(i) i(ure) d(icundo) Ilvir(i) q(uin)q(uemalis) IIII / Tamudiae M(arci) f(iliae) Severae / <strong>sacerdot(i) publicae</strong> Ceresa(ri) / Caesia Severa parentibus / d(onum) d(edit) bis</em></td>
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<th>23</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amiternum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dis Man(ibus) / sacrum / Plaetoriae / Secundae / <strong>ministrae Salutis</strong> / ann(os) XIII vivit XXX</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>24</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antium</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Claudia Attica / Attica Au&lt;u=g&gt;C&gt;(usti) lib(erti) a rationibi(us) / in sacramento Ceresa(ni) Antiatinae / deos sua impensa posuit / <strong>sacerdote</strong> Iulia Procula / Imp(eratoris) Caesar(cis) Domitian(o) / Aug(usti) Germanic(o) XI co(n)s(ule)</em></td>
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<td><strong>25</strong></td>
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<td><strong>26</strong></td>
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<td><strong>30</strong></td>
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<td><strong>31</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Aquinum | Italy (1) | AE 1978, 99=
Epigraphica 2005, p. 375 = AE 2005, 322 | Mid 1st century AD |
| Tetta M(arci) l(iberta) / Myrtale / Cupania N(umeri) f(ilia) / **magistr(ae)** / Dianae Karen(ae) / d(onum) d(ederunt) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>33</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquinum</td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 5414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floriae C(aii) f(iliae) / Posil[l]ae <strong>sacerdot(i)</strong> / publicae loc(us) d(atus) p(ublice)</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>34</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquinum</td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 5422 = CIL 1, 1182 = 1550 = ILS 3353 = ILLRP 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serviai C(ai) f(iliae) / <strong>sacerdotis Liberi</strong> / publicai <em>Aquinatis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>35</strong></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asculum</td>
<td>Italy (5)</td>
<td>Asculum II, 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen[t]ia T(it) l(iberta) Epistolum / <strong>mag(istra)</strong> Vener(is)</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>36</strong></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atina</td>
<td>Italy (3)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 343 = InscrIt 3-1, 134 = AE 1964, 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucia M(arci) l(iberta) Suettia / <strong>sacerdos</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>37</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atina</td>
<td>Italy (3)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 381 = InscrIt 3-1, 174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(is) M(anibus) / Antoniae A(uli) f(iliae) / Dorcadi sa/cerd<strong>oti</strong> [---] / Atinatium</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>38</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atina</td>
<td>Italy (3)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 5073 = CIL 1, 1532 = ILS 3344 = ILLRP 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munniai C(ai) f(iliae) / <strong>sacerd(oti) Cer(esis)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>39</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atina</td>
<td>Italy (3)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 5144 = CIL 6, 2272 = EE 8.1, 587 = Rüppke 455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Jasenniae / <strong>sace</strong>rdo/tis / [Vene]friae / [mon]umentum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

241
Beneventum | Italy (2) | AE 1968, 122 = IV Benevento 6 | 3rd cent. AD

Gaiae Nummiae / Ceioniae Um/briae Rufiae / Albinae c(larissimae) p(uellae) / sac(erdoti) pub(licae)

Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 1538 = ILS 4185 | AD 228

Attini sacrum / et Minervae Berecintiae / Concordia col(oniae) lib(erta) Ianuari[a] / c[y]mbal(istria) [I]oco secundo ob / crioibilium factum M(atris) de(um) / Ma(gnae) tradentib(us) Septimio / Primitivo augure et sac(erdote) / Servilia Varia et Terentia / Elisviana sacerdotes XVvir(ales) / praeuente Mamio Secundo / haec iussu Matris deum / in ara taurobolicu duo/dena cum vitula crem(ata) / sub die V Idus Aprilis / Modesto II et Probo co(n)s(ulibus)

Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 1539 = ILS 4183 = AE 2005, 426 | ?

Attini sacr(um) / et Minervae / Paracentiae / Mummeia C(ai) f(ilia) / Atticilla sacerdos ob taurobo/llium

Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 1541 = ILS 4184 = AE 2005, 426 | ?

Attini sacr(um) / et Minervae / Paracentiae / Terentia Flaviana / sacerdos secundo loco XVvir(alis) ob taur(obilium) tra/d[i]u(m) a Servilia / Varia sacerdote prima

Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 1542 = AE 2005, 426 | ?


Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 1652 | ?

Munatia M(arci) f(ilia) sacerdos

Beneventum | Italy (2) | CIL 9, 2111 = EE 8.1, 104 | ?

Sacerdoti / Iunoni Reg(inae) / Liciniae / Licinianae / Liciniiani trib(uni) / filiae / [---]tia Attiane / mater

Bovianum | Italy (4) | CIL 9, 2569 = CIL 1, 1751 = ILLRP 273 | Mid 1st cent. BC

Helviae / Mesi f(iliae) / sacerdot(i) Vener(is) / filiae de suo
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Brixia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>CIL 5, 4400</em> = Inscription 10,5, 193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / Caeciliae Proculae / sacerdot(i) XV</em>virali / L(ucus) Acutius / Caecilianus alumnus / et P(ublio) Acilio Suro nutri(tor).*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Butuntum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>CIL 9, 307 = AE 1990, 202</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Petiliae Q(uinti) f(iliae) Secundinae / sacerdoti Minervae vix(it) / ann(os) VIII m(enses) VII d(ies) XVIII ob infa/tigabilem pietat(em) eius Messi/a Dorcas mat(er) infel(icissima) fil(iae) d(ulcis)imae) b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Cales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>CIL 10, 4673</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Aria C(ai) f(ilia) sacerdos</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Capena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>AE 1954, 166</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Variae Italiae / Pacati Fausti / sacerdoti et cultrici / Cereris et Veneris / dignissimae ob merita eius / decuriones Augustales honorati / et vicani pecunia collata posuerunt / eique locum publice censuerunt</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Capena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>AE 1982, 267 = AE 1954, 165</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Iuliae Ti(beri) fil(iae) Paulinae / sacerdoti Cereris municip(i) / Capenatium foederatorum / ob honorem sacerdotalem / honestissimis caerimonitis / praebitum decuriones / item municipipes / et postea sacerdoti Veneris / bis epulum et sportulas decur(ionibus) / et municipibis praebeuit / l(ucus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) // (on the right side) Dedicata VI Kal(endas) Mart(ias) / Glabrione II [co(n)s(ule)] / curat(ore) L(ucio) Mucio Muciano / marito eius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Capena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>CIL 11, 3933 = ILS 3352</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Flaviae / Ammiae / sacerdoti / Cereris / ob honorem / caerimoniorum / honestissim(a)e / praebitorum / decreto ordinis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Capua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>CIL 10, 3911</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Herennia M(arci) [fil(ia)] / sacerdos / Cereri sacr[ata] / loc(us) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Capua</td>
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<tr>
<th>56</th>
<th>Capua</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 10, 3926 = <em>ILS</em> 3348</th>
<th>1st century BC (?)</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>*jicuria M(arci) f(ilia) s[acredos] / Cerialis mundalis / d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(aciendum) c(uravit)</td>
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<th>57</th>
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<th><em>CIL</em> 10, 4263 = <em>ILS</em> 1597</th>
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<td>*M(arco) Orfio M(arci) f(ilio) Fal(erna) / Rufa Dianae(!) / l(iberta) sibi et co(n)i[i]u&lt;g&gt;C&gt;i / su{i}u{o} feicit</td>
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<tr>
<th>58</th>
<th>Casauria</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th><em>AE</em> 1980, 374</th>
<th>1st cent. AD?</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Petriciae (mulieris) l(ibertae) / Polumniae / s[acredos Veneris] / C(aius) Decius C(ai) l(ibertus) Bitus / pos(u)it</td>
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<th>59</th>
<th>Casinum</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 10, 5191 = <em>ILS</em> 1541 = <em>ILSRP</em> 63</th>
<th>Republican</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Agria Sucia N(umeri) f(ilia) / s[acredos] / Cer(era) et Venerus</td>
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<th>60</th>
<th>Cora</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 10, 6511 = <em>AE</em> 1997, 285 = <em>AE</em> 2004, 388 = <em>ILS</em> 3488</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Cervaria Sp(uri) f(ilia) Fortunata / magistra / Matri Matutae / d(onum) d(edit)</td>
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<th>61</th>
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<td>*Staberia Q(uinti) f(ilia) s[acred(os)] / Modiani / porticium ante sacarium / a solo s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit)</td>
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<th><em>AE</em> 1988, 422 = <em>SubIt</em> 3, Corf10</th>
<th>AD 14-29</th>
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<td>*flaminica / Iuliae Augustae / s[acredos prim(a) / [---] / I[</td>
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<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Corfinium</td>
<td>Italy (4)</td>
<td><em>CIL</em> 9, 3166 = <em>ILS</em> 3187</td>
<td>End of the 1st cent. BC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acca Q(uinti) l(ilia) / <em>sacerdos / Veneris</em></td>
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<td>Accia / <em>sacerdos / Veneris</em> / Modia / <em>sacerdos / Veneris</em></td>
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<th><em>CIL</em> 9, 3170</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attia / Mirallis / <em>sacerdos / Cereris</em></td>
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<th>66</th>
<th>Corfinium</th>
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<th><em>CIL</em> 9, 6323 = <em>CIL</em> 1, 1777</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Titia L(ucii) l(ilia) <em>sacerdos</em></td>
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<th>67</th>
<th>Corfinium</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th><em>SupIt</em> 3, Co12 = <em>AE</em> 1900, 85 = <em>NS</em> 1899, 399</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>H)elvia / [Pothii]ne <em>sacerdos / [Cere]ris</em></td>
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<th>68</th>
<th>Cumae (?)</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th><em>EE</em> 4, 872; <em>AE</em> 1988 318 = <em>CIL</em> 6, 32,461 = Brouwer 30</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Dis Man(ibus) s]acr(um) / [---iae] Castae / <em>sacerd(otis) B]onae Deae</em> / [huic lo]cus datu[s / [a soda]libus VII / [long(um)] p(edes) VII lat(um) / [p(edes) --- h(ic) s(itia) c(st)]</td>
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<tr>
<th>69</th>
<th>Cupra Maritima</th>
<th>Italy (5)</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 9, 5295</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Veidia T(iti) l(iberta) Aug(e et / Iulia C(ai) l(iberta) Urbana / <em>mag(istrae) Veneri(s) d(ederunt)</em></td>
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<th>70</th>
<th>Fidenae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 14, 4057 = <em>AE</em> 2001, 738 = Brouwer 51</th>
<th>After 105 AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Fidenae</td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
<td>NS 1929, p 262. no 10=Brouwer 53</td>
<td>Imperial period</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-----Js(erva?) / -----/ magistra / [Bonae] Deae / d(onum) d(edit) / -----i-alpiam</td>
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<th>72</th>
<th>Fidenae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
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<tr>
<th>73</th>
<th>Formiae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>AE 1988, 286</th>
<th>1st cent. BC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lucia M(arci) f(ilia) / sacerdos</td>
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<th>74</th>
<th>Formiae</th>
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<th>CIL 10, 6103=CIL 1, 3110</th>
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<td>Caesia No(vi) f(ilia) sa(cerdos) / Cereri(s) / Q(uintus) Caesius Q(uinti) f(ilius) ne[p(os)]?/ fecit [---</td>
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<tr>
<th>75</th>
<th>Formiae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>CIL 10, 6109</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Sallu[s]/tiae Sat/urniae / sacerdoti / deae / Cereris / fil(i)</td>
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<tr>
<th>76</th>
<th>Forum Sempronii</th>
<th>Provincie/regio</th>
<th>CIL 11, 6108</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apollini / sacr(um) / [----]linus Alliae / Cordillae disp(ensator) / et Urania con(iugi)? / et Tityrus / magistri / d(onum) d(ederunt)</td>
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<tr>
<th>77</th>
<th>Furfo</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3518</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Salvidia T(iti) f(ilia) Secund[a] / Quinctia Sex(ii) f(ilia) Secunda / Casnasia Q(uinti) l(iberta) Rufa / Casnasia (mulieris) l(iberta) Sperat(a) / Sperata Munatidi A(uli) / ser(va) Veneri d(onum) d(at) / magis(trae) Vene(ris)</td>
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<tr>
<th>78</th>
<th>Gabii</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>CIL 14, 2804=ILS 6218</th>
<th>AD 138-140</th>
</tr>
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</table>
|     | Agusiae T(iti) f(iliae) Priscillae / sacerdoti Spei et Salutis Aug(ustae) / ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) Gabini statuum publice po/nendam curaverunt quod post / impensas exemplo instrium feminar(um) / factas ob sacerdotium etiam opus portic(us) / Spei vetustate vexatum pecunia sua refectu/ram sem / promiserit populo cum pro / salute principis Antonini Aug(usti) Pii / patris patriae liberorumque eius / eximio ludorum spectaculo edito / religiones veste donata / universis, satis fecerit / cuius statuar honore contenta / impensam populo remiserit / l(at) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grumentum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pietas Sec[un]di contuber(nalis) <strong>magistra</strong> / arcum et can[a]labrum lunoni / d(e) s(uo) d(onom) d(at)</td>
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<th>80</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Herdomia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Arreniae / Felicissimae / <strong>sacerdoti</strong> / [[-------]] / [[-------]] / Aug(ustae?) / L(uci) Arreni Men/andri fil(iae) coll(egium) / iuvenem ob me/riia eius / l(ocus) d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) // Ded(icata) Kal(endis) lun(ibus)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Luceria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) / Luceren[i]m Hermae / Vergiliae Priscae magistr(ae) Bonae [deae?]</strong></td>
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<th>82</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minturnae</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>28BC?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duovir(is) / hasc(e) <strong>magistri(sae)</strong> V(eneri) d(onom) d(ant) / [T]ertia D[o]matia S(exti) f(ilia) / Alfias / (mulieris) l(iberta) Flora / Cahia / (mulieris) l(iberta) Astap(h)iun / Dosith(ea) Calidi N(umeri) s(erra) / Stolia Minidi L(uci) s(erra) / Al[enia - ] l(iberta) Salvia / Co[---] M(arci) l(iberta) Creus(a) / Sec[---]ssia / Pal[---] / Co[---] / Cal[---] / [-------]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nazanno</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD 138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[---]lia Proper[ula ---] / [---]anna Veneri[a ---] / [---] <strong>magistr(ae) Bonae [deae]</strong> / [---] specul(um) arg(ent(eum)] p(ondo) [---] / [---] eadem dedicavit [---] / [---] Ant[onio] Aug(usto) [---] / co(n)s(ulibus)</td>
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<th>84</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nazanno</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>AD 138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[---]S[pernati / [---] <strong>magistra</strong> / [---]a de suo refer[cit] / [</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nepet</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>AD 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereri August(ae) / Matri agr(orum) / L(ucius) Bennius Primus / mag(ister) pagi / Bennia Primigenia / <strong>magistra</strong> fecer(unt) / Germanic(a) Caesare II / L(ucius) Seio Tuberone co(n)s(ulibus) / dies sacrifici XIII K(alendas) Mai(as)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[C]onsiae P(ubli) f(iliae) / [M(a)j]ursiae Octaviae / Paulinae / [r]egio media / sacerdotii / L(ocus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>d(atus) &lt;vacat&gt; d(ecretus) d(ecurionum)</td>
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<tr>
<th>87</th>
<th>Ostra Vetere</th>
<th>Italy (6)</th>
<th>CIL 11, 6185 = Brouwer 97</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bonae deae d(onom) d(edit) / Rufellia L(uci) l(iberta) / Tych(e) magistra</strong></td>
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<th>Peltuinum Vestinum</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3429 = ILS 6110 = AE 2004, 495</th>
<th>AD 242</th>
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<tr>
<td>C(aio) Vettio Attico et / C(aio) Asinio Praetextato co(n)sulibus / pr(idie) Idus April(is) / Peltuini Vestinis in curia Aug(ustalium) ordinem habentibus T(itio) Avidi / acco Restituto et T(itio) Blaesio Natale aedd(ilibus) q(uinq)e(uinmalibus) scribendo ad/fuerunt quod universi verba fecerunt / Nummiam Variat Q(uinti) f(iliae) sacerdotem Veneris Felicis ea addiecto/one adque prono animo circa nos agere coepisse pro instituto / benivolentiae suae sic ut et parentes eius semper egerunt ut / merito debeat ex consensu universorum patrona praefecturae / nostri/ae fieri quo magis magisque hoc honore qui est apud nos potissi/mus tantae claritatis eius oblato dignatione benignitatis eius glori/osi et in omnibus tuti ac defensi esse possimius q(uid) d(e) e(a) r(e) f(ieri) p(laceret) d(e) e(a) r(e) i(ta) c(ensuerunt) / placere eum patris universorum consortis Numminiae Variae C(ai) f(iliae) sacerdoti Veneris / Felicis pro splendore dignitatis suae patrocinium praefecturae nos/trae deferri petique ab eius claritate et eximia benignitate ut hunc / honorem sibi a nobis oblatum l(ibi)nt et prono animo susciperi / et singulos universosque nos remque publicam nostram in cit/entalam domus suae recipro pict et in quibuscumque / ratio egerit inercendete auctoritate dignitatis suae tuto de/fensosque praestet</td>
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<tr>
<th>89</th>
<th>Pinna Vestina</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3358</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ninniae Q(uinti) f(iliae) Primil/iae sacerdoti Cereriae / sancta tibi hunc titulum pueri / posuere merenti hos[pe]s si non e[st] / lasso tibi forte molestum oramus / lecto nomine pauca legas sum / l bertinis ego nata parentibus ambis / pauperibus census moribus ingenuis / sedi[/---][H]/[---][f]aci nuidi IAILROMNIA cura / [/---][r]/[---]factis sum DECORAI [---][I]/[S] / COIIN IA[---][I][---] IIIIIVS I[---][M]/[---]II[---][I][---] II[---][I] an/nosus hic defuncta piis sedib(us) ecce mo/ror tu qui pr(a)eter(en)s legisti lasse viator / sit tibi lux dulcis et mihi terra lev is</td>
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<th>Pollentia</th>
<th>Italy (9)</th>
<th>CIL 5, 7633 = InscrIt-9-1, 175</th>
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<tr>
<td>Numini Dia/iae Aug(ustae) / Valeria Epi/thesa magistra</td>
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<th>91</th>
<th>Pollentia</th>
<th>Italy (9)</th>
<th>InscrIt-9-1, 176</th>
<th>1st or 2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td>Dianae Aug(ustae) / Seia Q(uinti) f(ilia) / Sabina / magistra p(osuit/)agis</td>
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<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 810 = ILS 3785</td>
<td>Early first cent. AD (Augustan)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eumachia L(uci) f(ilia) sacerdos(os) public(a). nomine suo et M(arcii) Numistri Frontonis fili, chalcicum, cryptam, porticus Concordiae/ Augustae pietati sua pequinia fecit / eademque dedicavit</td>
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<td>CIL 10, 811: [Eumachia] L(uci) f(ilia) sacerdos(os) public(a). / nomine suo et M(arcii) Numistri Frontonis fili</td>
<td>[sacerdos(os) public(a).]</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CIL 10, 813 = ILS 6368</td>
<td>Early first cent. AD (Augustan)</td>
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<td>Eumachiae L(uci) f(iliae) sacerdos(os) public(a). / fullones</td>
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<td>M[a]nia P(ubli) f(ilia) sacerdos(os) public(a). Geni[o coloniae]? / Augusti? s]olo et pec[unia</td>
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<th>Pompeii</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>CIL 10, 810 = ILS 6371; EE 8, 315 and 855 = NS 1890, 333</th>
<th>Between 62-79 (Nero)</th>
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<td>[A]llea [M]ai f(ilia) / sacerdos(os) V[eneri]s / et Cereris si[jbi] / ex dec(reto) dec(u)r(ium) pe[c(unia) pub(lica)]</td>
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<th>CIL 10, 812</th>
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<td><strong>Pompeii</strong></td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
<td>CIL 10, 998= ILS 6369=AE 1996, 404=AE 2001, 793</td>
<td>AD 26</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>M[ajmiae P(ublii) f(iliae) sacerdoti / publicae locus sepulturae datus / decurionum decreto</em></td>
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<td><strong>Pompeii</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Istacidia N(umeri) f(ilia) / Rufilla sacerd(os) / publica</em></td>
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<td><strong>Pompeii</strong></td>
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<td><em>M(arco) Alleio Luccio Libellae patri aedili / Ilv(er) praefecto quinquennal(um) et M(arco) Alleio Libellae f(ilio) / decurioni xivit annis XVII locus monumenti / publice datus est Alleia M(arci) f(ilia) Decimilla sacerdos / publica Cereris faciundum curavit viro et filio</em></td>
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<td><strong>Pompeii</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Clodia A(uli) f(ilia) / sacerdos / publica / Cereris d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)</em></td>
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<td><em>Lassia M(arci) f(ilia) / sacerdos / publica / Cereris d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)</em></td>
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<td><strong>Pompeii</strong></td>
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<td><em>Clodia (mulieris) l(iberta) / Nigella porcar(ia) / publica</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Potentia</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Cereri / vert(entis) sac(rum) / Bovia / Maxima / sacerdos / XVviral(is) / IASAAI / [</em></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Praeneste</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Publiciae L(uci) f(iliae) / Simili / magistrae / Matris Metutae / M(arcus) Aemilius M(arci) f(ilius) / Ulpianus / uxor / sanctissimae / [?] d(atus) d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)</em></td>
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</table>
106
Praeneste Italy (1) CIL 14, 3006 = CIL 6, 29726 End of the 1st-3rd century AD

107 Puteoli Italy (1) AE 2005, 341 Augustan [Sc]xtia(?) C(ai) f(iliæ) Rufæ(?)/ [sa]c[erdoti C]er[eris p]ublic(ae)] / ex [dec(rieto) dec(urionum)] / [f


110 Puteoli Italy (1) CIL 10, 1798 3rd cent. AD? D(is) M(anibus) / Faltoniae / Procula[m] sa[cerdoti quae / sibi viva] / posuit

111 Puteoli Italy (1) CIL 10, 1812 1st cent. AD Sabina / sacerd[otis Cereris / public(a) monimen] tum / sibi vivae fecit /

112 Puteoli Italy (1) CIL 10, 1829 End of the 1st-3rd century AD D(is) M(anibus) / [---]ae mun/[---] sacerdoti publicae Cereris / [---] vix[it an(nos) LXXXIII / [---]][urina et / [---]us /

113 Reate Italy (4) SupPl 18, Re21 1st cent. AD Sacerdotibus[ / C(aio) Pontio Suav[il] / Pontiae Prim[ae] / Mercatae / Pomoniae Ph[---] / matri [---]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>114</th>
<th>Regium Iulium</th>
<th>Italy (3)</th>
<th>EE 8.1, 247</th>
<th>3rd cent. AD (after AD 250)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Iulie C(ai) f(iliae) Aemi/f(iiae) Calli(cae) / C(ai) f(iliae) <em>sacredo/ti ob multa / merita eius / R(egini) lul(iensis) s(ua) p(ecunia) / d(creto) d(ecurionum)</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>115</th>
<th>Signia</th>
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<th>EE 8, 624 = ILS 3495 = Brouwer 69</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
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<tr>
<td>*Arunoeia Sp(uri) f(ilia) / Acte <em>magistra / Bon(a)e deae tunicas / duas et palliolum / rasas cal(i)einas et / lucerna aeria d(onum) d(edit)</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>116</th>
<th>Spoleto</th>
<th>Italy (6)</th>
<th>CIL 11, 4767 = ILS 3492 = Brouwer 95</th>
<th>4th c AD?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[L]ucus Bon(a)e de(a)e / dedicatus ut licet / per masculos rem/undari permit(tente) Pom[pecia(?)] / <em>com[magistra]</em> ara(m) posu[it] / Ren(ata) Maxim(a) uxsor(/) Umbr[o]/nis p(rim)p(ilaris) posit(am?) in va/jcuo] / suo</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>117</th>
<th>Sulmo</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>AE 1984, 326 = SupIt 4, S47 = CIL 1, 3216</th>
<th>1st cent. BC- 1st half of the 1st cent. AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*A(ula) Tertia Sex(ti) f(ilia) / <em>sacredos Ceres/is</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>118</th>
<th>Sulmo</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3074 = ILS 4025</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Fucticia / C(ai) Fucici / Amandi / f(ilia) Iusta / <em>magistera</em> Angitiis / d(onum) d(at)</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>119</th>
<th>Sulmo</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3087 = CIL 1, 1774 = ILLRP 65</th>
<th>Mid 1st cent. BC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Caedia T(i) f(ilia) / <em>sacredos Ceres/is et Veneris</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>120</th>
<th>Sulmo</th>
<th>Italy (4)</th>
<th>CIL 9, 3089</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Helvia (mulieres) l(iberta) / Quarta / <em>sacredos Ceres/is et Veneris</em> viva sibi fecit</td>
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<th>121</th>
<th>Sulmo</th>
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<th>CIL 9, 3090 = CIL 1, 1775 = ILLRP 66 = ILS 3351</th>
<th>Mid 1st cent. BC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Mamia V(ibi) f(ilia) / <em>sacredos Ceres/is et Veneris</em></td>
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</table>
122
Sulmo  Italy (4)  SupIt 4, S48  1st cent. AD
Varia C(ai) f(ilia) // sacerdos // Ceres

123
Superaequeum  Italy (4)  AE 1990, 237= AE 1988, 446; SupIt 5, S017  1st cent. AD

124
Superaequeum  Italy (4)  SupIt 5, Su18=AE 1984, 290=AE 1988, 447  1st cent. AD
J / U[rs]iliae / sacerdoti / Stephanus

125
Surrentum  Italy (1)  CIL 10, 680= SIPS Surrentum 13=16=17  Augustan
[----ae L(uci) f(iliae) Magnae/ [sace]rdoti publicae/[Veneris et Ceres] // M(arco) Sittio C(ai)
f(ilio) Fal(ema) / Frontoni Saufeio / Procuro / vixit annum et mens(es) / tres huic decurion(es) / locum
sepulturae et / in funere HS V(milia) decr(everunt) // T(itio) Clodio C(ai) [f(ilio) ---] / Pro[culo] /
praef(ecto) fab[r(um) ---] / tribunus(!) mil(itum) / leg(ionis?) III / Scythicae leg(ionis?) --- ab
Imp(erator)/ / Caesare Aug(usto) / Sto missuo pro / censore ad Lus[itanos]

126
Surrentum  Italy (1)  CIL 10, 688= SIPS Surrentum 14=18  Tiberian
---s]acerdoti) publicae) Veneris / [et Ceres]? h]uic matronae statuam /ex aequi coll]ato in aedem
Veneris / [ponendam curraverunt huic /decureonos) pubblice locum sepulturea et / [finum quinque
milia numnum?] et statuam decreverunt / [L(ucio) Cornelio L(uci) f(ilio) Men(enia) M[---]
/f[amini Romae T(lister)] C(aes]ari) Aug(usti) /auguri aed(illi) Ilvir(o) quinquennali(a) /praef(ecto) 
fab[r(um)] bis hic togae vir[ilis die] /crustulum et mulsum populo /edidit /aedilitate spectaculum
gladia]orum / circonsiam edidit ob honor]em ---/decureonib(us) magnam cenan d/edit
quin]o/quennalitate sua ludos spl[endidissimus) edidit] huic decurion(um) publice locum [sepulturae
et in] / funer(e) HS V(milia) et statuam [decureverunt]

127
Sutrium  Italy (7)  CIL 11, 3246  ?
Servilia // L(uci) l(iberta) // Felix / magistra donu(m) / Minervae dat
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>128</th>
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<td><strong>Teanum Sidicinum</strong></td>
<td>Italy (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CIL 10, 4789=ILS 3112</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Flaviae Coeliae / Anniae Argivae / sacerd(oti) Iunonis / Populonae</strong></td>
<td>L(uci) Fl(avi) Coeli Prisci / Ilvir(i) pont(ificus) / filiae / Teanensis alumn(us) / et n(ot)arius patris / eius / l(ucus) d(atus) d(creto) d(ecurionum)</td>
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<td><strong>Teanum Sidicinum</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CIL 10, 4790</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Noniae Priscæ[c] / sacerd(oti) Iunonis[i] Populon(æ)</strong></td>
<td>L(uci) Noni Diophanti Ilivir(i) / q(uin)q(uennalis) pont(ifici) equi(ti) Rom(ani) / filiae / L(uci) L(?) / Noni Passæn[s] / Cleobulus Filær[gyr] / us Felix frat[res] / et Aurel(ia) Tryphera(ma) tuaer(ta) / l(ucus) d(atus) d(creto) d(ecurionum)</td>
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<td>**Vitelliae / Virgiliae / Felsiae / [m]inistriæ sa[crorum pu[bblicorum]] / [p]raesidis lu[n]onis Populo[n(æ)] / Virgilia Fl[augustae] / [m]a[te]f(r) l(ucus) d(atus) d(creto) d(ecurionum)</td>
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<th>131</th>
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<td><strong>Macqui[---] / sacerdos Cereris / publica summa</strong></td>
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<th>132</th>
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<td><strong>Staiae M(arci) f(iliae) / Pietati / sacerd(oti) Cereris[is] / pub(licae) primae</strong></td>
<td>l(ucus) d(atus) d(creto) d(ecurionum)</td>
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<th>133</th>
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<td><strong>Ticinium</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Petilia Q(uini) (filiation) / Sabina / sacerdo&lt;s&gt;T&gt;/ Minervae / v(otum) s(olvit) l(iberis) m erot(i) / adiuvante / M(arco) Claudio / Firmo</strong></td>
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<th>134</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>NS 1881 p. 22= CIL 11, 4635 = ILS 3494= Brouwer 93</strong></td>
<td>Augustan</td>
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<td><strong>Quieta Aties / Pieridis / ministra Bon(a)e Di(a)e / proma(gistra) pos(u)it d(edit/onum) d(edicavit/edit)</strong></td>
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<th>135</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>EE 9.698</strong></td>
<td>Imperial period</td>
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<td>137</td>
<td>Velia</td>
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<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>Venafrum</td>
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<td>D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum) / T[illiæ] / Eutychiæ / [sacerdoti] / T[ill(ius)] / Primus / (ecit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>Verona</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Salviae / [sacra]iae / Xystus / cons(erv)us / de suo dat</td>
</tr>
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<td>140</td>
<td>Via Salaria</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Iulia Aug(usti) l(iberta) / Helena / [Veneria ex hort(is)] / [Sallustianis] / sibi et suis / in fro(nt) p(edes) XII / in agr(o) p(edes) XII</td>
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<td>141</td>
<td>Vibo Valentia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Q((uintus) Vibull(u)s L(ucii) f(ilius) Q(uinti) n(epos) C(aius) C(incius) C(ai) f(ilius) Paul(us) IIIvir i(ure) d(icundo) / signum Proserpinae reficiendum statuendumque arasque / reficiundam ex s(enate) c(onsulto) curarunt HS DCC[XX magistrae] fuere Helvi[a Q(uinti) f(ilia) ]Orb[a M(arci) f(ilia)]</td>
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<td>142</td>
<td>Volturum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Afinia Phieris / [sacerdos] / v(iva) s(ibi) (ecit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>Vomanum superior</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lychinis / [magistra] Ven(eris) / (ibens) m(erito)</td>
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### Sicily

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>144</th>
</tr>
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<td><em>M(arco) T[-] / Iulio[-] / Tettia L[-] / sacerd[os] --- / Cereris mater I[-]</em></td>
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### NORTHERN AFRICA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>146</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Ain Barouri</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Ulpia Secu/nda sacer/dos / vixit annis / LXXXV / [se] viventi / [s]ibi fecit</em></td>
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<td><strong>Ammaedara</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Trebiae Matron[a]e / sacerdoti / magnae / Ceronim / [-] Sittius Celer f(iliae) p(er)p(etuus)?] / [m]atri su[ae castissimae?] posuit</em></td>
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<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / s(acrum) / Iulia Felic[itas] / sacer/does magna vixit / ann(os) [---] / Iulia Fe/licitas / liber/ta patr/oniae op/timae / posuit / h(ic) s(it) [e(st)]</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ammaedara</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>(left side) D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Cornelia Ae/gia qu(a)e et Ni/ce vixit an/nis XXXII / me(n)s(ibus) tres / Baburia / Ianuaria / quaet et sacer/dos Ceroni(m) mater pia p(osuit) / (right side) / [D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum)] / Q(uintius) Corn[elij]us Geniali[s] / vixit ann(i) / s(LXXV) / Baburia / Ia/nuaria qua(e) / et sacer/dos / Ceroni(m) mar/i[tu] posu/i[t] et filiae h(ic) s(it) e(st)</em></td>
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<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Corne/lia Lic/i(nia) s(acerdos) C(eronis/eris) p(ia)? / v(ixiu) a(nnis) LXV / h(ic) s(it) e(st) / fil(i)i p(i) pi po/suerunt</em></td>
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256
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<tr>
<th>151</th>
<th>Ascours</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>AE 1935, 34</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td><strong>Biricbal / Iurat h(ic) s(itus) e(st) / Caeretis / sacerda / v(ixit) a(mnos) LVI</strong></td>
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<th>152</th>
<th>Auzia</th>
<th>Mauretania Caesariensis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 9072</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>[O]b mem/[a]ria(m) Caeli / [Pie]ltatis v(ixit) / [a]n(nos) XVIII // Ob m/omori/a&lt;m=&lt;E&gt; Rutiliae / Januariae sacerdotes v(ixit) a(mnos) / XLV // Ob m/(em)oria(m) / Romani v(ixit) a(mnos) / XXVIII fi/atri // [C]aelius / Macrin/us coniugi et fiatri f(ecit) &lt;s=X&gt;anc(tissimo?)</strong></td>
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<th>153</th>
<th>Belalis Maior</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 14437</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Maria Extricata / sacerdos magna / pia vixit annis CIII / h(ic) s(itia) e(st)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>154</th>
<th>Ben Bessam</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>CIL 8, 8353=ILA/ 2.1, 4181 = CIL 8, 20203</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td><strong>Dis Manib(us) / Aria Anulla / sacerdos magna v(ixit) a(mnis) CI / bon(a?) sa(cerdos?) f(uit?)</strong></td>
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<th>Bulla Regia</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 14472 = CIL 8, 10580</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Valeriae L(uci) f(iliae) Concessae / C(aius) Domitius C(ai) f(ilius) Quirina / Pudens Lucretius Holonatianus et C(aius) Do/mitius C(ai) f(ilius) Quirina / Concessus matri opti/mae et bene de filiis suis / meritae item sacerdote / publicae Ceronum de/creto ab ordine loco / s(ua) p(ecunia) p(osuerunt)</strong></td>
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<th>Bulla Regia</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 14474</th>
<th>End of the 1st-3rd century AD</th>
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<td><strong>[D(is)] M(anibus) s(acrum) / [Sta]bera Mapia / m[ater] sacerdos / amanissima dulcis/[sima] vixit annis LXXX</strong></td>
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<th>Caesarea</th>
<th>Mauretania Caesariensis</th>
<th>AE 1976, 737a</th>
<th>?</th>
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<td><strong>C(ere) A(ugustae) s(acrum) / Cestia Du/bitata canis/tria v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) a(nimo)</strong></td>
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<th>CIL 8, 9321= CIL 8, 20960</th>
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<td><strong>C(ere)er Aug(u斯塔e) / Amatia Africana qui / Illotio caniste[---</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Caesarea</td>
<td>Mauretania Caesariensis</td>
<td><strong>CIL 8, 9337</strong></td>
<td>AD 183</td>
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<td><strong>Iulia Natalis / canistraria / d(e)cd(icavit) a(nno) pr(ovinciae) CXXXIII</strong></td>
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<th>160</th>
<th>Capsa</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th><strong>CIL 8, 112</strong></th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) /s(acrum)] / Vindiciae Th[eodorae sacerdof[ti Ceresi Aug[ustae] vix[i] / annis LXXX [curante An]/tonio Pud[cente ---] / filio eius [o(ssa) t(ibi) b(ene) q(uiescant)]</strong></td>
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<th>161</th>
<th>Carthago</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th><strong>CIL 8, 1140</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Iunoni / Sallustiae M(arii) fil(iae) / Luperciae sacerdot(i) Cer(esis/erum)</strong></td>
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<th>162</th>
<th>Carthago</th>
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<th><strong>CIL 8, 12919</strong></th>
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<td><strong>] Maior canistra/[ria p[i]a vix(i) ann(is) XXXV / Primigenius Aug(usti) con/iugi merenti feci(t) / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</strong></td>
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<th>163</th>
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<td><strong>Iovi Hammoni / Barbaro Silvano / sacerdotes / Sempronia Salsula mater sac[rorum] / C(aius) Iunius Mercurius / L(ucius) Pistorius Suavis / C(aius) Graecinius Auspiciatis / P(ublius) Iulius Felix / L(ucius) Pistorius Silvanus / L(ucius) Valerius Fortunatus / L(ucius) Caelius Peregrinus / T(itus) Valerius Primiti(v)us / P(ublius) Tettius Saturninus / M(arcus) Pomponius Crescens / M(arcus) Pomponius Felix / L(ucius) Caelius Dexter / Q(uintus) Liberius Proculus sacerdos / Valeria Pauli na mater / sacrorum(m) / Q(uintus) Caeceius Honoratus / [[[---V]]] / sace(t)i dotes / dei Barbari Silvani / Q(uintus) Liberius Proculus sacerdos / Valeria Pauli na mater / sacrorum(m)</strong></td>
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<th>164</th>
<th>Castellum Elephantum</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th><strong>CIL 8, 6359 = ILAlg 2.3, 10128 = ILS 4468</strong></th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) / Iulia Credula / sacerdos Cere/num loci / primi / v(ixit) a(nnis) LXXV / h(ic) s(ita) e(st) / D(is) M(anibus) / L(ucius) Proper/tius Mustae/cus v(ixit) a(nnis) LXX / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</strong></td>
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<th>Castellum Phuensis</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
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<th>End of the 1st-3rd century AD</th>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) / [M]onula / v(ixit) / h(is) / a(nnis) / CXX / sac(e)rds</strong></td>
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<th>166</th>
<th>Cillium</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th><strong>CIL 8, 11306 = CIL 8, 23208 = ILS 4466</strong></th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<td><strong>--/ sacerdoti magn(a)e / Cерерum castis /sim(a)e matri caris /sim(a)e cur(a) ege / runt fili(i) eius</strong></td>
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258
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<td>167</td>
<td>Cirta</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>CIL 8, 7093 = ILAlg 2.1 805</td>
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<td>Baebia &lt;P=F&gt;(ubli) ἡ (ilia) Quia (rina) / Casta sacerdos / Iun[onis] vix(it) ann[is] / LIV h(ic) s(ita) e(st) s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis)</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>Cirta</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>CIL 8, 7109 = ILAlg 2.1, 808</td>
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<tr>
<td>D(is) M(anibus) / Iulia / Postum/a sacerdos lu/nonis / v(ixit) a(nnis) &lt;L=I&gt; I</td>
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<td>169</td>
<td>Civitas Cit[ ]</td>
<td>Africa Proconsularis</td>
<td>AE 2008, 1692</td>
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<tr>
<td>Titia C(ai) ἡ (ilia) Melli/ma sacerdos / Telluris pia / vixit annis / LXXXV h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<td>170</td>
<td>Cuicul</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>ILAlg 2.3, 8003a</td>
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<td>Dis Manib(us) / Claudia L(ucii) ἡ (ilia) / Orfita sacerdos / v(ixit) a(nnis) LXX h(ic) s(ita)</td>
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<td>Cuicul</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>ILAlg 2.3, 8006</td>
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<td>Iulia Herba/sa sacer(dos) / v(ixit) an(nis) LXV / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<td>172</td>
<td>Djenum</td>
<td>Africa Proconsularis</td>
<td>CIL 8, 591 = ILTun 504 = CLE 817</td>
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<tr>
<td>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Helvia Severa sacerdos cas/[ti]ssima annis LXXXV / vixit iudicio / senuit merito / obit exemplo / [hinc] pietatis honos veteris stat gratia fact[i?] / L(ucus) Fabricius Gemellus / inpar matri / observantissimae</td>
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<td>173</td>
<td>El Hamima</td>
<td>Africa Proconsularis</td>
<td>CIL 8, 291 = CIL 8, 11485</td>
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<td>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / [---]a/ Secunda / sacerdos / vixit an(nos) / LXIII ἡ (iii) m(atri) p(iae) p(osuerunt)</td>
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<td>174</td>
<td>El Ksar</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>ILAlg 2.3, 8330</td>
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<td>[D(is)] M(anibus) s(acrum) / [---]idia Ho/[norat?]a sacer(dos) /</td>
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<td><strong>Gales</strong></td>
<td><strong>Africa Proconsularis</strong></td>
<td><strong>CIL 8, 23834 = ILPBardo 320 = IL Tun 634 = AE 1905, 34</strong></td>
<td><strong>Late 1st - early 2nd cent. AD</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Quarta Nyptanis f[ilia] G/ale(n)s uxor Celeris / Mantis f[ilia] sacerdos mag[na] / conditi(v)u(m) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit) curatorib/us Saturu[m] / Rogatu Bruti/one Maniu Namp(h)amone / Valente Celeris f(ilio) stru(ctoribus) Rufu / Imilcone Tuleses vixit an(nis)is LIX</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gens Bacchuiiana</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aemilia Amot/micar sacerdos / Cerenum p(ia) vix(it) an(nis)is LXXV / consecravit an(nis)is XXXV</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Gillium</strong></td>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Iulia Prima / sacer(os) Telluris / pia vixit annis / LXXXXV h(ic) s(itas) e(st) / fili et nepotes / matri san(c)tiissimae fecerunt</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hadrumentum</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dis Manibus / P(ublius) Rutilius Maxim(us) sa/cerdos Plutonis h(ic) [s(itus)] e(st) / v(icit) a(nnis)is LX / Porcia Veneria sacerdos Caelestis viro pi/issimo fecit</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hammam Oulad Zaid</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Memoriae Hammo/niae Beregalis / sacerd/origi/ / Cerenum / M(arcus) N[---]iocius / Victor filius / f(ecit)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>La Hamma</strong></td>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) / Munatia Lul(=) / sacerda mari/ta sanctissima / v(icit) a(nnos) LXX / P(ublius) S(itius) lanu/arius co(n)iug(i) / bene mer(entis) / f(aciendum) c(uravit)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / L(ucius) Munatius / [---]actus v(icit) a(nnos) LV / soror p(ia) f(ecit) / Clementilla / sa(cerdos) Cerenum</strong></td>
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261
190
Madauros  | Africa Proconsularis  | ILAlg 1, 2033  | ?  
*Deae Caere/ri Maurusiae Aug(ustae) / Iulia Victoria / *canistraria* / simulacrum / deae de suo fe/cit et dedicavit*

191
Madauros  | Africa Proconsularis  | ILAlg 1, 2213  | End of the 1st-3rd century AD  
*Dis Man/ibus sacris / Bass(ilia/idia?) Prim[o]s/sa Marisa / *sacerdos Tel/luris* vix(it) annis / LXX*

192
Madauros  | Africa Proconsularis  | ILAlg 1, 2218  | 2nd cent. AD  
*Dis M(anibus) sacr(um) / Claudia Paula / *sacerdos mag/nia* pia vixit an/nis LXXXX h(ic) s(ita) e(st)*

193
Madauros  | Africa Proconsularis  | ILAlg 1, 2219  | 2nd cent. AD  
*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Datia For/tunata *sacerdos / Cererum / p(ia) v(ixit) a(nnos) LXXXV / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)*

194
Madauros  | Africa Proconsularis  | ILAlg 1, 2231  | ?  
*s]a]cer[do]s / [-[-]M pia vixit an/nis LXV h(ic) s(ita) e(st) o(ssa) t(ibi) b(ene) q(uiescant) / T(itus)  
Fl(avius) Marinus matri optimae f(ecit)*

195
Masculula  | Africa Proconsularis  | CIL 8, 15779= ILS 4470  | ?  
*Siso[-[-] Missuhes fil(ia) / *sacerdos Matham/o-dis* pia vixit /annis LXXXVI / h(ic) s(ita) e(st) / D(is)  
M(anibus) s(acrum) / Mamus Sissonies / filia /i/ pia vixit annis / LXXXV curante Au/relio Bastro/zi  
filio*

196
Masculula  | Africa Proconsularis  | CIL 8, 15780  | 1st-2nd cent. AD  
1 / h(ic) s(ita) e(st) cura Victoris / Apiri et Victorini fil/i/orum) // [-[-[-[-] / [-[-[-] *sacerdos / C[-[-] pia  
v(ixit) a(nnos) LXV / [h(ic) s(ita) e(st) cu]ra Victorinae*

197
Mididi  | Africa Proconsularis  | CIL 8, 23393  | End of the 1st-3rd century AD  
*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Ofisia Catt/ula *sacreda* vixit an/nis LXX*

262
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>198</th>
<th>Milev</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>CIL 8, 19993 = ILAlg 2.3, 8562</th>
<th>1st-2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>**Va(l)eria L(uci) f(ilia) / Pupa <strong>sacerdos Cere[fris / um]</strong> v(ixit) a(nnis) / LXXXII</td>
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<tr>
<th>199</th>
<th>Rusicade</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 2.1, 72</th>
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<td>**Sittia Urb/a na **sacerda/ c aucaria/ v(ixit) a(nnis) LXXX/XV / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tr>
<th>200</th>
<th>Rusipisir</th>
<th>Mauretania Caesariensis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 8993 = ILS 1200</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>**Fabatiae Luci / filiae Pollae / Fabiae Domi/tiae Gelliolae / consulari f(e)/minae lampa/diferae / M(arcus) Fabatius Do/mitius Pan/cratius li/bertus et / procura/tor patro/nae piissim(a)e</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>201</th>
<th>Saddar</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>CIL 8, 5937 = ILAlg 2.3, 7246</th>
<th>2nd - 3rd cent. AD</th>
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<td>**Firmidia L(uci) / filia Imp[e[t]rata **sacer[d]os ma[gn]a/ vixit a(nnis) C / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tr>
<th>202</th>
<th>Saia Maior</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 25503</th>
<th>Early 1st cent. AD</th>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>sacer/dos magna</strong></td>
<td>pia vixit annis / LXXX/XV h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tr>
<th>203</th>
<th>Saldae</th>
<th>Mauretania Sitifensis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 20686</th>
<th>?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>**Maesolaev&lt;m&gt; Heren/nia M(arci) f(ilia) Tertulla / **sacerdos Cere[fris vixit a(nnis) ? / sacerdotium gessit a/]</td>
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<tr>
<th>204</th>
<th>Saltus Burunitanus</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 10575</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Caecilia Zaba sacerda magna</strong></td>
<td>[vixi)t ann(is) LXXXV</td>
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<th>205</th>
<th>Saltus Massipianus</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 580 = CIL 8, 11732</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>**D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Va[l]e[ria] Fortunata **sacerdos Cere[rum] vixit annis LXXII h(ic) s(ita) e(st) / Veturia Secunda fil(ia) matri posuit</td>
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<tr>
<th>206</th>
<th>Sicca Veneria</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 1623</th>
<th>2nd - 3rd cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>**Cereri / Aug(ustae) sac(rum) / Valeria / Saturnina / sacerdos, / Maior fla/minica posuere</td>
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<td>207</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sicca Veneria</td>
<td>Africa Proconsularis</td>
<td>CIL 8, 1650</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vindemanilia sacerdos</strong> vixit a/nnis LXXV / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sicca Veneria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Baricca / Rogati filia[i] / Ven(eris) ser(vae) [p(ia)] vix(it) an(nis) XXV</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sidi Bou Beker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Iulia Rufini coniunx Rufina / sacerdos / conditur hoc tumulo con[te]/giturque solo / sa[ncta pudica castissi/ma matronarum / v(xit) a(nnis) LVII</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidi Bou Gossa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dis Manib[u]/s sacrum / Iulia Zaba / sacerda mag/na vixit an/nis n(umero) LXXVIII</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sigus</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Se[n[t]iaξ] / Tertia sacerdos v(xit) a(nnos) / LXXV</strong></td>
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<th>212</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sigus</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>D(is) M(anibus) S(acrum) / Iulia Urba/na sacerdos mag/na v(xit) a(nnis) / CI h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simithus</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Veturia Sex(it) f(ilia)/ Martha/ sacerda Caelestae/ Hic sita v(xit) a(nnis) XCV (sic)</strong></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sitifis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>sae[nct/a / femina sacerdos] Tell(us) / nata patre Marco Cassio / Proculo matre Porcia Rogata v(xit) an(nis) LXX / m(enses) VII d(ies) XI C(aius) Iul(ius) Ger(anius) / f(ilia) matri piissimaeae / fecit</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sufetula</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ESI[---] /[---] sacerda [---] / domum fecit // Urbanus / sacerdos / donum fecit</td>
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<td>Page</td>
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<td>216</td>
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<tr>
<th>226</th>
<th>Thuburnica</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>ILAfr 476</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Iulia M(arcī) f(ilia) Vic/torīa sacredos pia vīxit an/nis LXV</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>227</th>
<th>Thubursicu Numidarum</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>CIL 8, 4883 = ILAlg 1, 1368 = ILAlg 1, 1369</th>
<th>End of the 1st-3rd century AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Fabia / Lacta / sacredos / Liberi / p(ia) v(ixit) a(nnis) LVII / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tr>
<th>228</th>
<th>Thubursicu Numidarum</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 1, 1372</th>
<th>?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Laeta Rufi f[il(ia)] / sacredos / pli Liberi / P[ia]t/iris pia vix[it]/ annis LXI[---] / h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<tr>
<th>229</th>
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<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 1, 1373</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Matrona / Pulchri f[i/l(ia)] sacredos / Telluris / p(ia) v(ixit) an(nis) LXXX/III</td>
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<th>230</th>
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<th>Numidia</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Rufina / Rufini Cr/assi filia sacredos Tell/uris h(ic) s(ita) e(st) / p(ia) v(ixit) a(nnis) LXXXV</td>
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<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 1, 1976</th>
<th>End of the 1st-2nd century AD</th>
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<td>*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Calpurnia Se/data Asprena/tiana Calpur/ni Gemini nepos / Calpurni Sedat(i) / et Vasidiae Ru/fillae sacredothis filia pia vi/xit annis XXXII / mensibus III / monum(entum) f(ecit) caris/simae et fidelissim[ae] / coniugi C(aius) Ann(ius) L() / maritus h(ic) s(ita) e(st)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>232</th>
<th>Thugga</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 26447 = MAD 1579</th>
<th>Between AD 101 and AD 300</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>*D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum) / Mundicia / Fortunat[a] / sacredo[s] / [</td>
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### 233

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thugga</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 8, 26447a=MAD 1607</th>
<th>Between AD 101 and AD 300</th>
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<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum)</em> / Veturula / Saturnini / <em>sacerdos</em> / p(ia) v(ixit) an(nis) LXXXI / h(ic) s(it) e(st)</td>
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### 234

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<th>Tiddis</th>
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<th>End of the 1st-3rd century AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>*D(is) M(anibus) / Cluven/tia Nove/[I]a <em>sacerdos Cerebris</em></td>
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### 235

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<th><em>CIL</em> 8, 6708= <em>ILA</em>lg 2-1, 3617</th>
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<td>*[R]upilia L(uci) r(ilia) / [Marc]ella <em>sa/[cer]dos Cerebris</em></td>
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### 236

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<tr>
<th>Tubusuctu</th>
<th>Mauretania Sitifensis</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 8, 8842= <em>CIL</em> 8, 20650</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabia Audicaena Tur/esis <em>mater / sacrorum</em> / vixi[t] an(nis) LXV / Fulvia Mele:ssa ma(tri) ben/e me(renti) po(suit)</td>
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### 237

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<tr>
<th>Vasampus</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th><em>AE</em> 2003, 1981</th>
<th>End of the 1st-3rd century AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>D(is) M(anibus) / Titurnia / Nina <em>sacerdos</em> / vixi(t) a(nnis) CXV / Rogatus Fe/lix Messor / matri p[o]s(uerunt?)</em></td>
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### 238

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<tr>
<th>Vegesela</th>
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<th><em>CIL</em> 8, 2310= <em>CIL</em> 8, 17784</th>
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<tr>
<td>Q(uintus) Minucius / Saturninus / *sacerdos pie / e[t] I[u]a Vene/ria coniunx / <em>sacer(dos) Iunonis</em> / v(otum) s(olverunt)</td>
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### OTHER PROVINCES

#### Hispania

### 239

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>?</th>
<th>Hispania Tarraconensis</th>
<th><em>CIL</em> 2, 6262</th>
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<tr>
<td>Veneri / Aug(usto) / Aquilia / Martia / <em>mag(istra) d(omon) p(osuit)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td>Arucci-Turobriga</td>
<td>Hispania Baetica</td>
<td>CIL 2, 964=ILER 1760=ILS 5402= CILA 1,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baebiae C(ai) f(iliae) / Crinitae / <strong>Turobrigen/si sacerdoti</strong> / quaem templum / Apollinis et Di/anae dedit ex / HS CC(milibus) ex qua sum/ma X[X] populi / Romani deduc/ta et epulo / dato it(em) temp/luum fie/ri sibique / hanc statuam / poni iussit</td>
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<th>241</th>
<th>Emporiae</th>
<th>Hispania Tarracensis</th>
<th>IRC3, 199= IRC5, p 93 = Hep 12, 154</th>
<th>First part of the first century AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/[---iae] T(iti) f(iliae)/ /[---]idae / <strong>sacer[doti] Di/anae</strong> / Mini[cria ---]/ / Mum(mia) Q(uinti) [f(ilia) ---]/</td>
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<th>Iliberris</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2.5, 631=CIL 2, 5514 = ILP Granada 56</th>
<th>Late 1st - 2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[…] […]/ […] L(ucii) f(ilia) Patricia / [ob hon/orum] <strong>sacer[doti]</strong> epulo / populo dato / d(edit/curionum) d(edicavit/creto)</td>
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<th>243</th>
<th>Ilipa</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CILA 2.1, 289</th>
<th>End 2nd - early 3rd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug(usto) / Silvano / ab Ilia Ilipa // Agria Ianuaria / <strong>sacerdotia</strong> / <strong>Ilipensis</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>244</th>
<th>Norba</th>
<th>Hispania Lusitania</th>
<th>CIL 2, 742=AE 1976, 315</th>
<th>AD 219</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C[n(aeo?)] [A]vito Saeco / [L(ucius)] Auff(idius) Celer et Cornelia Flavina <strong>sacerdotes</strong> atiutorio parentu(m) imp(erator) Anto(nino) P(io) Au[g(usto)] I[I] et Timeo Sacerdot(e co(n)s(ulibus)]</td>
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<th>Ossigi Latonium</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2.7, 3=CIL 2, 3349=CILA 3.1, 334 = ILER 460=ILS 3786</th>
<th>End of the 1st, beginning of the 2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augusto / Paci perpetuae et Concordiae / Augustae / Q(uintus) Vibiis Felicio sevir et / Vibia Felicula <strong>ministra Tutelae</strong> / Augustae / d(e) s(u) p(ecunia) d(ederunt) d(edicaverunt)</td>
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<th>Salpensa</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2, 1278= CILA 2.3, 951= ILER 438</th>
<th>1st or 2nd cent. AD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fortunae Aug(ustae) / […] IA L(ucii) f(ilia) Celerina bis ante ea / [publ]ice epulata ob honorem <strong>sacerdoti(i)</strong> / [ex ar]genti p(ondo) C(entum) epulo dato d(onom) d(edit)</td>
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247
Tarragona  Hispania  Tarraconensis  CIL 2, 4265 = RIT 363  ?
Claud(ia) Persina sacerd(os) / locum acceptum a re / publ(ica) sanctum in (pens(a) s(u)a) f(ecit)

Gaul

248
Antipolis  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 185 = ILN 2, 97  (2nd or) 3rd cent. AD
J Mar/[ce]ll[a] flaminica et sacerdos / viva sibi fecit / et {me} memoriam / consummavit

249
Antipolis  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 5724 = ILN 2, 14  ?
Ja C(ai) f(ilia) Carina / [fla]minica sacer(dos) / [Dia]nae Thucolis / [test]amento f(ieri) i(ussit)

250
Antipolis  Gallia Narbonensis  ILN 2 A, 15  Late 2nd cent. AD
Ma[----] / Ma[re]llae / sa[ce]rdot(i) Mi/n[e]rvae et Dia/nae in honor(em) / Calpurni(i) Her/metis, marit(i) eius / IIIIIViri Aug(ustales) cor(porati) A(ntipolitani)

251
Arele  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 654 = ILS 3496 = Brouwer 130  2nd quarter of the 1st cent. AD
Bonae deae / Caena Priscae lib(erta) Attice / ministra

252
Arele  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 703  2nd cent. AD
Satria Firma / [an]tistita deae / [----]ar c o / [posu]it

253
Arele  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 708  1st cent. AD
Valeria Urbana antistis sibi / et Sex(to) Mantio Eroti viro / et Octaviae Hilarae amicae / et Charidi libertae.

254
Baetarea  Gallia Narbonensis  CIL 12, 4237  ?
Atia L(uci) f(ilia) / Fausta sac(erdos)
255

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burdigala</th>
<th>Gallia Aquitania</th>
<th>CIL 13, 575a and b</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mercurio / sacrum / Pompeia Thel/[e]gu[s]a mater / sacrorum / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) // Mercurio / sacrum / Pompeia Th[e]legusa mater / sacrorum / v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito) // Attalus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

256

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glanum</th>
<th>Gallia Narbonensis</th>
<th>AE 1946 153 = AE 1949 139 = AE 1958 36 = AE 1998 887 = Brouwer 133</th>
<th>1st or 2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auribus / Lorcia Pia / ministra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

257

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glanum</th>
<th>Gallia Narbonensis</th>
<th>AE 1946 154 = Brouwer 134</th>
<th>1st or 2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attia Musa Dom(i)nae ministra posuit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Danube and Balkan region

258

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degoj</th>
<th>Pannonia Superior</th>
<th>CIL 3, 3936 = CIL 3, 10820 = ILS 7116</th>
<th>AD 238</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Il(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Nundinario / pro salute / Imp(eratoris) Gordiani Aug(usti) / G(aius) D(ignus) Q(uirina) Victorinus / dec(urio) col(oniae) Sisc(iae) l(ivia) r(everae) / eq(uites) Rom(anus) s(ac)erd(os) p(rovinciae) P(annoniae) sup(eriores) / et G(aius) D(----) Victorini(nus) / fil(ius) dec(ores) col(oniae) Sisc(iae) eq(uites) R(omanus) / et L[ucria] Lucilla / coniux sacerdot(alis) / Pio et Proculo co(n)s(ulibus)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

259

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Augusta Vindelicorum</th>
<th>Raetia</th>
<th>CIL 3, 5827 = ILS 7109</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>j / Silvae T(itii) f(iliae) / Materninae / sacerdot(al)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

260

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lazane</th>
<th>Moesia Inferior</th>
<th>ILSulg 247</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>j mat[r]ona s(ac)erd(os) marit[o ---] / [--- sub]terreno et lapide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

261

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salona</th>
<th>Dalmatia</th>
<th>ILSulg 3, 2052 = AE 1912, 42</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matrib(us) Mag(nis) / sacrum P(ublius) Safinius Filucius Terentiae sacerdotis filiius / aram supstituit(!) idem ampliavit / sibi et cognatio[ni suae] / permisso C(ai) Clodi Grac[c]ilis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
262

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tomis</th>
<th>Moesia Inferior</th>
<th>CIL 3, 7559 = ISC 2.2, 295</th>
<th>End of the 1st–3rd century AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *D*\(\text{is}^*\) *M*(anibus) / *Apolloni/us* *Dadae Ma/mae* *Dadae / matri suae / sacerdoti / To[m]an/o[rum be]ne me //renti

**North-western provinces**

263

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aquaes</th>
<th>Germania Superior</th>
<th>CIL 13, 6296</th>
<th>Mid 2nd cent. AD or later</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Dum[----]/ Magai filia* *Ianuaria / magistra Dum[---]*

264

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divodurum</th>
<th>Gallia Belgica</th>
<th>AE 1983, 711</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Silvano / sacrum / et Nymphis loci / Arete(?) Drus(?) / antistita / somnio monita / d(edit)*

265

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vesontio</th>
<th>Germania Superior</th>
<th>CIL 13, 5384 = AE 1984, 704</th>
<th>1st cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Geminia Titulla / Arausiensis mater / sacrorum hic / adquiescit / D(ecimus) Iul(ius) P(ubli) l(ibertus) / Auctus con(iugi?) / contubernali?) pi/iissimae et Aurae / Severi quem pro filio / filia) / obser(vavit)*

**UNCERTAIN CASES**

266

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>?</th>
<th>?</th>
<th>BCTH 1888, 336,2</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Matri[---]/ivia sacerdos*

**Rome**

267

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIL 6, 2238 = Brouwer 27</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| [Tyc?] *he magistra?) Bonae D[ae]*

268

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIL 6, 2292 = CIL 6, 4497 = Rüpke 493</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Aemilia Paulli l(iberta) Le(a?) / sacerdos / C(aio) Cassio (mulieris) et Paulli [l(iberto)] / Epigono*
269

CIL 6, 9824 = AE 2001, 169 = AE 2005, 146 = Rüpke 1419

Imperial period

Critonia Q(uinti) l(iberti) Philema / popa de insula / Q(uinti) Criton (mulieris) l(iberti) Dassi / sculptoris uctani(i) / sibi suisque poster(isque) / cor(um)

CIL 6, 32429

AD 96-98

İmp(erator) N(erva Traiano) Caesare Aug(usto) Germanico / Sex(to) / Iuliuu Frontino / Eutychu[s --- ] / Germ(anicus) If --- / colleg[ / ius / [---]iuu [---] / [---]ius [---] / [---]ja Amoena loc[---] / [---]

Aelius Secundus / [--- C]laud(i) Ha/lys / [---] Ulpius Iulicus / [---] Claud(i) Eutychia / [---]

Norbanus Orion / [---] Flavius Menander / [---] ve/rrna Eutychi Aug(usti) l(iberti) / [---] Claudia


Artemisia / [---] Is Onesimus / [---]s Onesimus loco / Eutychi Q(i) / [---] Phoeboe / [---]ocho loco

Domiti / One/simi [ / [---] / [---]CN / [---] jull[---] / VAS[---] / MEM[---] / T(itus') Flavius(is') --- /

Euhol(dus(?)) / CI / [---]ia[---] / [---] Claudius[---] / [---] in lo(e) C(audi) Lepid'u i[---] / [---]nae

P(ublius) Ae[li]uus[---] / Fortunatus Caes(aris) n(ostr) P(ublius) A(elius[---] / in loc(o) Onesimi qui et

Oxidi) Clau/di/a[---] / C(ai) l(ivi) Dia/doch i in loco C(ai) l(ivi) / Onesimus[---] / P(ublius) Aelius Isi[---]

Fortunata Caes(aris) n(ostr) verna loc(o) C(audi) Success[i --- o(biit)] / C(audi) Lepidina

in loc(o) --- lici / o(biit) M(arius) Ulpius Collatinus l(o)c Flavi Menand(ri) / T(itus) Flavius Hesper

loc(lau/i) Synthoni / o(biit) Flavia Isias loco Ulpi Collatica / T(itus) Flavius Latino/mus loco

Ulpi(i) Anici / o(biit) Ulpi Anicius loco Ulpi(i) Italian / [---]sures loco luli F(ilius) o(biit) / ---

It[---]ian o(biit) / [---] / o(biit) [---] / CI[---]VA[---] / [---] / / loco [---] / Ti(berius) C(audius)

Commagenus(?)[---] / in loc(o) C(audi) Ha[---] / sacerdot(es)[---] / Aelia[---] / [---] / [---]

Aelius[---] / Ulpiae[---] / C(audius) Clemens(?)[---] / C(audius)[---] Commagenus(?)[---] / [---]a

Fausta[---] / l(iberti) H[---] / [---]ina l(u) / [---] / [---] H(e)[---] / [---] Cyapr L[---] / [---] loc(o)

Faustae[---] / [---]urion[---] / [---]stus L[---] / [---] facilis Li

Italy

270

271

Alvito

Italy (1)

CIL 10, 5145 = EMarsi 109

sacerdos / Cerialis

272

Arpino

Italy (1)

CIL 10, 5678 = CIL 1, 3106 = ILArpino 1

100-50 BC

[--- don]um sacram[---] / [---] magis[i]tri Mercurio lan(ario) / [---] Cilix Tulli L(uci) s(ervus) / [---]

Teipa Preciae s(erva) / [---] Philotimus perf(ici) d(emand) c(uraverunt)

273

Capua

Italy (1)

CIL 10, 3912

? / virgin--- Ce]leri sa[cerdoti ---] / maxim[i ---] / C(arius) La[---] / Mar[---] / MVN[

272
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>274</th>
<th>Cumae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>CIL 10, 3689= AE 2005, 369</th>
<th>Augustan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Luce]ia Cn(aci) f ila) Maxima sa[cetis] s(ua) p(ecunia)]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>275</th>
<th>Fidenae</th>
<th>Italy (1)</th>
<th>NS 1929, p.262, no.9=Brouwer 52</th>
<th>Imperial period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A[quillia m[agistra]?) / Bonae Deae -------] / p(osuit?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>276</th>
<th>Interamna Nahars</th>
<th>Italy (6)</th>
<th>CIL 11, 4212= SupIt 19, 2002, p. 68</th>
<th>1st-2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noniae T(iti) f ilaiae / Rufinae / p[esticl(---) sacr(ae?) / L(ucius) Hispellatius / Sabinianus / aed(ilis) IIIvir i(ure) d(icundo) heres / ex testament(o) arbitrat(u) / C(ai) Obidi / Verecundi / marit[i] eis</td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Octavia?---] / Laenatis Pon[tiani co(n)s(ularis)? l(iberta)] / mag[istra?] [---] / Veneri V[ictrici ?] / l(ibens) [m(erito)]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>278</th>
<th>Tuder</th>
<th>Italy (6)</th>
<th>CIL 11, 4644b</th>
<th>Neronian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Bonae deae signum cum] / [b]asi Led[a ---] / [---]devei profi[---] / [---]turi uxsor [---] / [---] mag[istra?] d(onom) d(edit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**North Africa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>279</th>
<th>Castellum</th>
<th>Africa Proconsularis</th>
<th>CIL 8, 23848= ILPBardo 400 = ILTun 690</th>
<th>2nd cent. AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biracsaccarensium</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ex[trica l/unonis?] M(agnae?) / R(eginae?) ser(va) Felicis s/aluari f ila) pia vi/xit annis III hic siti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>280</th>
<th>Madauros</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 1, 2205</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D[---] / M[---] / M[---] / NVS Qu(i)r(ina) / veteran(us) / sacerd(os) / D[---] / R[---] / [I</td>
<td>// B?o/na sa/cerdos / Liberi Pa[tris]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>Saddar</td>
<td>Numidia</td>
<td>CIL 8, 5938 = ILAlg 2.3, 7247</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poz[---]ia s[ae]cr[os] v(icit) / an(n)is / LXXXVII</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>282</th>
<th>Sigus</th>
<th>Numidia</th>
<th>ILAlg 2.2, 6528</th>
<th>?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jonia / [---]agalli / [--- s]acerd[os] ---]XXX</td>
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**Hispania**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>283</th>
<th>Cartima</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2, 1956= ILER 2054= ILS 5512; ILMMalaga 6</th>
<th>AD 70-79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iunia D(ecimi) f(ilia) Rustica sacerd[os] perpetua et prima in municipio Cartimitan[o] / porticus public(as) vetustate corruptas refectit solum / baliniae dedit, vectigalia publica vindicavit, signum / aerum Martis in foro posuit, porticus ad balineum / solo suo cum piscina et signo Cupidinis, epulo dato / et spectaculis editis, de p(ecunia) s(ua) d(edit) d(edicavit), statuas sibi et C(ai) Fabio / Iuniano f(ilio) suo ab ordine Cartimitanorum decretas / remissa impensa, item statuam C(ai) Fabio Fabiano viro suo / d(e)c(p(ecunia) s(ua) l(actas) d(edit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>284</th>
<th>Cartima</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2, 1956= ILER 1764</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vibiae L(uci) f(iliae) / Turrinae / sacerd[oti] perpetuae / ordo Cartimitanus / statuam ponendam / decrevit / quae honore accepto / impensa remisit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>285</th>
<th>Cartima</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>CIL 2, 5488= ILER 1671 = ILMMalaga 7</th>
<th>1st cent. AD, after AD 69</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Valeria C(ai) f(ilia) Situllina / sacerd[oti] perpetuae d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) m(unicipii) C(artimitanui) f(uctu) / de sua pecunia solo suo l[ecit] / et epulo dato dedicavit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>286</th>
<th>Emporiae</th>
<th>Hispania Tarraconensis</th>
<th>IRC 3, 200 = IRC 5, p 94 = Hep 12, 155</th>
<th>First part of the first century AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[C][---]C[---] / [---] sa[ce]rdoti Di[iana] ---] / [-----] / [e fec]it(?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>287</th>
<th>Gades</th>
<th>Hispania Baetica</th>
<th>IRPCadiz 438=ILER 2660</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Domitia / Veneris &lt;serva&gt; / [h(ic)] s(ita) e(st) s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) t(evis)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

274
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>288</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>289</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iporca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corneliae Clementis filiae / Tuscae sacerdotiae perpetuae ordo Iporcensi/um &lt;ob&gt; munificentiam / statuam rem[i]ssis cenis / publicis posuit. / Item seviri cenas remise runt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>290</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ipsca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liciniae Q(uinti) filiae / Rufinae / sacerdoti / perpetuae / in col(onia) C(ilaritae) Iul(ia) et in / munific(pio) C(ontributensi) Ipse(nsis) / et in munific(pio) Flor(entino) / Iliberti(ano) aman/tissimae civium / suorum / plebs Contributens(nis) Ipse(nsis) / ob merita eius / statuam aere con/lato d(ono) d(edit) / Licinia Q(uinti) fil(ilia) Rufina / honore accepto / impensam remisit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>291</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ipsca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ sacerdoti CAE[---] / Montanae [---] / [------] / ISPPCVAN[---] / suam d(onum) d(edit) / huic ordo locum / decrevit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>292</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?] / [-?] R(?) H(??) T(?)[---] / Aelia Apra / Tispitana / sacer &lt;d=O&gt;os perpetu&lt;e=V&gt; &lt;vix=A&gt;it an/nis XXXV mens(ibus) / V dies XXVIII p(ia) t(n) / &lt;s(uis) h(ic) s(ita) e(st) s(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis)&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Danube and Balkan region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>293</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigetio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrae matr(i) / et m(inistrae?) Priscilla(e) / ob commen/datum et / restitu/tam fidem / Aelia(ius) Strato/nicus v(otum) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito) / Brigit(ene)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>294</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Istros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(o/ii) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / c(ivis) R(o/mani) et Lai cons(istentes) / vico Secundini / po(suerunt) pro salute / m' / impr(eratorum) domin(orum) nn(ostorum) L(uui) S(ertimini) / Severi et Marci A(ureli) / Antonini cura(m) / ag(entibus) magistra(s) Art(h)ema / Dioscoridentis / et Ius(s)i(t)i no Valeria(o) / Imp(eratoribus) Severo / III et Ant(onino) co(n)s(ulibus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Salona</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Prima Fulviniae / Urbana Curiae / Oecumene Iuliae / magistriae V(eneris?) d(onum) d(ant)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**North-western provinces**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>296</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colonia Agrippinensium</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Deae Semelae et / sororibus ei{i}us / deabus ob honorem / sacri matratus / Reginia Paterna / mater nata et / facta aram po/suit / sub sacerdotal(i) / Seranio Catullo / patre</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Biography

Veerle Gaspar (4-2-1981) studied Forestry and Nature Conservation for one year at Wageningen University, after which she decided that reading History at the Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen was a better choice. She graduated (with distinction) in 2006, before undertaking a Master of Literature in Ancient History at the University of St Andrews. In 2007 she started with her PhD-project at the University of Amsterdam, which she finished at the end of 2011.