

CHAPTER 13

Everyday occupations in Roman and Late Antique Egypt

‘Metadata’ as data for the study of linguistic variation

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Abstract

Within the Everyday Writing (EVWRIT) project, occupational designations have primarily been studied as a form of ‘metadata’ to explain linguistic variation. In this contribution, we argue that these terms also merit analysis as a subject of ‘variationist’ study in their own right. We begin by providing an overview of the occupational designations found in the Everyday Writing corpus, categorising them into five broader social groups and highlighting patterns in their contexts of occurrence and word formation. In the second part of our contribution, we explore three key areas of historical sociolinguistic inquiry related to occupational references: synchronic variation and change,

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gender differentiation, and the role of occupations in personal identification.

13.1 Introduction

While the value of papyrus documents for the study of economic and social history, as well as for the study of law, and administrative, religious, and cultural history, has been duly recognised (e.g. Ruffing 2020, 112, among many others), much less attention has been paid to the value of these sources for our knowledge of communication practices.¹ Within the Everyday Writing project,² a European-funded project that has been running at Ghent University (2018–2024), a team of researchers has been studying the communicative choices that people made in their written communication, and how the choice for one or the other feature connects to the context of writing.

Methodologically speaking, our approach, which we have come to call ‘historical socio-semiotics’ (Bentein and Amory 2023), consists of

- exhaustively annotating documentary sources for certain semiotic domains, such as materiality, layout, orthography, syntax, and multilingualism;
- annotating the same sources with socio-pragmatic (‘metadata’) information, as far as it is retrievable, such as the social characteristics and communicative goals of the interactants; and
- maximally connecting these two poles to each other, to find out more about the (ever shifting) social indexical value of communicative features (for the concept of indexicality, see Bentein 2019).

For these steps, new digital tools have been developed that greatly facilitate the project’s goals.

In this contribution, we would like to venture beyond this by now established methodology, and argue that our metadata information, too, which, to some extent at least, has been pushed into an auxiliary role, is worth studying in its own right from a ‘variationist’ perspective (cf. Bentein 2018 on lineage expressions). In this way, we intend to turn ‘metadata’ into ‘data’ in its own right, and broaden our conception of these notions. The metadata area that we will specifically be focusing on is that of ancient ‘occupations’ (also ‘professions’, ‘functions’), which we have annotated consistently in the Everyday Writing corpus as part

of the social characteristics of the relevant communicative participants, be they *initiators*, *intermediaries*, *legal representatives*, *receivers*, *witnesses*, *scribes*, or *signatories*.³ In our database, each of these occupations is in turn connected to a number of larger occupational classes, to which we will return later in this chapter (Section 13.3).⁴

Occupational designations have been studied extensively in previous research. Loisa Casarico (1983), Hans-Joachim Drexhage (1991a, 1991b, 2001, 2002), Kai Ruffing (2002), and Johannes Diethart (2005a, 2005b), among others, have made important lexicographical contributions on the manifold -πώλης and -πράτης compounds that are found in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine papyri (including literary and epigraphical corpora in their investigations), and that testify to the high degree of specialisation of trade- (and craft-) related occupations,⁵ while Ewa Wipszycka (1965) and Emanuela Battaglia (1989) have analysed the professions appearing in the textile and bakery industries respectively. The most comprehensive study that has been carried out so far is Kai Ruffing's, which exhaustively lists and discusses occupational designations for craftsmen and tradesmen in the Roman and Late Antique period, based on papyrological and epigraphical sources (Ruffing 2008).

Other scholars have studied occupations terms in the context of the broader themes of self-identification and self-representation (in Egypt and more broadly the ancient world), to which several edited volumes have been dedicated (e.g. Guicharrousse et al. 2019; Nowak, Latter, and Urbanik 2017). Yet another strand of research has studied occupational titles in an attempt to better understand larger socio-economic factors, such as the occupational structure of Egyptian villages (e.g. Langellotti 2017 for Tebtynis and Philadelphia), regional diversification between villages, and the connection with government (e.g. Roman government and taxation). Additionally, such scholarship has explored the socio-economic profile of certain (groups of) occupations through an 'onomastic' approach (see Langellotti 2017, 170), by connecting occupational titles to co-occurring textual elements such as names (Egyptian, Greco-Egyptian, common Greek, Macedonian; e.g. Hanson 1992; Langellotti 2017) and formal titles (president, secretary, etc.), as well as family relations (household types).

The goals of this chapter are twofold: first, we intend to provide an overview of the Greek occupational designations that we came across in the Everyday Writing corpus—a corpus of 4,686 letters, petitions,

and contracts from the Roman and Late Antique period—and to briefly discuss, on the basis of broader occupational classes, some of the main trends, focusing in particular on context of occurrence and word formation (Section 13.3); second, we want to highlight a number of aspects that are relevant for the variationist study of occupations, such as synchronic variation and change, gender differentiation, and the dynamics of personal identification (Section 13.4). Before doing so, however, we want to discuss briefly contexts of occurrence for occupational terms in the papyrological corpus (Section 13.2). We conclude our contribution with some suggestions for further research (Section 13.5).

13.2 Occupations and their contexts of occurrence

Occupational designations can be found in a variety of documents, serving a number of different purposes. A good starting point for our discussion is a 2017 chapter by Micaela Langellotti, which discusses occupations and naming trends in the villages of Tebtynis and Philadelphia during the first century CE (Langellotti 2017). In that chapter, Langellotti not only surveys the different types of documents in which occupations can be found, but also makes a broad distinction between documents where occupations are included as a form of personal identification (what she refers to as ‘socio-economic identifiers’), and those documents where the inclusion of an occupational reference is tightly connected to the purposes of the genre in question (Langellotti 2017, 154–55).⁶

Even though overlaps seem to exist between these two functions in some documents, we believe it is worth recognising the varying degrees to which occupational references either provide ‘absolute’ social identity information or rather form part of ‘relational’ social identity information (Bentein 2019, 145), that is, whether inclusion of an occupational reference serves to provide information about a person’s role and their relationship to other participants in a specific communicative context (= relational), or rather to provide more stable information about a person’s social characteristics (= absolute).⁷ Particularly in the former case, occupational references tend to be part of a longer identificational chain, which consists not only of a person’s name, but also their filiation, origins, and domicile (Gasco 1994, 50–51). The order of these elements tends to be relatively fixed.

As various scholars have pointed out, occupational designations are most often found in administrative documents such as lists, registers, and accounts, where they are included for taxation and other administrative purposes. As these documents are not included in the Everyday Writing corpus, we will not dwell on them much here. There are other text types, however, that are part of our corpus where there does seem to be an intimate relation between the type of transaction that is being made and the inclusion of an occupational reference. In work and apprenticeship contracts, for example, the profession is mentioned because it constitutes a basic element of the contract between the parties. A typical example is a work contract concerning flageolet players preserved in P.Fam.Tebt. 54 (219/223 CE) = TM 10761: Αὐρηλίῳ [Ὁ]νῶφρι [αὐ]λητῇ τὴν ἐργασίαν | παρὰ [Α]ὐρηλίου Φιλοσα[ρά] πιδος Λυσιμάχου Ἀντινο[έως] (ll. 1–2) ‘to Aurelius Onnophris, flageolet player by trade, from Aurelius Philosarapis, son of Lysimachos, citizen of Antinoopolis’ (transl. van Groningen).

Another text type where the occupational reference seems to be tightly connected to the type of economic transaction that is made are orders for delivery of food and other items, which form a valuable source for the study of the economic activities and status of the individuals. For example, P.Oxy. XVII 2139 (II/III CE) = TM 27203 preserves the order to a poulterer: Θώνι ὀρνειθᾶ. | δὲ εἰς παράστα-σιν | στρατηγοῦ ὀρνειθ(ας) (l. ὀρνιθ(ας)) δ | δραχμῶν δέκα (ll. 1–4) ‘to Thonis poulterer. Provide for the visit of the strategos 4 fowls at ten drachmae’ (transl. Hunt). Similar in nature is P.Oxy. VIII 1133 (396–397 CE) = TM 21750, a receipt for the price of some fruit sold by a grower to a dealer: Αὐρήλιος Ἰωάννης Σαρμάτου πωμαρίτης ἀφ’ Ἡρακλέως | πόλεως κατ[α]γινόμενος νῦν ἐ[π’] ἐποικίου Νύσου (l. Νήσου) Λιμενίου | ἀπὸ πρινπιλαρίων (l. πριμιπιλαρίων) Αὐρηλίῳ Ἀρτεμιδώρῳ Καλόπου | ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀρσενοειτον (l. Ἀρσινοειτῶν) πόλ[εως] κατ[α]γινόμενον (l. καταγινόμενον) ἐν τῇ λαμπρᾷ | καὶ λαμπροτάτῃ Ὀξυρυγχ[χειτῶν] πόλει ὁπωροπόλῃ (l. ὁπωροπόλῃ) χαίρειν (ll. 3–7) ‘Aurelius John son of Sarmates, fruit-gardener of Herakleopolis, now living at the village of Nesus Limenius, ex-primipilarius, to Aurelius Artemidorus, son of Calopus, of Arsinoiton polis, living at the illustrious and most illustrious city of Oxyrhynchus, fruit-dealer, greeting’ (transl. Hunt).

In the aforementioned types of documents, the occupational designations are related to the economic activities and transactions

described. When it comes to the use of occupational titles for the purposes of personal identification, we can turn to petitions, where petitioners mention not only their names but also their occupations and their provenance, as a way of identification. As Benjamin Kelly notes, 'In a society in which men used only a single name and a patronymic and many people in a particular village or town had similar names, the precise designation of occupation and domicile would contribute to a person's identification' (Kelly 2011, 153). Most of these documents start with the name of the official addressed and are followed by the name of the sender, their domicile, and sometimes their occupation (Kelly 2011, 47).⁸ For example, in P.Eirene I 5 (I CE) = TM 79304, a petition submitted by a builder, we read: *παρὰ Ζωίλου τοῦ Θ[έωνος οἰκοδόμου* (l. 2) 'from Zoilos, son of Theon, builder'. The occupation of the petitioner is also mentioned in the narration of their story if it is related to the complaint submitted to the authorities. Since female petitioners are fewer than male ones, we do not find many female occupations attested in petitions (Kelly 2011, 229–42).

Personal identification also plays a role in private contracts, like lease and sale contracts (Langellotti 2017, 155). P.Oxy. VII 1038 (568 CE) = TM 20333 records a lease of a ground floor room of a house and constitutes an illustrative example of formal identification in everyday economic transactions: *Αὐρήλιος | Στέφανος ἄρτοκ(όπος) υἱὸς Ἑρακλάμμωνο(ς) | μητρ(ὸς) Νόννας ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς | πόλεως χαίρειν* (ll. 13–16) 'Aurelius Stephanus, baker, son of Heraclammon and Nonna, of the same city greeting' (transl. Hunt). Professions could constitute part of an individual's identity, particularly in cases of local communities in which most of the people were recognised by their job.

While in Roman times most divorce contracts do not mention the parties' occupations, in Late Antique Egypt it is common practice that divorce settlements and other private legal documents (for example, agreements, settlements of disputes) include information about the professions of the parties as a way of identification and to make these texts appear more formal. To judge from the majority of such documents preserved, we can assume that the mention of an individual's occupation was not compulsory. However, various separation agreements record the husband's job or both spouses' jobs. In some of these cases, the husband and his wife practise the same profession and both contribute to the domestic economy in an almost equal way, cf. P.Nekr. 34 (305–306 CE) = TM 22632: *Αὐρήλιος Σοῦλις νεκροτάφος ἀπὸ*

το[πα]ρχίας Κύσε[ως] | Σενψάις (l. Σενψάιτι) θυγατρὸς (l. θυγατρί) Ψάιτος ἐκ μητρὸς Τεοῦς (l. Τεοῦτος) νεκροταφίς[σα] | ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς χαίρειν (ll. 1–3): ‘Aurelius Soulis, nekrotaphos from the toparchy of Kysis, to Senpsais daughter of Psais, her mother Teous, nekrotaphissa, from the same toparchy, greetings’ (transl. Bagnall).⁹

As can be seen, occupational designations mostly occur in formal text types, where the need for identification (of whatever type) is the greatest. Intriguingly, in informal text types such as private and business letters, we also come across details about the economic activities and everyday occupations practised by the correspondents, a matter which we will discuss at greater length in Subsection 13.4.3.

13.3 Occupations in the Everyday Writing corpus

Previous, lexicographical studies have mostly listed occupations on the basis of morphological endings: Loisa Casarico, for example, first published a ‘repertorio di nomi di mestieri’, focusing specifically on occupations ending in -πώλης and -πράτης (Casarico 1983), which has been updated multiple times by Hans-Joachim Drexhage, Johannes Diethart, and Kai Ruffing, who also took into account newer editions of papyrological sources, as well as other types of corpora, such as literary texts and inscriptions (see Section 13.1 for relevant studies). Similar work has been done for other types of morphological formations, such as occupations ending in -ᾶς (see Drexhage 2004b, who takes into account literary, papyrological, and epigraphical sources).

There have been other approaches to collecting occupational designations as well, which are less morphologically oriented: Hans-Joachim Drexhage, for example, has published a ‘preliminary’ list of all occupations found in literary sources (Drexhage 2004a), which he first organises alphabetically but then regroups in ten thematically organised categories.¹⁰ One can also mention the work of Micaela Langellotti (2017, 171–80), which lists in an appendix all occupations found in two archives (the Nemesion and Kronion archives), as well as in three census lists from Philadelphia (P.Lond. II 257–59), also specifying the number of occurrences and the document type, among others (for more general discussion of professions, see e.g. Bagnall 1993, 68–99; Lewis 1983, 134–55).

In what follows, we present the ‘everyday’ occupations that we retrieved in the Everyday Writing corpus on the basis of some larger

occupational classes. By ‘everyday’ occupations, we mean here those occupations that do not belong to the military, official, or religious spheres. We recognise the following classes:

- *agricultural workers*: occupations related to agriculture, including the capture and care of animals (e.g. farmers, hunters, fishermen);
- *landowners*: separated from the category of agricultural workers to refer to villagers and urban residents owning land without necessarily also working on that land;
- *craftsmen and tradesmen*: occupations related to the production and processing of specific materials such as foodstuff, construction, or textiles (e.g. weavers, carpenters, builders);
- *liberal professions*: occupations that provide services on the basis of intellectual skills achieved by at least some amount of schooling (e.g. bankers, managers, notaries, teachers, lawyers);
- *other service providers*: occupations that provide services other than those provided by liberal professions, in other words, occupations that are not based on a specific set of intellectual skills (e.g. watchmen, doorkeepers);
- *actors, musicians and athletes*: occupations that provide entertainment.

In what follows, we briefly discuss each of these occupational groups, with the exception of landowners, which are a relatively homogeneous group.¹¹ We focus in particular on the different types of occupations that we find in each of our broader categories, the social contexts in which these occupations can be found, and whether any morphological patterns can be discerned.

13.3.1 *Agricultural workers*

Given that agriculture was Egypt’s largest economic sector, it should not come as a surprise that agricultural occupations are particularly well attested in our corpus. Farmers form, as noted by Langelotti (2017, 150), the most popular occupation, with some distinction between different types of farmers,¹² such as δημόσιος γεωργός (public farmer), ἐναπόγραφος γεωργός (tied tenant), and μισθωτής (tenant farmer). Besides farmers, we find various occupations that are related to the growing and tending of plants and trees, such as ἀμπελουργός

(vine-dresser), κηπουρός (gardener), πωμαρίτης (fruit-gardener), and θεριστής (mower).

Under agricultural workers, we also include occupations that relate to the hunting of animals, such as ἀγρευτής and κυνηγός, both meaning ‘hunter’, and ἄλιεύς (fisherman). Occupations that relate to the tending of animals include βουκόλος (herdsman), χοιροβοσκός (swineherd), μελισσοουργός (beekeeper), ποιμήν (shepherd), and ὀρνεοτρόφος (poultry farmer). Our corpus also contains some references to agricultural workers taking a leading role, such as πιττακιάρχης (main leaser of public land) and φροντιστής κηπουρός (superintendent of the garden).

References to agricultural occupations mostly occur in contracts in the Everyday Writing corpus, in particular lease contracts, which are, of course, predominantly linked to farmers. Contracts of sale, loan, and surety also play a role, though less so. The same can be said of letters and petitions. In all text types, agricultural workers predominantly have the role of ‘initiator’, that is, they undertake the communicative act (such as engaging in a lease).

In terms of word formation, compounding with the lexical stems -ουργος, -τροφος, -βοσκος is noticeable in a variety of occupational terms, where the second term typically denotes the person undertaking an action based on the underlying verbal stem, and the first term the object of that action (so ὀρνεοτρόφος is the person who feeds/nourishes [τρέφω] poultry [ὄρνις] etc.).¹³ Agent nouns in -της that are derived from underlying verbs constitute another common type of formation (θεριστής is the person who mows [θερίζω], ἀγρευτής is the person who hunts [ἀγρεύω], etc.). Less common are agent nouns in -ευσ based on underlying nouns (ἄλιεύς is the person who works on the sea [ἄλς]), or in -ας and -ην (as with ποιμήν and κραμπιτᾶς; κραμπιτᾶς is further discussed in Subsection 13.3.6).

13.3.2 Craftsmen and tradesmen

As Langelotti notes (2017, 151), Egypt’s economy was not limited to farming and pastoralism, a wide variety of crafts and trades being attested too, particularly in an urban environment.¹⁴ These can be connected to the production and distribution of goods. Three areas that are particularly relevant in this regard, both in terms of production and distribution, are food, construction, and textiles (Bagnall 1993, 78).¹⁵

Various occupations are attested in the Everyday Writing corpus that are related to the securing and processing of food. Different types of bakers can be distinguished, such as ἀρτοκόπος (baker), βουκ(κ)ᾶς (confectioner), καθαρουργός (baker of fine bread), κλιβανεύς/κριβανεύς (baker), μάγκιψ (baker), and παστιλλᾶς (confectioner); similarly, various types of butchers can be distinguished, such as χοιρομάγειρος (pork butcher), χοιροσκόπτης (pork butcher), and αἰγ(ι)οθύτης (goat butcher). In the area of construction, our corpus mostly contains references to builders, carpenters, and stonemasons,¹⁶ including occupations such as ἀλαβαστρωνίτης (alabaster stonemason), (ἱερο)τέκτων ((temple) carpenter), λαοτόμος (stonemason), λαοζόος (stonemason), οἰκοδόμος (builder), πλινθευτής (brickmaker), and μυλοκόπος (millstone cutter).¹⁷ When it comes to the third area of production, the textile industry, a broad range of occupations in our corpus is related to various stages of textile production, such as βαφεύς (dyer), γέρδιος (weaver), γναφεύς (carder), καυνακοπλόκος (furrier), κογχιστής (dyer), κτηνιστής (wool-carder), λινούφος (weaver), ποικιλτής (embroider, pattern-weaver), στιπποκογχιστής (purple dyer), στιππουργός (linen fabrics weaver), ταπητάριος (carpet weaver), ταρσικάριος (weaver of Tarsus cloth), and ῥάπτης (tailor).

Other materials-based crafts that are not included under food, construction, and textiles, and of which relevant occupations are included in our corpus, include *leatherworking*, *metalworking*, *pottery*, *woodworking*, and *glassworking* (see Bagnall 1993, 84–85). Metalworking-related occupations in particular are well attested in our corpus, including material-related (rather than product-related; Bagnall 1993, 84)¹⁸ occupational references such as ἀργυροκόπος (silversmith), χαλκεύς (bronzesmith), χαλκοτύπος (coppersmith), χρυσοχόος (goldsmith), μολυβουργός (leadworker), and σιδηροχαλκεύς (ironsmith). Other occupations include καλικάριος (= καλιγάριος?) (bootmaker), σκυτεύς (shoemaker), κεραμεύς (potter), κεραμοπλάστης (potter), κουφοκεραμεύς (potter of wine jars), and ὑαλουργός (glassworker). Bagnall (1993, 85) notes a fundamental difference between these industries and the textile industry, in the sense that

the cities of Middle and Upper Egypt best known from the papyri all had flourishing textile industries ... at least some of which produced on a substantial scale for export. No other industry can be shown on

present evidence to have such a role; the remaining industries seem to have served local needs.

As for the distribution of goods, Bagnall notes that, to a large extent, 'production and marketing were united in the same establishments' (Bagnall 1993, 87), craftsmen also selling their own products. That being said, in the cities many things that were not produced there, especially related to food and drink, were also sold. Here one notes a high degree of specialisation: 'poultry is sold by one merchant ... fish by another, meat by the appropriate butchers. Vegetables are sold by one vender, fruit by another. Various sellers carried lentils and beans of various sorts. Merchants in oil, wine, beer, and condiments complete the normal range, though others can be found' (Bagnall 1993, 87). Apart from sellers of foodstuffs, there were also other types of merchants, like those connected to the textile industry, or animal dealers. Relevant occupational terms from our corpus include ἀνθυλλοπράτισσα (seller of flowers), ἐλαιοπώλης (male seller of oil) and ἐλαιοπώλισσα (female seller of oil), ἐλαιοπράτης (male seller of oil) and ἐλαιοπράτισσα (female seller of oil), ἐριοπώλης (seller of wool), ἱματιοπράτης (cloth merchant), κυμινοπώλης (cumin seller), λαχανευτής (greengrocer), λαχανοπώλης (greengrocer), λαχανοπράτης (greengrocer), λινέμπορος (flax merchant), ὀθονιακός (linen merchant), οἰνέμπορος (wine merchant), οἶνοπράτης (wine merchant), ὀρβιοπώλης (vetch-seller), ὀρنيθᾶς (poulterer), ὀπωροπώλης (fruit-dealer), φαρμακοπώλης (pharmacist), φοινικοπώλης (date-seller), πορφυροπώλης (dealer in purple), and ταριχοπράτισσα (female pickle seller). General terms that refer to merchants include ἔμπορος (merchant), κάπηλος (shopkeeper), and πραγματευτής (merchant).

Similarly to agricultural workers, craftsmen and tradesmen occur predominantly in contracts in the Everyday Writing corpus: lease contracts are the dominant type with this occupational class, too. Contracts of sale and loan are well attested, too, as are contracts of apprenticeship, which we typically find for textile workers.¹⁹ Compared to agricultural workers, craftsmen and tradesmen appear more often as receivers in letters, which may be related to higher degrees of literacy and/or a higher need to communicate information, make requests, etc. They can be found as initiators of petitions, too, making various sorts of complaints. In the documents that we have, reference is sometimes made to craftsmen and tradesmen functioning as headmen

(presidents) of their guilds:²⁰ this is particularly noticeable in P.Cair. Masp. III 67283 (547 CE) = TM 18420, a petition from the inhabitants of Aphroditto to the empress Theodora against the intrigues of the pagarch of Antaiopolis, which is signed by, among others, the κεφαλαιωτῆς τῶν τεκτόνων (headman of carpenters), the κεφαλαιωτῆς τῶν καυνακοπλόκων (headman of furriers), and the κεφαλαιωτῆς τῶν πακτονοποιῶν (headman of shipwrights). In other documents, we find references to a πρωταυράριος (head of the guilds of the goldsmiths) and an ἐργαστηριάρχης (foreman of a workshop).

As with agricultural workers, occupation terms for craftsmen and tradesmen are often formed by compounding a noun with a verbal lexical stem, with the noun forming the object of the verbal action. Best studied are -πώλης (πωλέω, sell) and -πρατής (πράττω, transact) compounds, but a variety of other types can be mentioned too, including compounds in -γραφος (γράφω, write), -δομος (δομάω/δέμω, construct), -θυτης (θύω, offer), -κοπος (κόπτω, cut), -ξοος (ξέω, carve), -ουργος (ἔργω, do work), -πηγος (πήγνυμι, fix in), -πλαστης (πλάσσω, form), -πλοκος (πλέκω, knit), -ποιος (ποιέω, produce), -τομος (τέμνω, cut), -τυπος (τυπόω, stamp), and -χοος (χέω, smelt) (e.g. χρυσοχόος, the person who melts or casts [χέω] gold [χρυσός]). There are some compounds that are formed on the basis of two nominal stems, as with ἱεροτέκτων (temple-carpenter), λινέμπορος (flax merchant), οἰνέμπορος (wine merchant), κουφοκεραμεύς (potter of wine jars), and σιδηροχαλκεύς (ironsmith). One can note that in these cases the first part of the compound word typically provides a subtype of the general category specified by the second part (e.g. κουφοκεραμεύς, the potter [κεραμεύς] that makes wine jars [κοῦφον]). Reference can also be made to agent nouns in -της and -εως: the former tend to have a verbal base (ποικιλτής 'embroiderer' from ποικίλλω 'embroider') and the latter a nominal base (e.g. κεραμεύς 'potter' from κέραμος 'potter's clay, pottery'), though the distinction is not absolute (e.g. γναφεύς 'carder' from κνάπτω 'card or comb wool', βαφεύς 'dyer' from βάπτω 'dip', 'dye'). One can also note a limited number of agent nouns in -ας (ὄρνιθας, poulterer; βουκκάς, confectioner), a suffix that became popular in Late Antiquity to denote the maker or seller of something. Finally, mention can be made of formations in -αριος and -ιακος to denote the person handling certain types of materials (as with ὀθονιακός, linen merchant; ταπητάριος, carpet weaver; and ταρσικάριος, weaver of Tarsus cloth).²¹

13.3.3 *Liberal professions*

Besides production and distribution, a good deal of the (urban) working population was involved in providing services of different kinds. In the Everyday Writing database, we separate 'liberal professions' from other types of services (including entertainment), based on the view that the former require at least some degree of learning.²²

One such group of literate workers is related to the administration, whether the imperial administration and city government, or the management of urban landowners' estates (Bagnall 1993, 91–92). One can think of various types of managers and secretaries such as the ἀντιγεοῦχος (landlord's agent), διοικητής (administrator), ἐπικτηνίτης (junior manager), ἐπιμελητής (steward), ἐπιστάτης (supervisor), ἐπίτροπος (steward/administrator), μειζότερος (person in charge of the household's supplies), οἰκονόμος (general administrator), παραλήμπτης (estate manager), πραγματεύς (estate manager), προεστώς (superintendent of estate), προνοητής (manager of an estate), σκρινιάριος (secretary, associated with official/administrative offices), and φροντιστής (manager). It is unclear what degree of learning each of these occupations needed, an issue which we will go no further into here.

A second major group of liberal professions is related to 'operations of documentation, recordkeeping, education and the law' (Bagnall 1993, 91), including various types of scribes and notaries: attested in the Everyday Writing corpus are occupations such as γραμματεύς (secretary, clerk), νομικός (lawyer, notary), νομογράφος (notary), νοτάριος (notary), σκρίβας (secretary), σημειογράφος (shorthand writer), συμβολαιογράφος (notary), συναλλαγματογράφος (notary), ταβελλίων (*tabellio*), ταβουλάριος (official clerk), and ταχυγράφος (shorthand writer). To the same group belong different types of teachers, such as γραμματικός (school teacher), γραμματοδιδάσκαλος (teacher of letters), διδάσκαλος (teacher); and lawyers and public speakers, referred to as δικολόγος (pleader, advocate), νομικάριος (lawyer), συνήγορος (advocate), σχολαστικός (lawyer), and ῥήτωρ (rhetorician). Under liberal professions, one can also include a number of other professions, such as doctors (ἰατρός), veterinarians (ἵπποιατρός), architects (ἀρχιτέκτων), and engineers (μηχανάριος). Another group that may be mentioned here, though it seems to have affinities both with our 'craftsmen/tradesmen' (see Subsection 13.3.2) and 'other service providers' (see

Subsection 13.3.4), is related to banking and the collecting and lending of money: this includes occupations such as *τραπεζίτης* (banker), and the somewhat less common *ἀργυροπράτης* (moneylender).²³

Similarly to our previous two occupational classes, liberal professions are well attested in contracts, particularly lease contracts, and in second instance contracts of loan and sale. In many of the cases, however, liberal professions are related to the role of scribe, rather than that of initiator, receiver, or witness, which is understandable, given the importance of the subgroup of liberal professions related to recordkeeping, documentation, and the law. Another major difference in terms of textual distribution is the very frequent appearance of liberal professions in letters, which is also unsurprising given the key importance of epistolary communication for this occupational class, in particular managers of various sorts, both as initiator and receiver. Petitions, too, are attested for this class, though less so than contracts and letters.

Morphologically speaking, there are some noticeable differences between our liberal professions and previously discussed occupational classes, in particular the lesser importance of compounding, which can be related to the fact that liberal professions often do not have the same type of concrete object as our other occupational classes. One can nevertheless note the use of *-λογος*, *-νομος*, *-πρατης*, *-τροπος*, and particularly *-γραφος*. Derivational word formation processes have much greater importance, in particular the use of *-της* as a suffix for agent nouns, which is common for liberal professions related to administration. As observed above, such agent nouns are typically formed on a verbal base, though not always (e.g. *ἐπικτηνίτης*, formed with the preposition *ἐπί* and *κτηνος*, pl. 'beasts', similarly *τραπεζίτης*, from the nominal base *τράπεζα* 'bank'). Other common suffixes for agent nouns in this occupational class are *-ος*, *-ευς*, *-ων* and *-ωρ*. As with craftsmen and tradesmen, we encounter endings in *-αριος* (e.g. *μηχανάριος*), as well as in *-ικος* (e.g. *γραμματικός*).²⁴

13.3.4 Other service providers

When it comes to other types of services (that is, services that require a lesser degree of education), Bagnall notes that 'probably the largest group of service workers was that in transportation' (Bagnall 1993, 88), the first place going to Nile shipping (transport of grain taxes and

exports). Some transportation-related occupations that are attested in our corpus include κυβερνήτης (skipper), ναύκληρος (captain, commander), ναύτης (sailor), ναυκληροκυβερνήτης (pilot of a ναυκλήριον), πορθμεύς (ferryman, boatman), and πολυκωπίτης (skipper of a ship with many oars). Besides river transportation, there was also transportation using animals, including 'the transportation of tax wheat to the ports, the transportation of food to the metropolis, and a good deal of personal travel' (Bagnall 1993, 89). Occupations that are attested in our corpus include καμηλάτης (camel-driver), ὄνηλάτης (donkey-driver), and ζευγηλάτης (driver of a yoke of oxen). Some occupations relate to specific types of transport, such as παρεμβάλλουσα (olive-carrier),²⁵ ὑδροπάροχος (water supplier), and ὄνθομετάφορος (dung transporter).

Bagnall recognises a number of other types of service workers, too, such as those who provided personal care services, including barbers and hairdressers, bath attendants, prostitutes, undertakers, and wet-nurses, with doctors and veterinarians at the upper end of the scale.²⁶ As noted in Subsection 13.3.3, we have included doctors and veterinarians under our 'liberal professions'; there is some evidence for other occupations related to personal care in our corpus, though. Relevant occupations include κουρεύς (barber), βαλανεύς (bath-man), ἔνταφιαστής (undertaker, embalmer), νεκροτάφος (corpse transporter), πανδοχεύς (inn-keeper), πλυσιμάριος (laundryman), and τροφός (wet-nurse). Assistants and agents could be mentioned here, too, though they could alternatively be grouped under our 'liberal professions'; this includes such occupations as βοηθός (assistant), ὑπουργός (assistant, servant), συνεσταμένος (agent), and στιπποχειριστής (agent of tow-merchants).

Another group of other service providers includes the security personnel of public and private establishments, including watchmen, guards, doorkeepers, and the like (Bagnall 1993, 90). There is limited evidence of such occupations in our corpus: relevant occupations include ὀνοφύλαξ (ass-keeper) and σύμμαχος (armed guard).

In terms of written documentation, other service providers are mostly attested in contracts in the Everyday Writing corpus, in particular contracts of lease, loan, and sale, parallel to what we noted for our other occupational classes. They are attested in other types of contracts, too, such as contracts of work and surety. They mainly appear as contracting parties in these texts. Other service providers also appear

as initiators and receivers in epistolary communication, mostly to discuss business-related affairs. They are found in a limited number of petitions.

When it comes to word formation, compounding plays a less prominent role for other service providers than it does for agricultural workers and craftsmen/tradesmen, which forms a parallel to our liberal professions. One can note, however, (complex) compounds in -ελατης (from ἐλαύνω, to drive away, with καμηλάτης as a short form of καμηλ-ελάτης), -παροχος (from παρέχω, to provide, supply), -μεταφορος (from μεταφέρω, to transfer, transport), -ταφος (from θάπτω, to bury), and -φυλαξ (from φυλάσσω, to guard, protect), with the second part of the compound form denoting the person undertaking an action, of which the first part of the compound forms the object. Besides these compounds, the dominant word formation pattern is the use of the derivational suffixes -της, -ος, and -ευς. As observed before, -της forms tend to have a verbal base (e.g. κυβερνήτης as the person who steers, from κυβερνάω), and -ευς forms a nominal base (e.g. πορθμεύς as the person crossing the πορθμός 'narrow sea, strait'), but some exceptions can be noted (e.g. ναύτης, which is based on ναῦς 'ship'). -ος forms, too, tend to be derived from a verbal base, in the -o grade (e.g. τροφός from τρέφω 'I nourish'). One can also note the limited occurrence of the adjectival suffix -αριος, and of participial forms to denote occupations (such as παρεμβάλλουσα, συνεσταμένος).²⁷

13.3.5 Actors, musicians, athletes

In his overview of urban professions, Bagnall briefly mentions what he calls 'entertainers', the best-known group of which is connected to chariot-racing, including charioteers, chariot-builders, trainers, veterinarians, and grooms. In our corpus, too, ἡνίοχος (charioteer) is attested, as is σταβλίτης (horse-trainer). Reference is also made to wrestlers (παγκρατιαστής); besides the generic ἀθλητής (combatant in the games), we also find references to people who have been victorious in specific contexts, such as the ἱερονίκης (conquerer in the sacred games), ὀλυμπιονίκης (conquerer in the Olympic games), and καπιτωλιονίκης (conquerer in the Capitolia). Other occupations situated in the athletic sphere are ἀλείπτης (trainer), ξυστάρχης (president of an athletic association), and ἀγωνοδίκης (umpire, judge of a game).

Besides athletes, actors and musicians (including dancers) form a second major category of entertainers (see Bagnall 1993, 92). The occupational references that we find are mostly instrument-based, including αὐλητής (flute player) and πρωταύλης (chief flute player). People using their verbal skills for entertainment include the βιολόγος (actor), Ὀμηριστής (rhapsode), and παντόμιμος (pantomimic actor).

The textual distribution of actors, musicians, and athletes is more or less evenly split between contracts, petitions, and letters, contracts being slightly more often attested, in particular contracts of work, which can be connected to the nature of this occupational class, which needs to engage itself. Athletes are also found on various occasions in our corpus requesting their rights through petitions and letters.

In terms of word formation, apart from various types of compounds in -αρχης (from ἄρχω, to rule), -νικης (from νικάω, to conquer), -λογος (from λέγω, to speak), and -οχος (from ἔχω, to have, hold), the dominant word formation pattern for this occupational group are agent nouns in -της, derived both from verbal and nominal bases (e.g. σταβλίτης from στάβλον 'posting station', but ἀλείπτης from ἀλείφω 'to anoint, prepare').

13.3.6 Some uncertain occupations

Before discussing how occupational designations can be studied from a variationist point of view, it is worth briefly discussing a number of occupational designations the meaning of which is to a greater or lesser extent uncertain. These include κραμπιτᾶς, βουκκᾶς, μάγκιψ, and μεθλίτης.

κραμπιτᾶς

Κραμπιτᾶς (κραμβιτᾶς) is a very rare term which appears in a papyrus document and three Late Antique inscriptions. In the divorce contract P.Cair. Masp. II 67153 (568 CE) = TM 18907, the husband is designated as κραμπιτᾶς: † Αὐρήλιος Μη[νᾶς υ]ῖος Ὁρουωνγί(ο)υ, ἐ[κ μη]τρὸς Τσίας κραμπιτᾶς, | [ἀπ]ὸ τῆς Ἀντι(νοέων) πόλε(ως) (ll. 4–5) 'Aurelius Menas son of Horouonchis, his mother being Tsia, *krampitās*, from the city of Antinoopolis'.²⁸ There is no other papyrological attestation of this occupation, and as a result we cannot be sure about the economic activities involved. However, we should consider that the word

κράμβη/κραμβίον,²⁹ which denotes cabbage, is very common in papyri from the Hellenistic and Roman period;³⁰ hence, one can think of a meaning ‘cabbage seller’,³¹ with κραμπιτᾶς perhaps being a reduced form of κραμβιτάριος (as suggested by Ruffing 2008, 610). Κραμπιτᾶς/κραμβιτᾶς appears to be formed with the stem of the noun κράμβη and the suffix -ᾶς, which is very common as ending of various occupations in Byzantine period, cf. πλακουντᾶς (maker of cakes), ταπιτᾶς/ταπητᾶς (carpet weaver), ἀρτυματᾶς (dealer in condiments).³²

Three Late Antique inscriptions give testimony to this everyday occupation in the Greek world, cf. IG IV².3 1465 (Corinth, VI CE) 1–3: +μνημῖον | Ἰωάννου | κραμβιτᾶ + (ll. 1–3) ‘tomb of Ioannes the cabbage seller’; VIII.3 563.1–2 (Corinth, 267–668 CE): Ἰωάννου | κραμβιτᾶ. + (ll. 1–2) ‘(tomb) of Ioannes the cabbage seller’; ArchEph (1929) 151 (Fthiotides Thebes, V CE?): + ἔνθα κατάκτε ὁ τῆς εὐλαβοῦς | μνήμης Πέτρος ἀν|αγνώστης {ἀναγνώστης} καὶ ἡ σύν|βιος αὐτοῦ Ἑρίνη {Εἰρήνη} ἔχον {ἔχων} τὴν μέθοδον {μέθοδον} κραν|βιτᾶς {κραμβιτᾶς} + (l. 1–7) ‘there lie Peter the reader of discreet memory and his wife Eirene whose profession was cabbage seller’.

βουκ(κ)ᾶς

Βουκ(κ)ᾶς appears in Stud.Pal. XX 148 (VII CE) = TM 36582: Γεωργίῳ υἱῷ Ἠλείᾳ βουκκᾶ | ἀφ’ Ἡρακλεουσπόλεως χ(αίρειν) (ll. 4–5) and probably in the list P.Bad. II 31 (IV CE) = TM 33128 (l. 21).³³ The suffix -ᾶς, as also noted above, designated hypocoristics in the classical period and turned out to be very common in Modern Greek. Among other things, the suffix denotes the maker or seller of something (Palmer 1945, 49–50). Βουκ(κ)ᾶς could be derived from βουκ(κ)ίον/βουκία ‘biscuit’ (cf. Lampe and Liddell 1961 s.v.), which stems from Latin *bucca* (cf. the diminutive *bucella* ‘small loaf’) and designates the maker of biscuits, thus confectioner or baker.³⁴

μάγκιψ

In the divorce contract P.Flor. I 93 (569 CE) = TM 23587 and its duplicate P.Lond. V 1713 = TM 19730 the occupational designation μάγκιψ is added for the male party: ἐκ μὲν τοῦ ἐνὸς μέρους Αὐρήλιος | Θεόδωρος υἱὸς Γεωργίου ἐκ μητρὸς Νόγγας μίσθιος | μάγκιψ ὁρμώμενος ἀπὸ ταύτ[ης] τῆς καλλ[ιτ]όλ(εως) Ἀντινοέω(ν) (ll. 9–11) ‘On the one

part Aurelius Theodoros, son of Georgios, from the mother Nonna, hired baker, hailing from the fair city of Antinoopolis' (transl. in APIS). The term is a Latin borrowing and originates from Latin *manceps*. In Greek authors, μάγκιψ is described as a kind of *praepositus pistorum*, cf. Socr. Sch. *HE* 5.18.3: Ἦσαν ἐξ ἀρχαίου κατὰ τὴν μεγίστην Ῥώμην οἴκοι παμμεγέθεις, ἐν οἷς ὁ τῇ πόλει χορηγούμενος ἄρτος ἐγίνετο, οἱ τε προϊστάμενοι τούτων, οἱ μάγκιπες τῇ Ῥωμαίων γλώσσει καλοῦνται, προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου ληστήρια τοὺς οἴκους πεποιήντο 'there were buildings of immense magnitude, erected in ancient Rome in former times, in which bread was made for distribution among the people. Those who had the charge of these edifices, who were called Mancipes in the Latin language, in process of time converted them into receptacles for thieves' (transl. Zenos). Greek renderings include μάγκιψ, μάγκυψ, and μάγκηψ.

Manceps derives from the word *mancipio*, and its first meaning is an acquirer or purchaser of a thing by the form of conveyance. Smith (1859, 726) mentions that they were those 'who bid at the public lettings of the censors for the purpose of farming any part of the public property'. *LSJ Suppl.* defines μάγκιψ as contractor, while in *LBG manceps* denotes the baker. Among various meanings, the word was gradually used to denote a person who purchases or hires a thing at a public auction. In some cases, *manceps* was considered as a manager of a public bakery, cf. Codex Theodosianus 14.16.2. If we accept it as a synonym of ἀρτοκόπος, as suggested by Battaglia (1989, 190) and Ruffing (2008, 655–56), it would mean the baker of common bread.³⁵ Christian texts of the Byzantine period associate the occupation of *manceps* with bakery, cf. for example Cyril, *Vita Sabae* p. 89, 21–22: αὐτῶν δὲ τὸν φούρνον ὑποκαίωντων ὑπομνησθεῖς ὁ μάγκιψ καὶαραχθεῖς περὶ τῶν ἱματίων μεγάλης φλογὸς γενομένης καὶ μηδενὸς εἰσελθεῖν τολμῶντος μεγάλου ὄντος τοῦ φούρνου 'As they were heating the oven, the baker remembered his clothes and was distressed about them, since the fire was now intense and no one dared to enter the oven, which was large' (transl. Price); John Lydus, *De Mensibus* 4.43: Οἱ δὲ μάγγιπες, οἷονεὶ τεχνῖται τοῦ ἀνδραποδώδους ἄρτου, ἔπεμπον τοῖς ἐν λόγῳ Ῥωμυλίας ἀνῶνας 'And the bakers, being the makers of servile [i.e. coarse] bread, would send "Romulian provisions" to those of high repute' (transl. Hooker).³⁶ The term also appears in inscriptions from Roman and early Byzantine Asia Minor (cf. MAMA III 242, 492; see also Ruffing 2008, 656). The female μαγκίπισσα, which is not attested

in the papyri, appears in Origenes *Hexapla*, I Reg. VIII 13 (cf. Battaglia 1989, 189) and in Byzantine texts from the twelfth century.³⁷

μεθλίτης

Μεθλίτης is another uncommon occupation attested in papyri from the fifth to the seventh century CE: SB XII 11003 (IV/V CE) = TM 32610: μεθλίτε (l. μεθλίται) λί(τρα) α (l. 7); SB XXIV 16288 (600 CE) = TM 41325: Αὐρήλιοι{ς} | Φοιβάμμων υἱὸς Μακαρίου καὶ ἕτερος Φοιβάμμων | ὁ καὶ Πεβᾶς υἱὸς Σαμβᾶ μεθλίται ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς πόλεως (ll. 6–8) ‘From Aurelii Phoibammon, son of Makarios, and the other Phoibammon alias Pebas, son of Sambas, sheep farmers from the same city’. Although there exist several attestations of this occupation, the term is not clear and we cannot be sure about its etymology. We come across the variants μεθ(ε)λίτης (cf. SPP III 12, TM 37528) and μεθλιτάριος (cf. SB I 4858, TM 114238). It is possible that the noun denotes ‘sheep farmer’ or ‘sheep slaughterer’, on the basis of the entry μέθλην-τὸν ἄρνα in Hesychius’ dictionary (cf. Hesychius M 555, ed. Latte).³⁸ The term could be associated with the verb μεθέλκω (‘draw to the side’) or μεθαιρέω (‘catch in turn’).

13.4 A historical sociolinguistic approach to occupation terms

Ancient historians tend to refer to ethnicity as a key factor of social identity (class), distinguishing for Roman Egypt, for instance, between Roman citizens, the citizens of the Greek cities of Egypt, and Egyptians (see e.g. Vandorpe 2012, 262–65). At the same time, scholarship has recognised the need to provide a more comprehensive account of identity,³⁹ which also recognises other social factors such as gender, age, social status, and profession.⁴⁰ Clarysse and Thompson, for example, have stressed the key importance of occupational class for ancient identity in their study of Ptolemaic tax registers:

Group membership offered more than the need to pay certain taxes. It was through their membership of an [occupational group] that most in Egypt found a livelihood, their partners, their neighbours and friends, support in life as in death. The [occupational group] formed a basic

social unit in the multifarious lives of the people; it played a significant communal role and for its members provided a key focus of identity.⁴¹

In line with sociolinguistic studies that emphasise the key role of occupation for social class and status,⁴² historical sociolinguistic scholarship, too, has started to draw more attention to occupations, and how linguistic variables such as features of clause combining are related to them (see e.g. Bentein 2015, 2017).

In what follows, we want to approach the matter from an alternative point of view, and look at occupation terms as a ‘variant field’ itself, one that is sensitive to linguistic variation, instead of using occupation as a metadata category to which other (linguistic) variables can be related. As space is limited here, we want to briefly touch upon three issues which we consider particularly relevant and intriguing: (i) the extent to which there is synchronic and diachronic change in occupation terms (Subsection 13.4.1); (ii) the extent to which there was gender differentiation in occupational references (Subsection 13.4.2); and (iii) the factors that motivate employment of an occupational reference in informal letter writing (Subsection 13.4.3).

13.4.1 Synchronic variation and diachronic change

In Section 13.3 we have seen that, particularly within the occupational class of ‘craftsmen and tradesmen’, a large number of occupations existed, some of which seem to (partially) overlap, at least to the modern eye: we can mention again, for example, the many different types of bakers that we find in our corpus, including ἀρτοκόπος, βουκ(κ)ᾶς, καθαρουργός, κλιβανεύς/κριβανεύς, μάγκιψ, and παστιλλᾶς. This high number of craftsmen and tradesmen has generally been taken as an indicator of ‘occupational specialisation’, which in turn is interpreted as a reflection of a developed economy (see in particular Ruffing 2002, 2008). Against this view, other scholars have suggested that the occupational terms that we have may not necessarily reflect a high degree of specialisation, but that we may in fact be dealing with synonyms.⁴³ To verify whether we are, indeed, dealing with terms that are roughly semantically equivalent but carry different sociolinguistic indexicalities (high- vs low-register variants, regional variants, etc.), one would need to engage in in-depth lexicographical study. At least for our bakers, there does, in fact seem to be some degree of specialisation (e.g. in

terms of product/baking technique), but for other professions this may be less the case: one can contrast, for example, *λαοτόμος* and *λαοζόος*, both meaning 'stonemason', though being formed with a different suffix (-τομος, from *τέμνω*, to cut, vs -ζοος, from *ξέω* to carve); similarly, one can contrast *κεραμεύς* and *κεραμοπλάστης*, both meaning 'potter', though again being formed differently (-ευσ vs -πλαστης).⁴⁴

The best-known case of such variation is undoubtedly the variation between -πωλης and -πρατης compounds.⁴⁵ Although in the Hellenistic and Roman period most occupations denoting the sellers of food and other items are formed with -πωλης (*κρεοπώλης*, meat-seller, *ἐριποπώλης*, wool-seller, etc.), from the fourth century CE onwards a second set of occupational titles appears with linguistic variants formed with the compound -πρατης. Relevant examples include oil-sellers (*έλαιοπώλης* vs *έλαιοπράτης*) and wine-sellers (*οἰνοπώλης* vs *οἰνοπράτης*). The attestations of the terms demonstrate that during the fourth century they were used as synonyms, though in a later stage -πρατης gradually replaced -πωλης (Diethart 2005a, 2005b; Drexhage 1991a, 1991b). One can compare, for example, text-internal references to occupations in Stud.Pal. VIII 758 (IV–V CE) = TM 33684, a receipt from the Hermopolite nome ἱκατέβαλ(ε) Φιβ ἔλαιοπράτ(ης) μέρ(ος) ἐνοικ(ίου) (l. 1) 'Phibis oil-seller paid a part of the rent' and SB X 10728 (318 CE) = TM 17431, a contract of sale from Oxyrynchus: [- - - ὁ] πηλιώτου Διοσκόρου ἔλαιοπώλου (l. 11) 'on the east property of Dioscorus, oil-merchant' (transl. Coles).⁴⁶ One should note that the term οἰνέμπορος, which was supposed to denote the wine merchant who travelled, was also used as a synonym to the aforementioned terms from the first to the fifth century CE, adding further complexity (see the discussion of Drexhage 1991b).

Besides oil- and wine-sellers, there are some other relevant examples. The word ἱματιοπώλης 'clothes-dealer' is much more common in the Hellenistic and Roman period and has some Late Antique attestations, while ἱματιοπράτης is only attested after the third century CE. Similarly, *λαχανοπώλης* (greengrocer) is a common term in papyrus documents from the Roman and Byzantine period, while *λαχανοπράτης* appears only after the fourth century CE. At the same time, one also finds the term *λαχανευτής*, which is much more restricted, with only four examples in the papyrological corpus, three of which date from Late Antiquity. Another interesting case is *ταριχοπώλης* (dealer in salt fish), which has some attestations in the Hellenistic, Roman, and

Late Antique periods, while *ταριχοπράτης* does not appear in papyrus documents. Curiously, there is an attestation of the female occupation *ταριχοπράτισσα* (P.Coll.Youtie II 92 [569 CE] = TM 20901), but no occurrence of the term *ταριχοπώλισσα*. It is to such female occupations that we turn next.

13.4.2 Gender differentiation

An important testimony about everyday occupations in Roman Egypt originates from a semi-literary papyrus. P.Tebt. II 278 col. I (first century CE) = TM 63088 includes a pair of acrostics (see Figure 13.1). The first one is a list of various traders or artificers, each beginning with a different letter of the alphabet: ‘Baker, dyer, fuller, spear-maker, oilman, painter, cobbler, breastplate-maker, doctor, locksmith, mason, millstone-maker, shipwright, scraper-maker, armourer, tablet-maker, ..., engraver, glassworker, ..., goldsmith, ...’ (transl. Grenfell and Hunt)

Raffaella Cribiore has identified the papyrus as a school exercise and has suggested that the text could be a list written by a teacher to be copied by students in order that they build vocabulary and practice their signs or letters (Cribiore 1996, 197). A point of interest is the fact that we only meet masculine occupations, some of which (such as *δοροξύς* ‘spear-maker’) do not have any other attestation in papyri (see Rowlandson 1998, 307 n. 240).⁴⁷ Such a detail in a school exercise reinforces our impression that female occupational titles were not very

Col. i.	
Ἀ[ρ]ῆ[ο]κόπος	ναυπη[γ]ός
βαφεύς	ξυστροποιός
γυ[αφ]εύς	15 ὀπλοποιός
δοροξύς	πινακοποιός
5 ἐλ[εο]ργός	[ρ]
ζωγράφος	[σ]
ἡπητήης	τορ[ε]ντήης
θωρακοποιός	20 ὑαλουργός
ιατρός	φιλ
10 κλειτοποιός	χρυσοχ[ι]δός
λάξος	ψ[ι]
μυλοκόπος	φ

Figure 13.1: Acrostic list of traders (P.Tebt. II 278 col. I)

Source: Grenfell and Hunt 1907, 34. Image is in the public domain.

established due to the male dominance in most of the everyday jobs in antiquity. That being said, the papyrological and epigraphical evidence has demonstrated that women in Egypt practised various everyday occupations,⁴⁸ and there is, in fact, limited evidence for the formation of specific female variants of occupations terms, though in other cases the male term was used with reference to women. Hans-Joachim Drexhage's research about female occupations in Ptolemaic Egypt is an important contribution to this study (Drexhage 1992).

The best-known case of the development of such female forms is, again, with the suffixes -πωλης and -πρατης. As already mentioned, from the fourth century onwards ἐλαιοπράτης (oil-dealer) is very often attested in papyri and in most of the cases it is used as a synonym of ἐλαιοπώλης (oil-seller). Two very interesting papyri from fourth-century Panopolis should be considered. P.Panop. 11 (320 CE) = TM 16157 records the lease of a house belonging to a woman called Aurelia Theodora. The lessee is a certain Sophia who addresses Theodora as an ἐλαιοπώλισσα (oil-seller). Aurelia Theodora also appears in P.Panop. 24 (c. 323–326 CE) = TM 16195, a petition addressed to the prefect about an economic affair, which is dated a few years after P.Panop. 11. In the second line of the document, she presents herself as an ἐλαιοπράτισσα. If we take into consideration that the compound -πρατης/-πρατισσα is widespread during Late Antiquity, it is not strange that Theodora chooses this term to identify herself in an official document such as a petition. Theodora appears to be a woman of a high economic and social status who owned a considerable amount of property as implied by several other documents.⁴⁹ Besides ἐλαιοπώλισσα, another potential term designating a female oil-seller is ἐλαιόπωλ(ις), which was suggested by the editor of P.Cair.Masp. III 67287 (538 CE) = TM 36522 (col. IV, l. 23). As there is only one, abbreviated example from the papyri, usage of this term remains uncertain.

We see a comparable development with regard to the occupation of gravedigger, νεκροτάφος. A female gravedigger is referred to as νεκροτάφισσα in the divorce contract P.Nekr. 34 (305–306 CE) = TM 22632: Αὐρήλιος Σοῦλις νεκροτάφος ἀπὸ το[πα]ρχίας Κύσε[ως] | Σενψαίς (l. Σενψαίτι) θυγατρὸς (l. θυγατρὶ) Ψαίτος ἐκ μητρὸς Τεοῦς (l. Τεοῦτος) νεκροταφίσ[σα] | ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς χαίρειν (ll. 1–3) 'Aurelius Soulis, nekrotaphos from the toparchy of Kusi, to Senpsais daughter of Psais, her mother Teous, nekrotaphissa from the same (toparchy), greetings' (transl. Bagnall). Another instance of the same form has been

reconstructed in the fragmentary opening of another divorce contract, P.Nekr. 24 (299–300 CE) = TM 22585, νεκροτάφισσα ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς χαίρειν] (l. 2) ‘nekrotaphissa from the same city, greetings’. The term is common for the female gravedigger along with νεκροτάφη, which is attested in documents of the same period, such as P.Nekr. 40 (308 CE) = TM 22631: Ταπαοῦς Πια[οὔτ]ο[ς] νεκροτάφη Μωθ[ε]ῖ|των π[ό]-λεως] (ll. 1–2) ‘Tapaous daughter of Piaoous, nekrotaphe of the city of the Mothites’ (transl. Bagnall). LSJ also mentions a female formation in -ις, namely νεκροταφίς, which has no attestations in the papyrological corpus.

Gender-related morphological variation is also attested for teachers. Male teachers in papyri are denoted with the terms διδάσκαλος or διδέσκαλος from the first century CE onwards. Although the noun was the same in both masculine and feminine forms,⁵⁰ women teachers in papyrus documents are more often designated as δέσκαλος or δεσκά-λη.⁵¹ For example, in P.Mich. II 123 r, 21 (45 CE) = TM 11967, which constitutes a financial register (*anagraphe*) of all the documents drawn up day by day in the record-office (*grapheion*) of Tebtynis, we read about a female δέσκαλος: [Σα]ραπιὰς δεσκαλος ἀργ(υρίου) (δραχμαὶ) δ (l. 9) ‘Sarapias, teacher: 4 silver drachmai’. In P.Mil. Vogl. II 76 (II CE) = TM 15188, a letter addressed from Diogenis to Kronion, a female teacher is referred to in the salutations, ἀσπάζου | πάντας τοὺς ἐμοὺς | καὶ Ἰσιδώραν καὶ ὑπαγέτωι (l. ὑπαγέτω) εἰς δέσκαλον (l. 15 with BL XII 127) ‘salute all my relatives and Isidora, and let her go to a woman teacher’ (transl. Bagnall and Cribiore). It appears that a female teacher is more appropriate for a female student. Another example is BGU I 332 (II/III CE) = TM 28252, a letter addressed from Sarapias to her children. In ll. 8–10, we again read about a teacher in the salutations: ἀσπάζεται ἡμᾶς (l. ὑμᾶς) Κυρίλλα | καὶ ἡ θυγάτηρ Ἑρμίας Ἑρμίας, Ἑρ[μ]ανοῦβις ἡ τροφός, Ἀθηναίς ἡ δέσκα|λος ‘Kyrilla greets you, and the daughter of Hermias, Hermias, Hermanoubis the nurse, Athenais the teacher’ (transl. Bagnall and Cribiore). In the apprenticeship contract SB XVIII 13305 (271–272 CE) = TM 14738, Aurelia Libouke who is going to teach a young girl the art of weaving is called δέσκαλος: παραδωσιν (l. παραδώσει) αὐτὴν ἡ δεσ|καλος (l. διδάσ|καλος) μεμαθη-κυῖαν τὴν τέχνην (ll. 25–27) ‘the teacher shall return her after she has learned the craft’. In addition, P.Oxy. XXXI 2595 (III CE) = TM 30434 includes salutations to a female teacher without mentioning her name. The editor translates the term δέσκαλος as ‘governess’, and suggests

the correct reading διδάσκαλος (in the accusative case): ἀσπάζου τὸν ἐπιστάτην | καὶ Σαραπάμμωνα τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ τὴν | δεσκαλον (l. διδάσκαλον) καὶ τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ πάντας (ll. 8–10) ‘Give my best wishes to the overseer and your brother Sarapammon and the governess and the whole household’ (transl. Parsons). Although the writer does not mention the woman’s name and identifies her with her occupation, she appears to be a part of the family.

P.Mich. VIII 464 (99 CE) = TM 17238 testifies to the type δεσκάλη instead of δέσκαλος already discussed for a female teacher. Apollonius writes to her brother (and probably husband) Iulius Terentianus, explaining how she is ruling the household and taking care of his children in his absence: καὶ μὴ λυποῦ περὶ τῶν | [τ]έκνων· κ[αλ]ῶ[ς] δῖακινται (l. διάκεινται) καὶ εἰς | [δ]εσκάλην (l. διδάσκαλον) [π]αρεδρεύουσι (ll. 8–10) ‘And do not worry about the children; they are in good health, and they are kept busy with a teacher’ (transl. Youtie and Winter). The type δεσκάλη instead of the common δέσκαλος points to an attempt to find the appropriate female occupational term.⁵² Raffaella Cribiore remarks that the term διδάσκαλος was modulated to διδέσκαλος and then to δέσκαλος without reduplication (Cribiore 1996, 23; Jannaris 1897, 191). The examples discussed cannot, unfortunately, explain why women teachers were designated with a shorter form of the occupational term compared to men. However, as shown by Kapsomenakis, the use of this female occupational term may have had a long tradition since it was also attested in the beginning of the twentieth century in Asia Minor (Kapsomenakis 1938, 121–22).

To conclude this brief discussion, it is worth mentioning the use of participles as an alternative way of forming female agent nouns. Earlier in this subsection, we discussed the development of forms in -πωλίσσα, -πρατίσσα, as well as -πωλὶς as female forms of the standard male endings -πωλὴς and -πρατής. It is worth noting that one also finds participial forms besides nouns with these endings: so, for example, in PSI XII 1239 (430 CE) = TM 17407, a contract of sale, we meet the participle ἐλαιοπωλοῦσαν to refer to a female oil-seller who is a neighbour of the property that is to be sold. Perhaps people preferred to use such participial forms because of the infrequency of suffixes denoting female occupations.⁵³ The same phenomenon can be observed with reference to female landowners: reference to these rich women is often made through the use of ἡ γεοῦχος ‘the landowner’ (a male occupational term with a female article), though in other cases we find the use

of the participle (ἡ γεουχοῦσα), as in the opening of SB VI 9561 (590 CE) = TM 19101, a contract of lease from the archive of Flavia Anastasia: Φλαουία Ἀναστασία τῇ ἐνδο[ξο]τά[τῃ] | ἰλλουσ[τρία] θυγατρὶ τοῦ τῆς ἐν[δό]ξου | μνή[μ]ης Μ . α. Εὐδαίμονος γεου[χ]ούση | ἐνταῦθα τῇ λαμπρᾷ Ὀξυρυγχιτῶν | πόλε[ι] (ll. 7–11) ‘to Flavia Anastasia, the very glorious and illustrious, daughter of ... Eudaimôn, of glorious memory, who is here a landowner in the brilliant city of Oxyrhynchus’. Given that for male occupations, too, we find variation between nominal and participial forms (e.g. γεοῦχος vs γεουχῶν, γεωργός vs γεωργῶν), more research is needed to understand the factors motivating the use of participles for occupational designations.

13.4.3 *The dynamics of personal identification in private letter writing*

As we have seen throughout this chapter, occupational terms particularly appear in formal documents in the Everyday Writing corpus, such as official letters, petitions, and contracts, to provide stable information about a person’s identity, and/or to specify their role in a specific communicative context. Occupational references are less expected in an informal context, though that does not mean they are entirely unattested: one place where we find such references is the external address of letters,⁵⁴ where occupations constitute a basic element of the receiver’s identification which ensures that the letter will be delivered to the right person.⁵⁵ So, for example, in P.Oxy. XXXI 2595 (III CE) = TM 30434, the opening reads Ὠριγένης Σερήνωι τῷ ἀδελφῷ | χαίρειν ‘Horigenes to Serenus his brother, greetings’, but the more impersonal external address ἀπόδος Σερήνω Χ ἀργυροκόπῳ ‘deliver to Serenus the silversmith’; the same can be seen in P.Lund. II 5 (500 CE) = TM 41035, which has as its opening [κυ]ρίῳ μου ἀδελφο (l. ἀδελφῷ) Λεόντιο (l. Λεοντίῳ) Χρυσάρῃς | ἡ θυγάτερ (l. θυγάτηρ) Ἀμβροσίου χ(αί)ρ(ειν) (ll. 1–2) ‘to my lord brother Leontios, Chrysaris, the daughter of Ambrosius, greeting’, but on the verso side contains an explicit reference to the addressee’s occupation, ἀπόδος Λεοντίῳ (l. Λεοντίῳ) κυμινᾷ παρ(ᾷ) | Χρυσάρίτος θυγατρὸς Ἀμβροσίου ‘deliver to Leontios the cumin seller from Chrysaris daughter of Ambrosios’ (transl. APIS). Apart from a reference to the addressee’s occupation, the external address may also contain rather short instructions for the delivery to the letter carrier, so-called σημασία,⁵⁶ or simply a geographical

reference, as in P.Oxy. XVII 2150 (III CE) = TM 30673, ἀπ(ό)δος εἰς τὴν οἰκ(ίαν) Σαρμάτ(ου) πρυτανεύσ(αντος) π(α)ρὰ Διδύμου 'deliver to the house of Sarmates, ex-prytanis, from Didymus' (transl. Hunt) or P.Oxy. VIII 1155 (104 CE) = TM 21760, ἀπόδος ἰς (l. εἰς) τὸ Ἴσιον Ἀπίωνι | παστοφόρῳ | παρὰ Θεονᾶτος 'Deliver to Apion, pastophorus, at the Iseum, from Theonas' (transl. Hunt).

Interestingly, both locations and people with specific occupations can serve as reference points for delivery of the letter to a third party (on which, see further Llewelyn 1994). For example, P.Oxy. II 300 (I CE) = TM 25673, is a letter from Indike to her relative Thaisous. The address on the back, however, reads εἰς τὸ γυμνάσι(ον) Θεῶνι Νικοβούλ(ου) | ἐλαιοχρειστη (l. ἐλαιοχρίστη) 'to the gymnasium, for Theon son of Nikoboulos, *elaiochristes*'.⁵⁷ The editors assume that Theon was the husband of Thaisous. Another such example is P.Oxy. XLII 3065 (III CE) = TM 30332, a letter from Areios to his parents, Agrippina and Cornelius: the address on the back specifies that delivery is to be made to a myrrh-seller (whose name has not been preserved), who will then deliver the letter to Areios' mother: ἀπόδος ... ρσα μυροπώλη ἵνα ἀπ[ο]δῶ Ἀ[γ]ριππίνη | π(α)ρὰ Ἀρείου νόου 'deliver to ... the myrrh-seller, so that he can deliver it to Agrippina my mother from her son Arius' (transl. Parsons).⁵⁸

In contrast to the external address, the opening greetings of private letters typically do not contain any occupational references, but rather kinship terms, as well as honorific and philophroneic epithets, specifying the relationship of the sender of the addressee. Some informal letters nevertheless contain such references: for example, the opening greeting of P.Oxy. XLVIII 3406 (IV CE) = TM 33716, not only explicitly states the occupation of the addressee, Papnuthis, but also that of the sender, Klematia: π(α)ρὰ Κληματίης γεούχου | Παπνουτίου προνοητῇ Σαδάλου χαίρειν (ll. 1–2) 'from Klematia, landlady, to Papnuthis, caretaker at Sadalu, greetings' (transl. Chambers). Perhaps this is due to practical reasons, such as mode of dictation, type of delivery, or the urgency with which the request was made. Alternatively, the inclusion of an occupational reference may have had communicative purposes,⁵⁹ such as underlining the hierarchical relationship between the communicative participants and/or increasing the formality of the document, by mimicking, to some extent at least, the opening of formal texts.⁶⁰

Our corpus also contains letters with multiple addressees where an occupation is mentioned for only one of the addressees, as for example

BGU IV 1082 (IV CE) = TM 33057: κυρίῳ μου ἀδελφῷ Ἀπφυγχίῳ | καὶ Διδύμῳ (l. Διδύμῳ) ταπιταρίου (l. ταπιταρίῳ) | Πετῦσις Παπτηβε (ll. 1–3): ‘to my lord brother Apphynchios and Didymos the carpet weaver from Petusis son of Paptebe’. In such cases, the inclusion of an occupational reference may have acted as a slightly less formal way of identifying addressees than the inclusion of a patronymic, which was even more standard in formal documents than the use of an occupational reference. Identification may also have been a motivating factor for the inclusion of the sender’s occupation in the external address, as a way of immediately signalling to the addressee who the sender is. One can contrast, for example, the opening greeting of P.Herm.3 (317–323 CE) = TM 21122, τῷ κυρίῳ μου πασσόφῳι (l. πανσόφῳ) Ἀμβροσίῳι | Ἀνατόλιος (vac.) χαίρειν (ll. 1–2) ‘to my lord, all-wise Ambrosius, Anatolius, greetings’ with its address on the verso, [τῷ] πασσόφῳι (l. πανσόφῳ) Ἀμβροσίῳι (vac.) Ἀνατόλιος ἀρχιπροφήτης ‘to the all-wise Ambrosius, Anatolius, chief prophet’ (transl. Rees).⁶¹ Some external addresses contain both the occupation of the sender and the addressee,⁶² which, one could hypothesise, serve slightly different purposes, that is, identification of the addressee vis-à-vis the letter carrier, and identification of the sender vis-à-vis the addressee. As an example, we can refer to P.Oxy. LIX 3989 (II CE) = TM 27845, Πλουτάρχῳ ἱερεὶ φίλῳι ((x)) <παρὰ> Λυκαρίωνος γυμνασιαρχή(σαντος) Ὀξυρ(υγχιτῶν) ‘To Plutarchus, priest, friend, from (?) Lycarion ex-gymnasiarch of the Oxyrhynchites’ (transl. Ioannidou), which, besides the occupational references, also contains the philophroneic term φίλῳι.⁶³

To conclude this brief discussion of personal identification in private letter writing, it is worth noting that attestations of occupations as identifying signs are also found even without the name of the person.⁶⁴ For example, in P.Tebt. II 424 (276–300 CE) = TM 31368, Sarapammon writes to Píperas announcing that he has sent him a letter through the baker without naming him: Σαραπάμμων Πιπεράτι. | ἔπεμψά σοι ἐπιστολὴν διὰ τοῦ ἀρτοκόπου (ll. 1–3) ‘Sarapammon to Píperas. I sent you a letter by the baker’. A parallel is found in external addresses, when a woman is identified by her husband’s job, without the husband being explicitly named. An illustrative example is P.Tebt. II 414 (II CE) = TM 28427, in which Thenpetsokis gives various directions to her sister Thenapunchis. The external address on the verso reads Ἀπό[δο]ς Θεναπύνχι | τῇ γυναικὶ τοῦ κεραμέως ‘deliver to Thenapunchis, the wife of the potter’ (transl. Grenfell and Hunt). In small villages such as

Tebtynis, women were frequently identified by their husband's occupation and social status. Because most craftsmen and traders were well known locally, a man's profession could serve as a key identifier for both himself and his family, as well as a practical detail aiding the letter carrier in locating the intended recipient.⁶⁵

13.5 Conclusion

One of the main goals of the Everyday Writing project has been to connect, as much as possible, communicative features (including linguistic, material, and palaeographical features) to the socio-pragmatic characteristics of documents, or, in other words, to connect 'data' to 'metadata'. In this chapter, we have argued that metadata information, too, can be analysed as data in its own right for the study of linguistic variation. We have outlined the large number of 'everyday' occupations that can be found in the Everyday Writing corpus, which we have categorised in five larger social groups—namely agricultural workers; craftsmen and tradesmen; liberal professions; other service providers; and actors, musicians, and athletes—drawing attention to some patterns that can be found in our corpus in terms of word formation and context of occurrence. We also noted the existence of some 'uncertain' occupations.

In the second part of this chapter, we have briefly discussed three areas of study which we consider particularly relevant for the historical sociolinguistic study of occupational references, namely (i) the development of occupational references that are (roughly) synonymous and their variation over time, (ii) the extent to which a separate set of female occupational terms developed over time, and (iii) the motivating factors for the inclusion of occupational references in private letters. Evidently, there is much more to be said about occupational terms; for example, it would be worth exploring the degree to which alternative spellings existed for the same term,⁶⁶ the register-sensitivity of particular morphological formations (such as endings in -ας),⁶⁷ the degree to which occupational terms have been subject to metalinguistic observations, etc.⁶⁸ Likewise, it would be worth extending the same methodology to other subject areas that are traditionally categorised under the heading of 'metadata', such as the labels that are found in documentary sources to refer to different text types (e.g. the different

Greek words used to refer to ‘letter’ or ‘petition’). This, and much more, remains to be explored in future research.

Notes

- 1 Klaas Bentein’s and Marianna Thoma’s work was undertaken in the context of the ERC Starting Grant project EVWRIT (Everyday Writing in Graeco-Roman and Late Antique Egypt (I–VIII CE). A Socio-Semiotic Study of Communicative Variation), a project that has received funding from the European Research Council under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Grant agreement no. 756487). For more information, see www.ev writ.ugent.be.
- 2 For the project, and the annotation work that was done in it, see Bentein (2024) and Bentein and Amory (2019).
- 3 There are other relevant communicative roles, too, which have not been annotated, such as people sending and receiving salutations in private letters.
- 4 Of course, a single person may have been involved in more than one occupation.
- 5 Gibbs (2012, 85–86) differentiates between two types of specialisation: specialisation related to the final product (craftsmen/tradesmen concentrating their efforts on specific products) vs specialisation in the process of production (workers specialising according to their method of production). Gibbs notes that both appear to have existed in Roman Egypt, though he considers the latter more common, particularly in the fields of textile production and metalworking.
- 6 In the record-office archive of Tebtynis, Langellotti showed that most occupations were attested in affidavits (χειρογραφία), applications for state concessions (ἀναφορά), associations’ rules (νόμοι), and accounts.
- 7 Occupational designations tend to be thought of in absolute terms, though more and more attention is paid to other aspects in recent scholarship. Mairs (2013, 165), for example, mentions the concept of ‘situational identity’ in her discussion of ethnicity, which recognises that ‘there are times and places when it may be important for an individual to emphasize one particular aspect of his or her identity and others when it may not.’ Veisse (2013, 88) notes in her study on the expression of identity in Ptolemaic petitions that reference to the petitioners’ ‘socio-professional category’ occurs in 54 per cent of the documents in her corpus as a way of specifying one’s identity; she wonders whether the inclusion of such a reference might be explained by the contents of the petition.
- 8 See also Kelly (2011, 155 table 4.1), which presents the main occupational categories for petitioners, and the number of petitions from people of each category. On the references to occupations in Ptolemaic petitions, see Veisse (2013, 3, 7).
- 9 The term ‘nekrotaphos’ has the meaning of ‘grave digger, undertaker’.
- 10 The same type of approach is followed in Ruffing (2008), which focuses specifically on occupational designations for craftsmen and tradesmen in the Roman and Late Antique period, which are exhaustively collected for Greek papyri and inscriptions. He presents an alphabetic list of all such occupational designations

- (part II, listing over 800 such designations), and simultaneously divides these into a number of categories and subcategories (part I, ch. 3).
- 11 Bagnall (1993) differentiates between different types of urban landowners; for villagers, too, differentiations can be made.
 - 12 These different types of farmers are related to different types of land tenure, which we will not go further into here. On land ownership and tenure in Roman Egypt see, for example, Rowlandson (1996).
 - 13 βουκόλος can be placed here, too, though -κόλος is somewhat less recognisable as a verbal stem (cf. Latin colo).
 - 14 See Alston (1998, 183–84), who notes that c. 28 per cent of the male population of Oxyrhynchus and 27 per cent of the male population of Panopolis were registered tradesmen (Alston focuses on Roman Egypt). Fikhman (1979) estimates that at least 90 different crafts were attested in Oxyrhynchus.
 - 15 For more fine-grained subcategorisations of craftsmen and tradesmen as an occupational group, see for example Drexhage (2004a, 62–65), Ruffing (2008, 103–215), and Sodini (1979).
 - 16 Shipbuilding may be considered a separate area of construction; relevant occupations in our corpus include ναυπηγός (shipbuilder) and πακτωνοποιός (boat-maker).
 - 17 Some occupations related to decoration are also attested, such as ζωγράφος (painter).
 - 18 Gibbs (2012, 45) mentions the existence of product-related metalworking specialists such as nailsmiths and locksmiths.
 - 19 Lewis (1983, 135) lists some of the occupations for which apprenticeships are documented in the papyri, but goes on to note that ‘any trade or skill was presumably learnt through an apprenticeship’. On lists of apprenticeship contracts, see also Bergamasco (1995, 162–67) and Bradley (1985, 316).
 - 20 On which, see for example Gibbs (2012, 41). Coles, Maehler, and Parsons (1987, 230–32) provide in an appendix to P.Oxy. LIV, a list of the guilds of Oxyrhynchus that registered prices with the city authorities in the fourth century CE, arriving at a total number of 33 (!) guilds.
 - 21 See for example Palmer (1945, 48–49) on noun formations in -αριος, who notes that this suffix was a Latinism, and Palmer (1945, 34) for the adjectival suffix -ιακος.
 - 22 Lewis (1983, 151) speaks of ‘the practitioners of the learned professions’, though noting that ‘the only ones who appear with any frequency in the papyri are the physicians’.
 - 23 Lewis (1983, 147) notes that ‘bankers were generally men of wealth and high social standing’.
 - 24 On the use of the adjectival suffix -ικος, see for example Palmer (1945, 35–37).
 - 25 The term derives from παρεμβάλλω and is related to a process in the manufacture of oil including transport of olives.
 - 26 Bagnall 1993, 90, where he notes that such service workers ‘were probably not numerous, except for domestic servants and bath attendants’.
 - 27 The use of participial forms for occupational designations, mainly female, is further discussed under Subsection 13.4.2.
 - 28 Cf. P.Cair.Masp. II 67253 (568 CE) = TM 18946.
 - 29 On κράμβη and κραμβίον, see *LSJ* s.v. ‘κράμβη’.

- 30 See, for example, the letter SB VI 9017, 16 = TM 25243 (I/II CE): ἐκομισάμην | παρὰ Ἀρίμματος δεσ|μὴν κράμβης (ll. 5–7).
- 31 Robert (1966, 770) has suggested the meaning ‘vegetarian’; see Ruffing (2008, 610) for further discussion.
- 32 On this ending in the nouns denoting professions, see Drexhage (2004b), Gignac (1981, 18–19), and Palmer (1945, 49–50). On the trading of cabbage, see Drexhage (1990).
- 33 Cf. also P. Oxy. II 397 (I CE) = TM 25687.
- 34 See the discussion in Diethart (1984). Ruffing (2008, 461–62) also mentions the term βουκελλατᾶς (deriving from *bucella*), which appears to be synonym to βουκ(κ)ᾶς.
- 35 See also *Etymologicum Parvum* M 10: Μάγκιτες· Ῥωμαιστὶ οἱ τεχνῖται τοῦ ἄρτου.
- 36 Cf. *Scholia Anonyma Recentiora in Aristophanes Nubes* 640a: ἀλφιταμοιβοῦ] μάγγιπος Cant.2Hο, μάγκιπος (Ca2), ψωμοπωλίδος M9 (m²), ἄρτοποιοῦ lb, ἀλφιτομέτρου Lb.
- 37 Cf. Kriaras μάγκιψ ο· μάγκιπας. Φούρναρης: Εἰάν ἤμουν παραζυμωτῆς ἡ δου-
λευτῆς μαγκίπου (Προδρ. III 165). [< λατ. manceps. Ο τ., καθὼς και τ. μάντζι-
πας, σήμ. ιδιωμ. Η λ. τον 4. αι. (Kahane, GR II 508)].
- 38 See Sijpesteijn (1972, 50); S. Tost, SPP III.2 21 A, n. to ll. 1–2 (p. 33); Koroli, SPP III 674.2, n. to l. 2 (forthcoming).
- 39 For example, Mairs (2013, 164): ‘important though the ethnic question is ... there is a sense in which it has tended to impede a more holistic consideration of personal and corporate identities.’
- 40 Mairs (2013, 166) discusses some of the different ways in which these different components of identity may be related to each other (‘nested’, ‘cross-cutting’, and ‘separate’).
- 41 Clarysse and Thompson (2006 vol. 2, 205). We borrow the quote a little paraphrased from Mairs (2013, 172).
- 42 See for example Ash (2002, 419) for the importance of occupational class in modern-day sociolinguistics.
- 43 See Rathbone (2010, 366), who notes that the multiplicity of occupational terms in Late Antiquity may be more a matter of ‘exuberant linguistic usage’ than ‘continuing high specialisation’.
- 44 Drexhage (2004b, 39) mentions the variation between πλακουντᾶς, πλακου-
ντᾶριος, and πλακουντοποιός, all meaning ‘maker of cakes’, ‘pastry-cook’.
- 45 See Section 13.1 for relevant studies. Casarico (1983, 24) lists relevant cases of variation, and notes that such variation mostly exists with the products that are most commonly sold, and are therefore best attested.
- 46 Similarly, compare P.Bad. II 26 V inv. 213 (295–296 CE) = TM 19324: π(αρά) Σιλβανοῦ Ἀριάμωνος οἶνοπ(ώλου) (l. 5) and P. Louvre III 215 (IV CE) = TM 978758: [. . .] ὠνίφ οἶνοπρ(άτη) (ταλαντ-) (μυρι-) γ (l. 9).
- 47 In addition, the papyrus gives evidence of non typical forms of some occupations, such as the case of κλειτοποίς instead of κλειδοποιός, which also appears, for example, in the lease contract P.Strasb. VI 600 (VII CE) = TM 16811: ἐκ μητρὸς . . . [. . .] . . . κλειτοποίου (l. κλειδοποίου) (l. 7).
- 48 On women’s occupations in classical Athens, see, for example, Herfst (1922, 40–48); in Roman society, see Pomeroy (1994, 201) and Treggiari (1976); in

- Hellenistic Egypt, see Worp (2011); in Roman Egypt, see Sebillotte Cuchet (2016) and Thoma (2018, 115–82, 2026).
- 49 See P.Panop. 12 (337 CE) = TM 16158; P.Panop. 23 (after 314 CE) = TM 16194.
 - 50 See already Aeschylus, *PV* 109–11: *ναρθηκοπλήρωτον δὲ θηρῶμαι πυρὸς/πηγὴν κλοπαίαν, ἣ διδάσκαλος τέχνης/πάσης βροτοῖς πέφηνε καὶ μέγας πόρος* ‘I hunted out and stored in fennel stalk the stolen source of fire that has proved a teacher to mortals in every art and a means to mighty ends’ (transl. Weir Smyth).
 - 51 There is the exception of SB XIV 11532 (early IV CE) = TM 32935: *Κυρίαν τὴν διδάσκαλον* (l. 5).
 - 52 Cf. *παρθένος/παρθένη*.
 - 53 There does not seem to be any non-literary evidence for a verbal formation of the type *ἐλαιοπράττω*.
 - 54 Attestations of occupations as identifying signs are also found in the body of letters. For example, in P.Oxy. XXXVI 2789 (III CE) = TM 30388, Kleopatra asks her father Epaphroditos to measure out five artabas of barley specifically to Moros the builder (*Μώρω τῷ οἰκοδόμῳ*, l. 4).
 - 55 Different types of address on the verso may suggest different modes of delivery; contrast, for example, the external address of P.Giss.Apoll. 1 (115–117 CE) = TM 19423 (*Ἀπολλωνίῳ στρατηγῷ Ἀπολ[λωνοπολίτου]*) with that of P.Flor. III 332 (113–120 CE) = TM 19372 (*Ἀπολλωνίῳ Χ υἱῷ*), both letters from Eudaimonis to her son Apollonios (the famous strategos).
 - 56 For letters from the EVWRIT corpus with *σημασία*, see for example P.Laur. I 20 (III CE) = TM 31506; P.Meyer. 20 (III CE) = TM 31286; P.Oxy. XIV 1678 (III CE) = TM 31786; P.Oxy. XIV 1773 (III CE) = TM 31815. In one case, the instructions have survived independently from the actual letter that was to be delivered: P.Oxy. XXXIV 2719 (III CE) = TM 30394 contains 15 lines with very elaborate instructions for the delivery of letters to Rufus.
 - 57 The *elaiochristes* is a municipal official responsible for the supply of oil.
 - 58 For other relevant examples, see P.Oxy. XLIII 3094 (217–218 CE) = TM 15973; SB XXII 15359 = P.Oxy. descr. I 182 = P.Oxy. descr. 11 (mid-IV CE) = TM 33346.
 - 59 See further Bentein (2023, 437–38), who also mentions the introduction of terms denoting descent and origins in the openings of private letters.
 - 60 Though in the case of formal documents the position of the receiver and initiator would be reversed, an order that was adopted more and more in informal documents, too.
 - 61 One can compare this to the use of kinship terms in the opening vs the external address of private letters: in P.Oxy. XII 1586 (200–225 CE) = TM 31768, for example, the opening profiles Herais’ role as sister (*Ἀρποκρατίων Ἡραΐδι τῇ | ἀδελφῇ χαίρειν* ‘Harpokration to Herais his sister greetings’), whereas the external address profiles Harpokration’s role as brother (*Αὐρηλία [Ἡραΐδι] π(αρά) ἀδελ(φοῦ) Ἀρποκρατίωνος* ‘to Aurelia Herais from her brother Harpokration’).
 - 62 Compare, again, addresses with kinship terms for both the sender and the addressee.
 - 63 Other examples with double occupational references in the external address include P.Oxy. LVI 3854 (III CE) = TM 31654 and P.Oxy. VI 933 (III CE) = TM 31322.

- 64 Diethart (2006, 230–32) discusses the use of occupational designations as personal names and aliases in the papyri.
- 65 Compare the external address of P.Oxy. XXXIII 2680 (II–III CE) = TM 26930, which contains only the name of the husband, without his occupation: ἀπὸ Ἀρσινόης Σαραπιάδι γυναῖκί Πολυκράτ(ους) ‘from Arsinoe to Sarapias the wife of Polykrates’.
- 66 Compare Drexhage (2004a, 43) for the existence of ‘Schreibvarianten’.
- 67 Compare Drexhage (2004b) on formations in -ᾶς.
- 68 Phrynichus, for example, notes in his *Ecloga* (176) that one should use ὀπωρώνης ‘fruiterer’ instead of ὀπωροπώλης (Diethart 2005b, 193).

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