A Prosopographical Data Base
of Cultic Personnel in Ancient Rome

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Résumé. La documentation prosopographique du personnel sacerdotal est une tâche fondamentale pour l'histoire sociale de la religion. Utilisant une banque de données de la religion romaine et les programmes de *TUSTEP*, de nouveaux outils sont développés pour étudier et présenter la prosopographie sacerdotale de la Rome ancienne. Au-delà du livre imprimé, la forme électronique des biographies offre des possibilités d'analyse.

| Keywords: Data base, roman religion, roman priest, prosopography, *TUSTEP*. | Mots-clés : Banque de données, religion romaine, sacerdoce romain, prosopographie, *TUSTEP*. |

1. Priests and the social history of Roman religion

In 1988 a computer assisted project on the social history of Roman religion had been presented at the University of Tübingen[1]. An empirical approach to Roman religion demands the analysis of "religion" as a social system consisting primarily of cultic practices. Human actors and participants rather than gods are the centre of interest. To describe the specific place of religion within the whole of society, the religious phenomena have to be specified in time, place, and persons. A documentary structure has been developed that employs a variety

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of categories to analyze single pieces of literary, epigraphical or archaeological evidence and to simplify retrieval of relevant data from a disparate mass of sources.

The project—short-titled *SoRoRel*—was intended to further specialized research as well as university teaching. Therefore a bundle of limited research interests has been defined, resulting in a couple of small projects operating within the same theoretical framework and using the common data base *RRB-DAT* (Roman Religion Base DATa)[2]. Meanwhile the project has gained the support of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (since 1990)[3], the hardware (PCs, printers) has been improved by support from the University. One element, a prosopography of cultic personnel in Rome, has gathered momentum[4]. A new set of data bases was developed and has been successfully operated. The completion of the first part, dealing with the time of the republic, offers the opportunity to present an outline of the tools, which have been created on the base of *TUSTEP*, the "Tübingen system of text-processing programs", developed by the Department of Literary and Documentary Data Processing at the University of Tübingen (Prof. W. Ott).

The most important politicians occupied the higher ranks of Roman priests. They came into the priestly colleges either as promising young men of the leading families or—if "new men"—in regard to high personal achievements, especially the consulate, in comparatively old age[5]. There was a wide range of possible interferences with the political administration: The augurs could cancel assemblies by announcing bad omens, the pontifices might declare a splendid building project to be contrary to the will of the gods, the *decemviri* might force the consul to attend a public ritual of penitence before departing to warfare[6]. Thus, it is important to know the members of the priestly colleges, not only to understand certain features of the religious policy, but also for a better understanding of regular patterns of the political history as well.

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[2] For a closer description see the summary mentioned above.

[3] The project is located at the University of Tübingen, Dept. of Classics (*Philologisches Seminar*) and is directed by Prof. Dr. Hubert Cancik.

[4] For a general view on Roman religion lead by an interest in social history, see CANCIK (Hubert): 1991, "La religione", in ANDREAE (Bernard) *et al.*, *Princeps urbium: Cultura e vita sociale dell'Italia romana* (Milano: Schweiwiller, pp. 337–409). A paradigm for the presentation of priests is given in its appendix: CANCIK-LINDEMAIER (Hildegard), RÜPKE (Jörg), *Documentazione e Bibliografia*, pp. 409–416.

[5] The basic facts in: SZEMLER (George J.): 1986, "Priesthoods and Priestly Careers in Ancient Rome", in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, II.16,3 (Berlin: de Gruyter) pp. 2314–31.

[6] For a short survey see BEARD (Mary), NORTH (John): 1990, eds., *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (London: Duckworth).

With regard to political history the prosopography of the most important Roman priests has been treated several times[7]. However, many gaps and problems remained. A thorough critique of the republican sources, mainly Livy (drawing on the annalistic tradition) and Cicero (drawing on augural material and personal acquaintance), shows the limits of the supposed documentary sources and the extent of late-republican fiction. Continuous documentation did not start before the middle of the third century B.C. Succession lists like the so-called Augural *fasti* belong to an even later time[8]. For the Empire, dominated by epigraphical sources, many new findings have to be integrated[9]. From the perspective of the history of religion, however, much of the material has been neglected, too. Specialized or even professionalized rôles are extremely important for the institutionalization and organization of any religion. To describe this aspect of religious systems, it is necessary to go beyond the level of those functionaries who are generally called "priests" and whose rôles are characterized by high social esteem and prestige. Therefore the term as well as the area of research called "priests" has been substituted by "cultic personnel", including religious administrators and the butchers employed in sacrifices.

Another expansion of the field of interest concerns the definition of "Roman religion". As the approach of social history demands a local analysis, "Roman religion" is understood as the total of religious activity within the ancient city of Rome. Especially during the empire, this situation is characterized by an extreme diversity of cooperating or rivalling cults, a market-like situation offering the option of a sectarian, fundamentalist outlook as well as the option of religious eclecticism, engaging in many cults and maintaining a faceted loyalty[10]. Therefore "priestly" rôles in traditional cults, the so-called "oriental" cults, synagogal functionaries and Christian personnel are included.

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[7] For the republic, see after T.R.S. BROUGHTON'S *Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (3 vols., Philadelphia: American Philological Association, pp. 1951–1986) in particular SZEMLER (G.J.): 1972, *The Priests of the Roman Republic: A Study of Interactions Between Priesthoods and Magistracies* (Bruxelles: Latomus, no. 127).

[8] RÜPKE (J.): 1993, "Livius, Priesternamen und die annales maximi", *Klio*, 75, pp. 155–179.

[9] A dissertation of 1904 remains the most comprehensive prosopography of priests: HOWE (G.), *Fasti sacerdotum p. R. publicorum aetatis imperatoriae* (Leipzig: Teubner).

[10] GLADIGOW (B.): 1990, "ΧΡΗΣΘΑΙ ΘΕΟΙΣ: Orientierungs- und Loyalitätskonflikte in der griechischen Religion", in ELSAS (C.), KIPPENBERG (H.G.), eds., *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Carsten Colpe* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann), pp. 237–251.

2. The tools: `PRI.BIO` and `PRI.FAS`

RRBDAT was intended to serve as a collection of generally important sources; their extensive classification enables unlimited access. The prosopographical project, now, aims at a full-scale analysis, using all previous research in establishing a complete survey of carriers of institutionalized cultic rôles. It is expected to include around 2,000 persons, being restricted to the city of Rome (including its Latin cults) between 300 B.C. and A.D. 499[11]. Since much prosopographical work has been done in the field of Ancient History in general, it was possible to restrict the prosopographical research and the goals for presentation to three successive levels:

a) Religious biographies of the relevant persons had to be established, documenting each of their cultic/religious function and their most important religious acts; as far as political and military activities are concerned, the documentation has to be restricted to the most important data; it is not intended to supplant the biographies of standard prosopographical reference works like the *Realencyclopädie* or the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*.

b) The developments in the membership of each college or office must be visible.

c) It must be possible to define the names of all persons in office and to document also the religious spectrum, represented by these persons and offices for any given year.

A survey of existing prosopographies quickly illustrated that it was useful to prepare two forms of presentation in parallel. One includes the biographies, the other documents the office-holders year by year, thus imitating the ancient succession or membership lists of magistrates called *fasti* or *alba*[12]. In order to establish annual membership lists, it is crucial to define the date of cooptation (ordination) and the time of death or end of office. Only rarely do the sources offer direct evidence. Therefore it is not useful to transform the source-oriented data of *RRBDAT* into *fasti* directly. The data sets of *RRBDAT* are automatically transformed into a biography-like file, listing the relevant material under the heading of the name of an office-holder; this serves as a basis for the formulation of the biography.

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[11] The limits are set by the *lex Ogulnia* of 300 B.C., producing the first reliable list of new priests (Liv. 10,9,2), and an ecclesiastical document of A.D. 499, giving a comprehensive list of Christian officials in Rome.

[12] In a way, Broughton's *Magistrates* (n. 5) served as an example; yet, whereas Broughton's "biographical" part is more like an index, just including names and dates of offices, and all the arguing is done in the annual lists, it proved helpful to argue the (religious) biographies and just document the results in the annual scheme.

With regard to the final presentation of biographies and annual lists as a printed tool, two decisions had to be taken early:

a) Should the printed biography be a verbalized version of standardized data sets, a version produced only at a late stage, whereas before the data entries mainly enable statistical analysis and easy correction until all biographical data sets have been completed?

b) Should the annual lists be automatically produced from the relevant entries of the biographical data sets?

   i) On the one hand it should be possible to use structured forms of retrieval to enable a wide range of analyses including statistical procedures. On the other hand as much information as possible should be given in a readable form to facilitate sporadic usage; complex argumentation of any length might be integrated at any time: Given the scarcity of the sources, many resulting data remain hypothetical and could not be used without information about degrees of certainty and underlying assumptions. Also the cooperation of students with a limited amount of working time demanded the avoidance of complex codes; for mnemotechnical reasons abbreviations were assimilated to ancient epigraphical usage as far as possible. With its possibility, to treat user-defined codes as structures of a data base as well as commandos to format and compose a continuous text, *TUSTEP* enables the production of a file (PRI.BIO) yielding to the conflicting demands. In the end, "free" categories are mixed with a few encoded ones. Additionally, encoded information and index marks can be inserted at any place within the text entries of the "free" categories.

   ii) The information on all priests of a certain year is contained in the periods of individual office-holding, encoded in the biographical file. They could be automatically converted into yearly lists at the end of the work or any moment before. But very soon it proved worthwhile to "manually" generate and enlarge a second file containing the annual lists of office-holders as far as biographies had established the terms of office (PRI.FAS). By offering a clearer image of parallel memberships, quick checks are possible—in particular in establishing membership periods for new persons. Incompatibilities, *e.g.* scarcity of further collegial places, often show up in filling the lists and not in filing the biographies. Thus, at times, reworking starts in the *alba* and only then leads to corrections of the biographies.

2.1. PRI.BIO

The data structure, viz. the entry mask looks like this[13]:

```
@1  Reference name:
@2  Standard references: PIR  RE
@3  Nr. in prosopographies of priests:    Bardt    Klose    MRR
        Szemler    Howe    Hoffman    Lewis    Schumacher
@4  Status:    Sex:    patr:    pleb:    ethn:
@5  Other names:
@6  Date of birth/death:
@7  Religious functions:
@8  Place in career:
@9  Religious activities:
@10 Literary activities:
@11 Sources:
@12 Bibliography:
@13 Editor:    date:    status:
@14 Commentary:
@15 Work to be done:
```

The name of reference (@1) forms the link with the second file (PRI.FAS). Since the complex Roman names may appear in different forms in the sources, a form is used that is as complete as possible, *e.g.* naming the *praenomen* of the father and grandfather. Further *cognomina* or alternate forms are given under @5. If necessary, an arabic numeral for purposes of differentiation is added. The standard references (@2) enable the reader to check the information or to get further information more easily. The same is true for the next category, though usually the relevant information is presented completely in the file itself. For life-long offices—a characteristic feature of Roman priesthoods—the life span determines the end of office. At the same time it is interesting to establish a date of birth, in order to get an idea of the age of cooptation / ordination.

Category 7 deals with the kernel of the whole biography. Text may be entered in an unstructered form. By that it is possible to paraphrase the contents of a specific source as well as to indicate degrees of probability. The priesthood is marked with ((p...)), the period of office-holding is encoded in the form (((od1=d2=d3=d4))). d1 and d4 mark the beginning and the end of office. If both dates are definitely known, d2 and d3 are to be dropped. If one or both of them are not known, d2—as the first secure date (*terminus ante quem* of beginning of office)—and / or d3—as the last secure date (*terminus post quem* of end of office)—have to be entered. In these cases d1 and d4 are to be (carefully

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[13] The classification and the following examples are translated; the file as such is produced in German.

and restrictively) estimated. Such estimated dates have to start and end at the beginning or end of five-year-periods (*e.g.* 90–66 B.C.; 55–51 B.C.; A.D. 36–40; A.D. 121–155), to avoid the pretence of exactness. In PRI.FAS the names will be written in italics in years within periods that are not surrounded by two secure dates; known dates of cooptation or death are shown by bold letters. Double brackets mark indexed terms that are part of the text, triple brackets "invisible" additional information, *e.g.* (((g...))) for key words of general interest. Also symbols documenting checks already done (*e.g.* ##) could be integrated.

The next category gives an outline of any political or military career. It aims at producing a context for important stages in the religious "career" (usually a classical Roman priests had just one priestly office, which he held for the rest of his life). The remaining categories should be self-explaining. A short explanation of "literary activities": These pieces of information do not primarily serve to illustrate the biographical portrait, but to document in how far the theoretical reflection of one's own religion and its possible development ("theology") is done by persons filling the institutionalized rôles of this cult. To put it in a nut-shell: Do priests in Roman cults produce theological tractates or are these written by marginalized "intellectuals"?

As an example, the following biography is produced in its file form and in the format of the final paper publication, which is produced automatically:

```
@1 Reference name: Aemilius M. f. M. n. Lepidus, M. (2)
@2 Standard references: RE Aemilius 68.## KP Lepidus I.4.##
@3 Nr. in prosopographies of priests: Bardt P 22, Pon m 13##; MRR
1,329##. 390## Szemler P 12##.
@4 Status: Sex: m patr: x pleb: ethn:
@5 Further names:
@6 Date of birth/death: Around 230-152 B. C.@F+For the year of
birth s. MÜNZER 1920:171. 177##; for the year of
death additionally BARDT.@f-
@7 Religious functions: ((pPontifex)) since 199, (((o-199===-152)))
from 180 ((ppontifex maximus)).(((o-180===-152)))
@8 Place in career: Already 201 legate Lepidus became 193 curule
aedile, 187 and 175 consul, 179 censor. Afterwards princeps
senatus.
@9 Religious activities: Taking down of votive weaponry to finance
the renovation of the temple of Iuppiter Capitolinus (as censor
179, Liv. 40,51,3##). Preformulates the prayer of the ((gvota
decennalia)) 172 (Liv. 42,28,8 f.##). 156 the roof of his office-
house was thrown into the Tiber by lightning (Obs. 16##). Speaking
for his college he denied the censor the right to dedicate a
statue of Concordia in 152 correctly (Cic. domo 136##).
@10 Literary activities:
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@11 Sources: RRC 419/2## (pontifex maximus); Liv. 32,7,15##
(cooptation); 40,42,12## (election as pontifex maximus); per. 48##
(death).
@12 Bibliography: MÜNZER 1920:170-8. 201 f. 410##; DRAPER
1988:246##.
@13 Editor: JR,WL date:04.10.91 Status:+
@14 Commentary:
@15 Work to be done:
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The final form looks like this:

58[14]

Aemilius M. f. M. n. Lepidus, M. (2)

RE Aemilius 68. KP Lepidus I.4. — Bardt P 22, Pon m 13; MRR 1,329. 390; Szemler P 12. M. Pa.

Around 230–152 B.C.[1] — Pontifex since 199, from 180 pontifex maximus. Already 201 legate Lepidus became 193 curule aedile, 187 and 175 consul, 179 censor. Afterwards princeps senatus. Religious activities: Taking down of votive weaponry to finance the renovation of the temple of Iuppiter Capitolinus (as censor 179, Liv. 40,51,3). Preformulates the prayer of the *vota decennalia* 172 (Liv. 42,28,8 f.). 156 the roof of his office-house was thrown into the Tiber by lightning (Obs. 16). Speaking for his college he denied the censor the right to dedicate a statue of Concordia in 152 correctly (Cic. *domo* 136). RRC 419/2 (pontifex maximus); Liv. 32,7,15 (cooptation); 40,42,12 (election as pontifex maximus); *per.* 48 (death). MÜNZER 1920: 170–8. 201 f. 410; DRAPER 1988:246.

[1] For the year of birth s. MÜNZER: 1920:171. 177; for the year of death additionally BARDT.

The analysis of the file's data can be based on the connection of any features. Thus, the names of all patrician (or libertine) *flamines* might be produced; priesthoods held by Cornelii might be listed. Statistical analyses of a more complex nature can be applied as well: A small program selects a couple of encoded data and produces a file that can be used for statistical analyses using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Analyses concentrating on the sources produce profiles of the kind of "priestly" data transmitted by individual authors or types of evidence (inscriptions, coins).

[14] The current identifying number is encoded in the internal file structure and can be used as reference for every purpose.

2.2. PRI.FAS

The possibilities of easy analysis are enhanced by the second file, which contains the annual lists of office-holders. As the yearly account differs according to the direct evidence or the number of reconstructed biographies for the period, a particular year is given as example instead of the empty formular. In the extreme case, dozens of different priesthoods with known office-holders can be named for a single year.

> 141 B.C. (613 a. u. c.)
> Sacerdotes
> Pontifex maximus: **P. Cornelius P. f. Cn. n. Scipio Nasica Corculum/P. Cornelius P. f. P. n. Scipio Nasica Serapio**
> Pontifices: *Cn. Domitius Cn. f. L n. Ahenobarbus*; T. Manlius A. f. T. n. Torquatus; *Q. Fabius Q. f. Q. n. Maximus Servilianus*; *P. Licinius P. f. P. n. Crassus Dives Mucianus*; **P. Cornelius P. f. P. n. Scipio Nasica Serapio**
> Vestales: *Claudia*
> Flamines: M: *L. Valerius L. f. L. n. Flaccus*; *Q: Ser. Fabius Q. f. Q. n. Pictor*
> Augures: *P. Cornelius P. f. P. n. Scipio Africanus Aemilianus*; *Q. Caecilius Q. f. L. n. Metellus Macedonicus*; *M. Aemilius M. f. M. n. Lepidus Porcina*; *Ser. Sulpicius Ser. f. P n. Galba (2)*; *C. Laelius C. f. C. n.*; *Ap. Claudius C. f. Ap. n. Pulcher*; Ti. Sempronius Ti. f. P. n. Gracchus
> Sacris faciundis: *M. Aemilius M'. f. M'. n. Lepidus*; *L. Cornelius Cn. f. L. n. Lentulus Lupus*
> Epulones: Q. Fulvius M. f. M. n. Nobilior
> Salii: Ap. Claudius C. f. Ap. n. Pulcher

> **Bold letters**: known exit/entry dates   Normal: secure dates
> *Italics*: hypothetical dates

This printed form is identical with the file format (except for minor details). It lists the known members of each college in the sequence of cooptation. A decree of a college would have named the members present in this order, as we know from two examples that have been preserved by the literary tradition[15]. The example shows the enormous amount of new results—hypotheses at least—generated by the principle of investigating the duration of membership for each person. Due to the loss of Livy's history for the years after 167, there is nearly no direct evidence for priestly membership in the following years at all, apart from a few passing notes in Ciceronian speeches or dialogues. This is indicated by the italics used for most of the names. Nevertheless quite a few members can be named; the slash for the pontifex maximus indicates a change of the office-holder in 142.

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[15] Cicero, *de haruspicum responso* 12; Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 3,13. See TAYLOR (Lily Ross): 1942, "Caesar's colleagues in the pontifical college", *American Journal of Philology*, 63, pp. 385–412.

By a "show only"-command, membership lists of a specific college for successive years might be produced. For instance, what about the college of the augurs after the death of Sulla?

78 B.C.: L. Marcius Q. f. Q. n. Philippus; L. Iulius L. f. L. n. Caesar; **L. Cornelius L. f. P. n. Sulla Felix**; *C. Coelius C. f. C. n. Caldus*; *L. Licinius L. f. L. n. Lucullus*; *Cn. Pompeius Cn. f. Sex. n. Magnus*

77 B.C.: L. Marcius Q. f. Q. n. Philippus; L. Iulius L. f. L. n. Caesar; *C. Coelius C. f. C. n. Caldus*; *L. Licinius L. f. L. n. Lucullus*; *Cn. Pompeius Cn. f. Sex. n. Magnus*

76 B.C.: L. Marcius Q. f. Q. n. Philippus; L. Iulius L. f. L. n. Caesar; *C. Coelius C. f. C. n. Caldus*; *L. Licinius L. f. L. n. Lucullus*; *Cn. Pompeius Cn. f. Sex. n. Magnus*

75 B.C.: L. Iulius L. f. L. n. Caesar; *L. Licinius L. f. L. n. Lucullus*; *Cn. Pompeius Cn. f. Sex. n. Magnus*

By reducing the information displayed to the names given in bold letters, the membership list of a college can be reduced to the format shown by classical inscriptions from Augustan time onward (and probably used by the internal documents before), namely, showing the exits (by death) and cooptations only:

216 B.C.

P. Scantinius/Q. Caecilius L. f. L. n. Metellus; L. Aemilius M. f. M. n. Paullus/Q. Fabius Q. f. Q. n. Maximus Verrucosus; Q. Aelius P. f. Paétus/Q. Fulvius M. f. Q. n. Flaccus

213 B.C.

L. Cornelius L. f. Ti. n. Lentulus Caudinus; C. Papirius C. f. L. n. Maso/Cn. Servilius Cn. f. Cn. n. Caepio; M. Cornelius M. f. M. n. Cethegus

212 B.C.

P. Licinius P. f. P. n. Crassus Dives

211 B.C.

M'. Pomponius M'. f. M'. n. Matho/C. Livius M. f. M. n. Salinator; T. Otacilius Crassus

210 B.C.

C. Servilius C. f. P. n. Geminus

203 B.C.

Q. Fabius Q. f. Q. n. Maximus Verrucosus/Ser. Sulpicius Ser. f. P. n. Galba (1)

202 B.C.

T. Manlius T. f. T. n. Torquatus/C. Sulpicius Galba

199 B.C.

Ser. Sulpicius Ser. f. P. n. Galba (1)/M. Aemilius M. f. M. n. Lepidus (2); C. Sulpicius Galba/Cn. Cornelius Cn. f. L. n. Scipio Hispallus

196 B.C.

M. Cornelius M. f. M. n. Cethegus/L. Valerius P. f. L. n. Flaccus; C. Sempronius Tuditanus/M. Claudius M. f. M. n. Marcellus (2)

183 B.C.
P. Licinius P. f. P. n. Crassus Dives/C. Servilius C. f. P. n. Geminus; M. Sempronius M. f. C. n. Tuditanus

180 B.C.
C. Servilius C. f. P. n. Geminus/M. Aemilius M. f. M. n. Lepidus (2); L. Valerius P. f. L. n. Flaccus/Q. Fabius Q. f. Q. n. Labeo; Q. Fulvius Q. f. M. n. Flaccus

177 B.C.
M. Claudius M. f. M. n. Marcellus (2)/M. Claudius M. f. M. n. Marcellus (3)

176 B.C.
Cn. Cornelius Cn. f. L. n. Scipio Hispallus/L. Furius Philus

174 B.C.
Cn. Servilius Cn. f. Cn. n. Caepio/C. Sulpicius C. f. Galba; M. Sempronius M. f. C. n. Tuditanus/N. N.

172 B.C.
Q. Fulvius Q. f. M. n. Flaccus/Cn. Domitius Cn. f. L. n. Ahenobarbus

170 B.C.
C. Livius M. f. M. n. Salinator/M. Servilius M. f. C. n.; L. Furius Philus/T. Manlius A. f. T. n. Torquatus

The example is taken from the pontiffs and covers the years of the extant Livian tradition (218–167 B.C.); the only retouch for the printing is the melting of *pontifex* maximus with the other pontiffs. To get the ancient form, one has to imagine an *in loco eius* instead of the slash; single names denote succession to another single person in a previous year.

3. Perspectives

The prosopographical work as outlined above is planned to be finished by 1995. It will provide History of Religion like Ancient History with a useful, although limited tool. By supplementing paper forms by electronic data bases prosopographical works gain in accessibility. Despite its small size—in comparison with the large epigraphical projects—it proves the usefulness of a planful computerization. *TUSTEP* offered the opportunity to create a powerful analytical tool with a small amount of time spent in programming. Its free availability for PCs and mainframe machines (for complex operations) eased the decentralized handling of data-input, the range of applications—from writing a paper to manipulating large data bases and directly transforming it to photocomposition—proved useful for the communication within a group of different small projects in a research or teaching context.