ACTA INSTITUTI ROMANI FINLANDIAE VOL. 47

LIFE AND DEATH IN A MULTICULTURAL HARBOUR CITY: OSTIA ANTICA FROM THE REPUBLIC THROUGH LATE ANTIQUITY

editor

ARJA KARIVIERI



ROMA 2020

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Foreword

Mariarosaria Barbera
Director emerita, Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica

Both dependent on water, Ostia and Tampere have over the course of their existence adapted and adjusted to it: the former even derives the name by which it has gone down in history since at least the fourth century BCE from the concept of river mouth (*ostium*).

Naturally, water is not the only element that prompted us to establish close ties between Ostia and Tampere. These are two distant and different cities, one speaking the language of the Mediterranean, the other the tongue of the Nordic peoples to whom the ancient world gave the fabled name of "Hyperboreans".

A significant role was played by the close collaboration between the institution now known as the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica and the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* and, to an even greater extent, the unwavering interest and detailed attention that the very active Finnish Institute has for decades devoted to the entire port system that, in ancient times, was made up of Ostia and the nearby town of Portus. With our friends at the *Institutum* we have established a long-standing and uninterrupted dialogue on the historical processes that shaped the Roman coast. This collaboration relationship celebrated the third millennium with a ground-breaking conference held in December 1999. The meeting shed new light on the system of relations between Ostia-Portus and Rome, and was fittingly published in 2002 in a volume of the Institute's Acta (*ActaIRF* 27) entitled: *Ostia e Portus nelle loro relazioni con Roma* edited by C. Bruun and A. Gallina Zevi.

From books and conferences we have now moved on to this splendid and fascinating exhibition that responds, in the concrete shape of installations and physical objects brought to Finland, to a growing interest in the historical and archaeological developments that Rome and its empire have rendered immortal.

For the Republican city initially, and later for the capital of a vast empire that for centuries survived its own enormous size, Ostia was the first and most important "calling card" for anyone travelling by sea to the Eternal City from one of the many ports of the Mediterranean's hospitable basin.

Ostia, described in the sources as the first of the Roman colonies, was founded in around the mid-fourth century BCE as a fortified settlement (*castrum*) at the mouth of the Tiber river. During the Republican and imperial periods it grew gradually larger thanks to its strategic importance as the port of Rome. In an area that eventually came to cover over a hundred hectares, extending beyond the course of the Tiber to the north (the so-called "Ostian Trastevere", revealed by recent sub-surface prospections) lay a lively town inhabited – according to some plausible theories – by a population that at its height exceeded 50,000 people.

In its long history, uninterrupted from the fourth century BCE to at least the fifth-sixth century CE, the settlement originally reserved for 300 families of colonists and bounded by a modest wall circuit gradually took on the aspect of a town, with a mixture of administrative and commercial functions in the service of the capital and its territory. At the same time, a mixture of public and private amenities developed, with temples and sanctuaries, civic structures like the basilica and the curia, public baths and the theatre with the Piazzale delle Corporazioni.



Figure 1. In 1908-1913, during the excavations directed by Dante Vaglieri, a "ferrovia Decauville", a small portable railway was acquired for the removal of the earth. During the excavations of the Quattro tempietti west of the theatre, a large marble relief was found, representing a *togatus* making a sacrifice (Museo Ostiense, inv. 31). Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The urban fabric also included private residential buildings, consisting both of large densely populated apartment blocks and the *domus* of the wealthier classes, together with a varied range of shops, including *thermopolia* and *cauponae* where residents and travellers could eat and drink. Last but not least, a contribution to the cityscape was made by the large warehouses occupying the whole strip along the Tiber and that characterized Ostia as a port city linked to the grain taxes of Rome.

Much of Ostia's "added value" with respect to other towns and settlements of the Roman period, in Italy (and elsewhere), lies in the fact that it has preserved exceptional evidence of private residential architecture in the mid- and late imperial period that allows us to understand and appreciate the typological evolution of buildings from the first until at least the fifth century CE. We should also mention that, for the same period, the houses of Ostia and the necropolis of Isola Sacra host the two largest concentrations of Roman painting cycles from the Flavian period onwards, as well as fully illustrating the developments of the mosaic and floor coverings used to decorate buildings.

The Park not only preserves the often monumental funerary structures of the "Laurentine" necropolis near today's archaeological site of Ostia and the slightly more distant necropolis of Isola Sacra, facing the "Ostian Trastevere" (there are over 200 overground tombs at Isola Sacra). Its storerooms also hold fascinating artefacts recovered during the succession of more or less "licit" excavations that took place over the decades from the early 19th century onwards – up until the 1950s the archaeologists Dante Vaglieri and Guido Calza were responsible for the most important of these.



Figure 2. The area of the Republican Temples after the excavations in 1938; in the centre the Temple of Hercules. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

For centuries, Ostia was exploited to "recover" valuable materials and as a result the town's statues, sarcophagi and inscriptions (the latter make up the second largest collection in the world, immediately after Rome) are to be seen no longer in their original context but in major museums in Italy and abroad. Despite these thefts, the Ostia-*Portus* archaeological system still offers a rich and complex picture representative and illustrative of the creations of the ancient world that travelled overland and above all by sea.

Contemporary with Ostia and in a constant dialogue with it, the area of *Portus* offers insights into the imposing port infrastructure that, particularly from the Roman imperial period onwards, facilitated trade and the connections between Rome and the whole Mediterranean area more generally. This was thanks to the construction of the large port of Claudius, later renovated and enlarged by Trajan with an imposing hexagonal basin, capable of protecting large ships from storms and the fury of the sea. "Rewarded" by Constantine, who in the early fourth century CE recognized its status as a city, and in keeping with the functions for which it was born and prospered even after Ostia's decline, the state-owned archaeological site at *Portus* is now home to the Museum of the Ships, Museo dalle Navi. This museum will shortly reopen to the public with new displays on some of the best known ships of the Mediterranean with their hulls almost intact, together with other materials from on board.

The finds from the excavations, old and more recent, play an important role in archaeological and historical research. Within the exhibition we thus see an intertwined sequence of different aspects of life, and of the Roman world more generally, illustrated by carefully chosen objects from Ostia, attentively selected in a mutually enriching collaboration with our Finnish friends.

A rapid glance at the catalogue fully conveys the richness of the themes tackled and the objects presented, covering a period of about nine centuries and ranging from statues, reliefs and inscriptions of some importance to the humbler instruments of everyday life, decorations such as mosaic floors, objects for personal adornment and hygiene. The world of magic is represented by amulets and curse tablets (*tabellae defixionum*), the divine sphere is illustrated by statues of gods small and large (chief among them the god Vulcan, the protector of Ostia). The traditional Roman pantheon is accompanied by eastern cults, including Christianity, which for centuries were able to coexist thanks to the melting pot conditions typical of Roman culture and particularly prevalent in the highly tolerant Ostia. Nor is the world of the dead absent: it is represented not only by urns and funerary altars, but also by osteological remains that have been rigorously studied, interpreted and made comprehensible to all.

The finds are also a valuable tool in the promotion and dissemination of the heritage and values that the Park of Ostia is called upon to represent and share not just with specialists but above all with other communities, near and far: those which the Faro Convention describes as "heritage communities".

The exhibition introduced by this text was born out of this objective: to fully share these common interests and values, in the awareness of the need – and I would say the duty – to recover and relaunch the international vocation of an area – the Roman coast and with it Ostia and Portus – that has always been a crossroads for different peoples and cultures. Thanks in part to the mediation of the Archaeological Park, the area's relationship of scholarly collaboration with international research institutions grows stronger every day.

Acknowledgements

The project, *Segregated or Integrated? Living and Dying in the Harbour City of Ostia, 300 BCE–700 CE,* that was directed by Arja Karivieri in collaboration with Docent Katariina Mustakallio, and financed by the Academy Finland and Tampere University (2015-2019) was conducted in close collaboration with the Director of the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Dr. Mariarosaria Barbera and all her colleagues at Ostia. We owe a great debt of gratitude especially to Dr. Barbera, Dr. Paola Germoni, Dr. Cinzia Morellli and Dr. Cristina Genovese in all scientific and practical issues through the years.

The project team of the research project of the Academy of Finland and Tampere University, directed by Karivieri and Mustakallio, consisted of Docent Ria Berg, Docent Marja-Leena Hänninen, Docent Anna Kjellström, postdoctoral scholar Dr. Ghislaine van der Ploeg, and as additional members Dr. Jesper Blid and Pekka Tuomisto. The project has included several affiliated partners who have made this project a great success: Prof. Marxiano Melotti from the Università Niccolo Cusano at Rome and Prof. Ray Laurence from the Macquarie University, Prof. Christer Bruun from the University of Toronto, Prof. Heikki Solin and Prof. Olli Salomies at the University of Helsinki, Prof. Lena Larsson Lovén from the Gothenburg University, Prof. Véronique Dasen from the University of Fribourg, Prof. Anders Götherström from Stockholm University, Assoc. Prof. Marina Prusac Lindhagen from the Museum of Cultural History at the University of Oslo, Assoc. Prof. Birte Poulsen from Aarhus University, and in Rome, Dr. Paola Catalano from the Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma, and Prof. Olga Rickards and Dr. Flavio De Angelis from the Tor Vergata University. We also wish to thank Docent Antero Tammisto who kindly provided us with new iconographical analyses of mosaic emblemata from Ostia, and all our colleagues at Trivium, Tampere Centre for Classical, Medieval and Early Modern Studies for multidisciplinary discussions through the years.

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Ancient history from August 2017, also as the Director of the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae*, and to concentrate during these years on Ostia studies and the project. At the same time, the project of the Academy of Finland and the Tampere University contributed to the research period of Docent Anna Kjellström from the Osteoarchaeological Laboratory at Stockholm University and enabled her participation in the project. The DNA-laboratory, directed by Prof. Anders Götherström, at the Department of Archaeology and Classical studies at Stockholm University has contributed with DNA-analyses and collaboration with the anthropological section of the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica and Dr. Paola Francesca Rossi, as well as the important collaboration with the Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma, Sezione di Antropologia, directed during the project by Dr. Paola Catalano, and her collaborators, Andrea Battistini, Carla Caldarini and Stefania di Giannantonio, and with the research group of the Università Tor Vergata, Dr. Flavio De Angelis, Prof. Olga Rickards, Dr. Cristina Martinez-Labarga and Dr. Sara Varano. For this book, we also got an essential contribution of Prof. Michael MacKinnon, specialist of zooarcheology, who has collaborated with many research groups in Ostia.

A central role in the project from the beginning onwards has been the support of Dr. Paola Germoni, curator of the collections in Ostia, when Soprintendente Francesco Prosperetti gave the official permit for the project in 2015 to start the research and planning of a large Ostia exhibition. The exhibition project *Ostia. Portti Roomaan* (*Ostia, Gateway to Rome*) that has been a central part of the research project, was conducted in close collaboration with the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae*, the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere, and a large international group of scholars. The director of the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Dr. Mariarosaria Barbera created a unique, inspiring working group for the exhibition and has supported the development of the project with great enthusiasm. Together with Dr. Germoni and Dr. Cinzia Morelli, Dr. Barbera created the most favorable conditions for this major exhibition, where we for the first time can present in Northern Europe all the treasures that Ostia's soil has deposited until modern era. Dr. Cristina Genovese has played a key role in the implementation of the exhibition. We are also grateful for the many important comments that Dr. Paola Olivanti, the coordinator of the 2001 Geneva exhibition in Ostia, has given us over the years. Franco Giovannangeli, Adriana Orlando and Patrizia Tomei have assisted in the selection of exhibits and inspection of the objects in Ostia's storerooms, and conservators Antonella Docci and Tiziana Sorgoni were responsible for the extremely important part of the exhibition, the control and conservation of the objects before the exhibition. In Ostia's photo archive Dr. Marina Lo Blundo, Giovanna Cilione and Stefania Falchi, and Barbara Ruggero, the curator of the drawing archive, have provided both photos of artefacts and several unique old excavation images, drawings and maps for the publication and illustrations of the exhibition, for which we would like to express our warm thanks. Over the years, many members of Ostia's staff have helped our group in various occasions, including Dr. Claudia Tempesta, Dr. Flora Panariti, Dr. Dario Daffara and Cristiano Brughitta, and we would like to warmly thank everyone.

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The exhibition *Ostia. Portti Roomaan* was inaugurated on 31st of October, 2019 in Tampere, and due to the lockdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the exhibition will continue until the 10th of January 2021. Another collaborative partner during the project of the Academy of Finland has been the Museum of Cultural History at the University of Oslo. Most of the objects in the Vapriikki exhibition come from the collections of the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, and some of them have never been exposed before. We got the unique possibility to include several central pieces of the collections due to the ongoing renovation and reinstallation of the exhibitions in the Museo Ostiense, and we are deeply grateful for this honour. For the exhibition, important was also the possibility to be able to include some of the famous models and some plaster casts of marble reliefs and sarcophagi from the Museo della Civiltà Romana in Rome. The unique examples of anthropological material in the exhibition are on display with the kind permission of the Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma, and we thank Soprintendente Dr. Daniela Porro for this possibility. We also wish to thank Karolinska Institutet in Solna and Petter Förander for the permission to show their small collection of surgical instruments in the exhibition. Prof. Véronique Dasen, our colleague from the University of Fribourg, Director of the European ERC research project *Locus Ludi. The Cultural Fabric of Play and Games in Classical Antiquity* has kindly given the permission to show videos of ancient games produced by the ERC project team in the exhibition.

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Rome, 24 June 2020
Arja Karivieri

Organization of the Exhibition in Tampere
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Coordination of the exhibition in Rome
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Tmi Kaarina Marttila
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Introduction

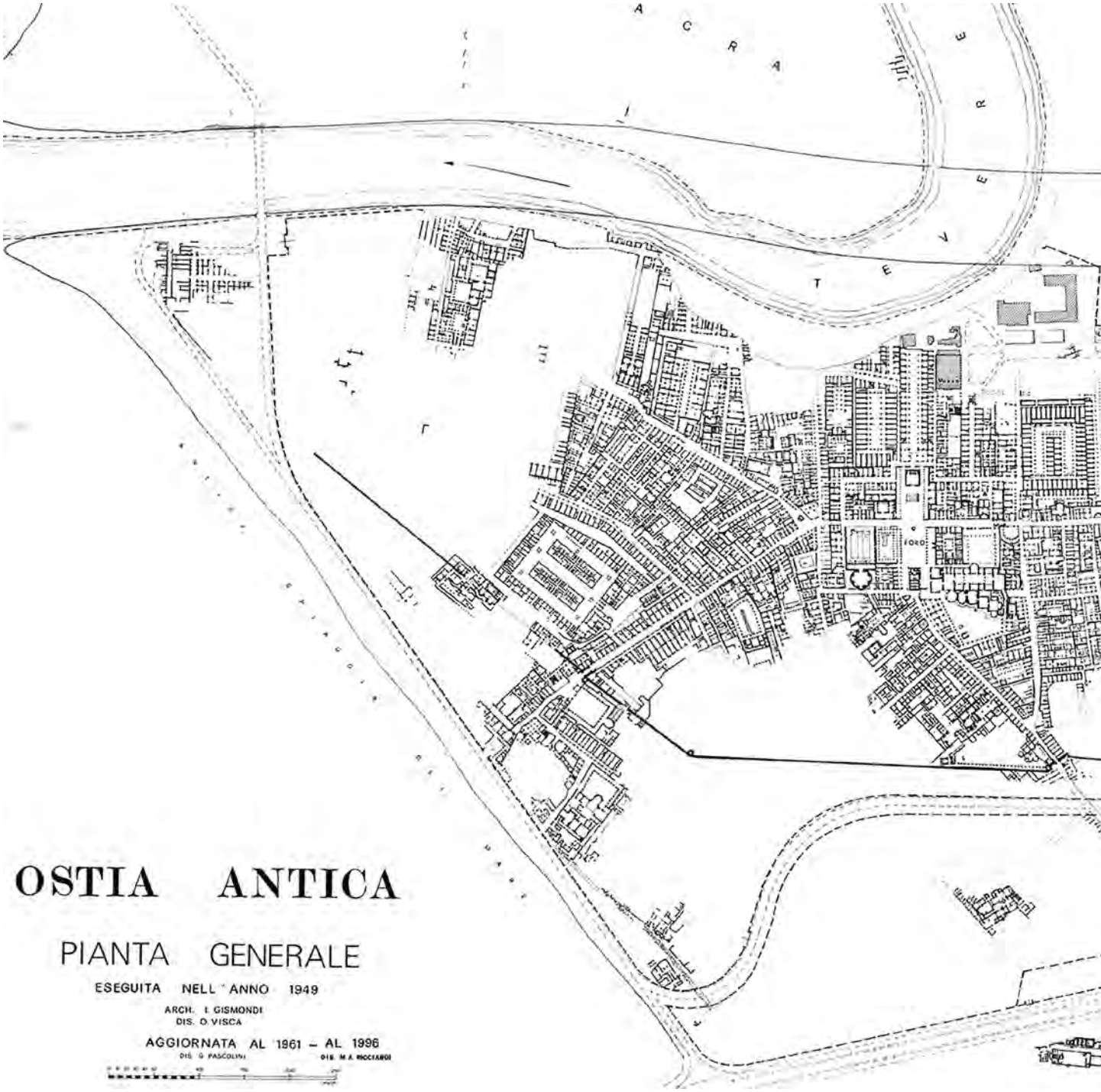
Arja Karivieri

Ancient Ostia has been in focus for years for both our Italian colleagues and research groups from several countries, through various publications, Ostia seminars for new results of archaeological and historical research, as well as thematic workshops, including Finnish scholars who have made their contribution to the development of new research approaches and initiatives. The collaboration between the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* and the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica dates back to the 1960s, when Prof. Jaakko Suolahti with his group studied, analyzed and published the large collection of brick stamps found in Ostia, at that time stored in Castello at Ostia Antica. Another important Finnish research project was directed by Dr. Anne Helttula, whose research group documented and published the grave inscriptions from Isola Sacra. In 1975-1980, the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* conducted joint excavations in the ancient town of Ficana together with other Nordic institutes in Rome, in collaboration with the Soprintendenza archeologica di Ostia.

The current volume is a result of the four-year project, *Segregated or Integrated? Living and Dying in the Harbour City of Ostia, 300 BCE–700 CE,* of the Academy of Finland and Tampere University, launched in September 2015, to study, analyse, revise and synthesize results of decades of archaeological and historical research in the harbour city of Ostia from its early history until Late Antiquity, with a new approach. The main aim of the research project was to investigate how established and incoming cultures interacted within the built environment, material and literary culture, over a millennium, in terms of their political, social, and religious life, both in the local community and in the central hub of Mediterranean travel. Different cultures, ethnicities and religions from across the Mediterranean interacted in this port environment, which was especially sensitive to changes in the wider world. The well-preserved urban landscape of Ostia thus provides a unique opportunity to enquire into a millennium of pre-modern cultural identity, and to address a modern issue: how migrating groups change an urban society.

The project studied ethnical and cultural integration, and how political, social and religious life changed and developed through centuries through the impact of different ethnic groups and religious cults. Cultural encounters were reflected in the cityscape and changes in art and minor objects. During the project, these results were also compared to the analyses of osteoarchaeological material that provides information about the mobility of people, their lifespan, nutrition and diseases. The thread in the project has been the life histories of Ostian people, their origin, life and death; how their original identities were transformed and new local identities were constructed in Ostia in a multicultural and cosmopolitan setting. The project has studied how the arrival of incomers affected urban development, public building, urban rituals and social display, as well as private space and grave inscriptions, and how global ethno-religious practices were embedded in the daily life of local neighbourhoods.

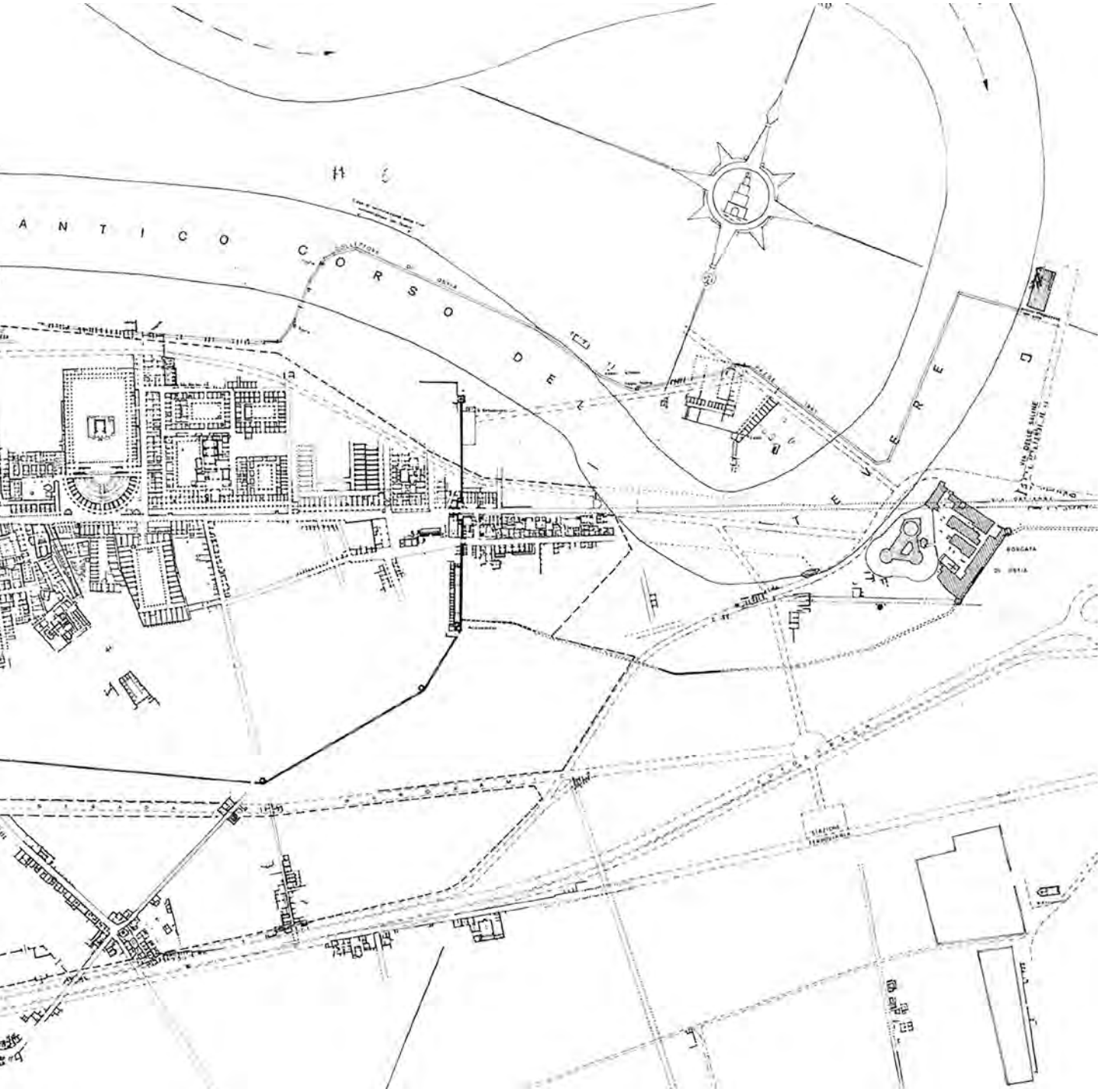
The research questions included the following: how did the ancient harbour city of Rome cope with immigration, on what basis did the people of Ostia build their identity, and in what ways did Ostia constitute



Map 1. Ostia Antica, detailed plan of the excavations. Plan: M. A. Ricciardi 1996. Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

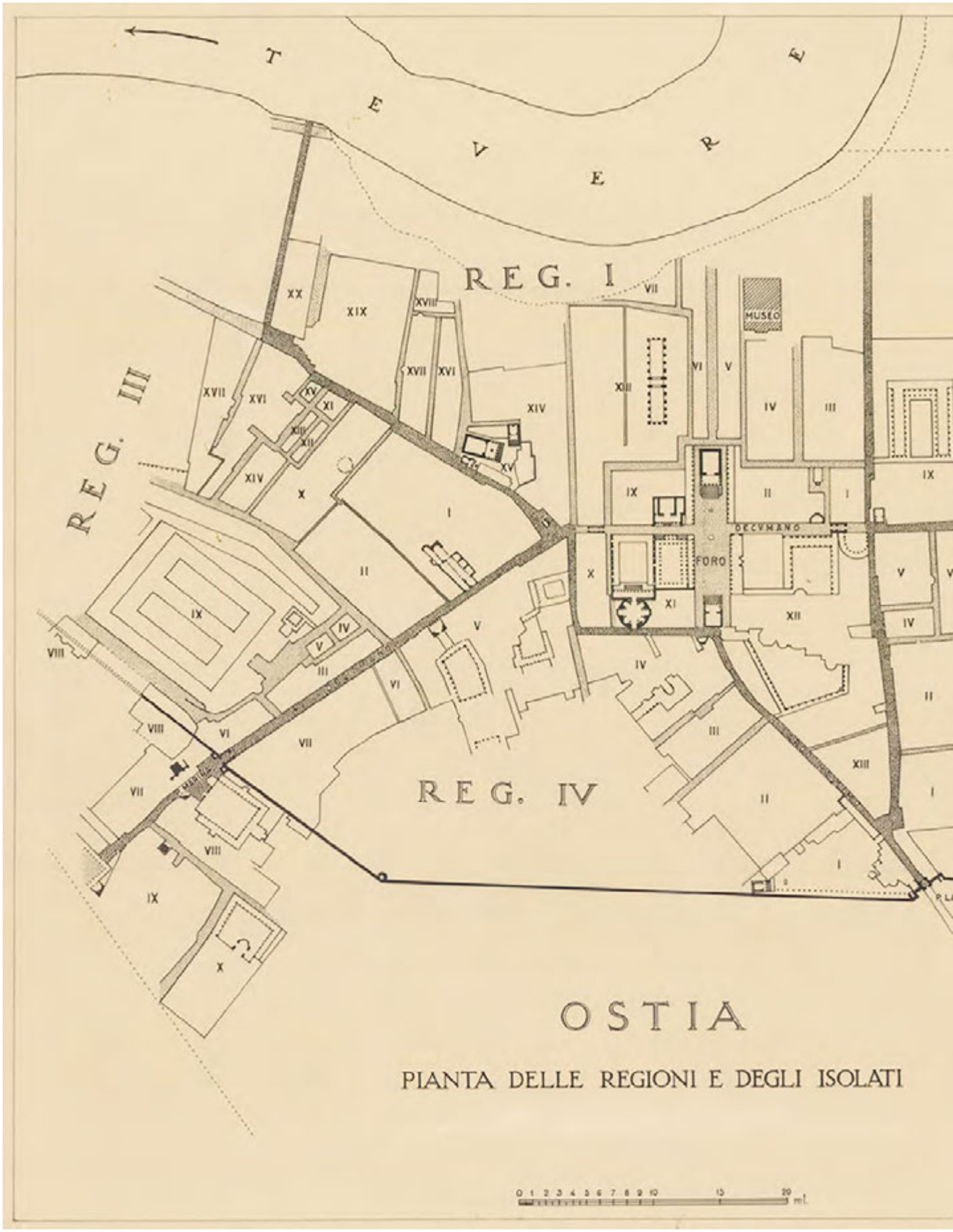
a middle ground where several identities could co-exist. These questions were analysed through case-studies of archaeological remains, spatial analyses, topographical survey, epigraphy, and research into human osteology, as well as literature and cultural research, integrating the existing and new survey and excavation results into our research data and conclusions, with a common approach connected to the theories of identity and social otherness.

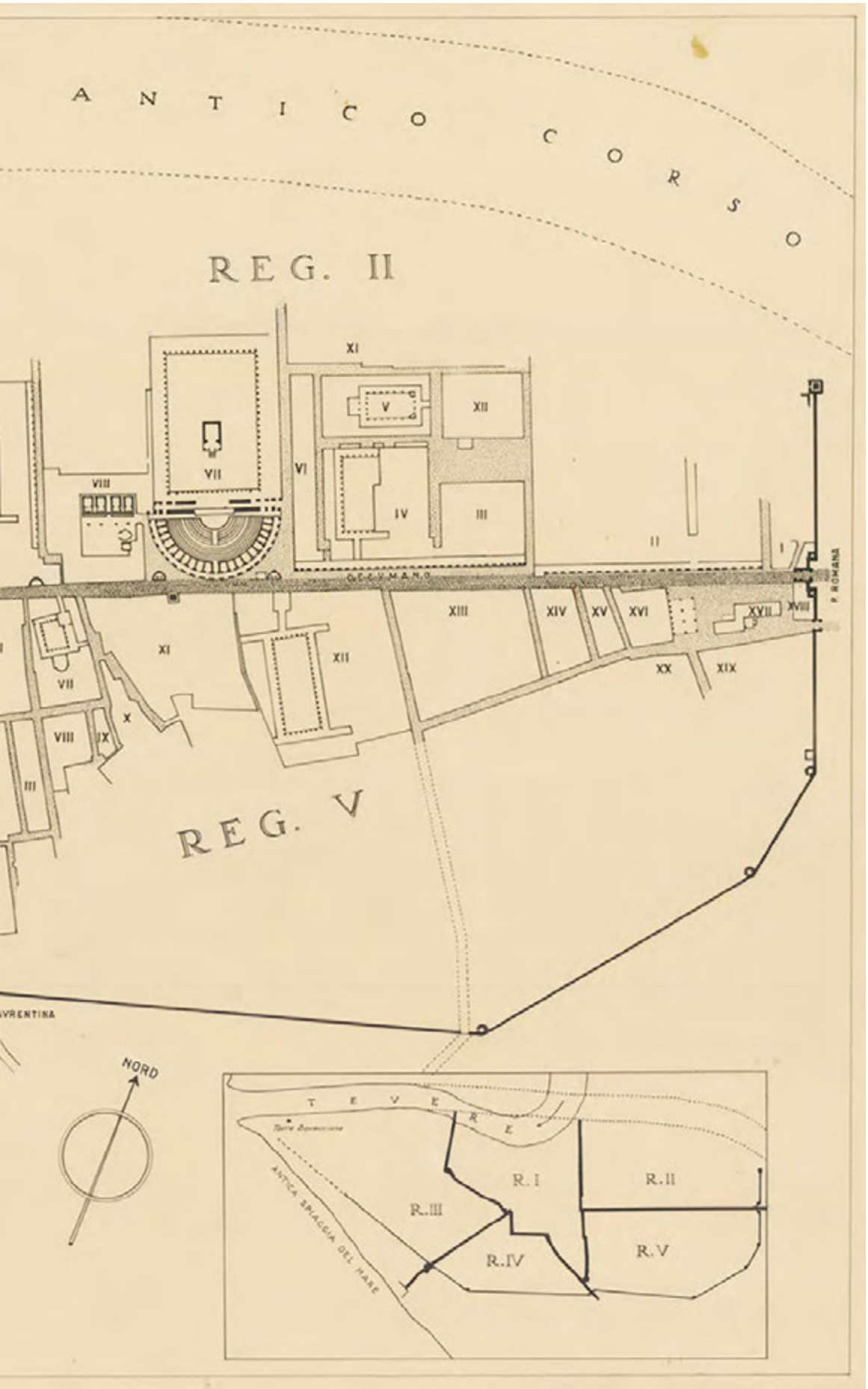
This new Ostia project has added a new research perspective to the already existing and currently conducted studies in Ostia by approaching the city in its entirety from a cultural and social perspective, which



allows us to re-examine the life histories of Ostia's inhabitants with new objectives and methodologies. In our publications and the exhibition *Ostia, Gateway to Rome*, we provide an interdisciplinary synthesis on Roman urban identities, by placing the focus on questions of ethnicity, as well as cultural and social identities in the Roman society, in order to showcase this great example of the ancient experience of cultural encounters.

From the beginning, the aim of the project was to create new results through collaborative multidisciplinary research, thematic workshops and participation in international conferences, through annual field


T E V E R E
REG. I
REG. III
REG. IV
MUSEO
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MARITIMA
OSTIA
PIANTA DELLE REGIONI E DEGLI ISOLATI
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 15 20 ml.



Map 2. Ostia Antica, general plan of the excavations, with regions, *Regio* I-V, and *insulae*. Plan: O. Visca 1952. Parco Archaeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

work periods in Ostia and seminar discussions of the project group, and to collect the required data for a large new exhibition where the main theme of the research project is presented, i.e., Ostia as a central hub, a multicultural society where multiple nationalities cohabited and collaborated, and various religions and cults of the Roman Empire coexisted simultaneously.

The production of this volume was more time-consuming than was planned from the beginning. For the exhibition at Tampere, a Finnish book, *Ostia. Portti Roomaan*, was published at the end of 2019, including in part the same articles as the present volume. Several articles have, however, been revised, updated and expanded for this publication, and the catalogue of the objects in the exhibition has been added at the end of this book. The title of the present book reflects the thematic approach of the research project, emphasizing our interest in the life histories of Ostia's inhabitants in the multicultural harbour city. This volume includes also an article by Marxiano Melotti on the liminality of Ostia, which was not included in the Finnish volume *Ostia. Portti Roomaan*. We also wish to thank warmly Christer Bruun, who wrote a chapter on water supply in Ostia for the Finnish book; however, his study on the administration of water supply in Ostia will be discussed in greater detail in his forthcoming historical monograph on Ostia.

The authors of this collaborative volume include scholars who worked on the project of the Academy of Finland at the University of Tampere, as well as numerous scholars who have been working at Ostia for years or decades, creating a unique international group of people who have Ostian studies at the centre of their scholarly interests. This volume also aims to provide a new, thematically organized, up-to-date presentation of the city of Ostia Antica in English. A previous large collection of scholarly articles on Ostia, together with an exhibition catalogue, *Ostia. Port et porte de la Rome antique* was published in 2001 in French, for the first exhibition in which Ostia, its history and archaeology were presented abroad for an international audience at the Musée Rath in Geneva. The Swiss exhibition volume was the result of the collaboration between Swiss and Italian archaeologists, the research group in Ostia under the direction of Soprintendente Dr. Anna Gallina Zevi and the Swiss group under the direction of Cäsar Metz, director of the Musées d'art et d'histoire, and Jean-Paul Descoeudres, professor of Classical archaeology at the University of Geneva.

The new, thematic approach of the present work to the history and archaeology of Ostia is reflected also in the contents of the volume. The authors of the various chapters represent several countries active in Ostian studies (in alphabetical order: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland) and present their interpretations and various scholarly views, providing references to further publications and reports that are listed in the general bibliography, which aims to cover the main aspects and research problems concerning archaeological and historical studies at Ostia.

This book presents results of new research on Ostia and Portus in the form of short chapters. Several articles present a synthetic view of specific aspects of life and death in Ostia Antica, giving information about the ways of life and activities in the Tiber delta, in the harbour of Rome. Many articles discuss archaeological material, buildings and small finds, or inscriptions, but ancient literary sources too reveal a plethora of information that is highly interesting and enables us to understand better the Ostian society and the life stories of its inhabitants.

The book is divided into four main sections, I The Harbour of Rome, II The City of Ostia, III Everyday Life in Ostia, IV Religion and Cults. The first section presents the early phases in the history of Ostia as a *castrum*, as a guardian of the salt works located in the Tiber river delta. The development of the city from the naval centre in the fourth century BCE to the most important trading port of the Mediterranean in the second century CE is followed through the growth of Portus harbour, Ostia's road system and artificial water channels between Ostia and Portus, as well as the development of infrastructure and connectivity.

The second section is dedicated to the flourishing centuries of the city of Ostia and the specific character of the international harbour city: architecture, building and administration, but also housing, people and their multicultural identities. In this section, the reader gets more information about living conditions in the famous apartment blocks of Ostia: where did the inhabitants sleep, where did they eat and where were the toilets of these apartments. Another chapter presents the lavish private houses of the late antique Ostia, with their exquisite furnishing. The urban life includes the daily activities of the working class of Ostia, various artisans and craftsmen and their associations – the ordinary people who provide one of the most important aspects for research on Ostia. The salt works of Ostia had a central role in the history of ancient Ostia, as well as the large group of slaves working in the salt works.

The third section deepens our view of the many aspects of everyday life of Ostia's inhabitants almost two thousand years ago. The urban life in Ostia consisted of working, shopping, leisure and entertainment, as well as daily routines of the ordinary family. Women had an important role in the social and religious life of the city, and their stories reveal interesting details of marriage, family structures, and economic realities in the city, as these are documented in many inscriptions. Dressing, jewelry, and interest in make-up and hair-dressing are revealed by many small objects and personal items found in Ostia.

The fourth section is dedicated to the evidence of religion and cults in Ostia. Some of the cults were established already in the Republican period, and derive from the Graeco-Roman tradition. However, in the Imperial era many neighbourhoods in Ostia were characterized by cult rooms dedicated to some of the Eastern cults. The articles show how religion had a profound effect on the urban life and daily activities of Ostia's inhabitants, as well as on the funerary rituals that played a central role in the lives of families. Commemoration of the deceased family members and the creation of special grave monuments was important. Osteoarchaeological studies reveal important new details of the lives, nutrition and health of the people who worked and lived in Ostia and its vicinity. In the last article, we also get an overview of modern Ostia, Lido di Ostia, and its relation to the ancient city and the archaeological area.

The chapters may be read in order, or as individual articles. When possible, in each chapter reference is made both to other relevant articles in the book and to illustrations elsewhere in the publication, for example: (see the article by Germoni in this volume, p. 277). References are also made to the numbers of the exhibited objects in the catalogue, including a description of each object and further references, as follows: (**Cat. no. 112**). For buildings cited in the chapters, the names are usually given in Italian, and when a street address is given, it correlates to the city plan of Ostia (Maps 1 and 2), providing a tripartite address: location in the Region (I–V), *insula*, and the entrance number of the building from the street, for example: Domus di Amore e Psiche (I.14.5). Each article has bibliographical references in the footnotes, and the abbreviations are included in the list of abbreviations and the general bibliography at the end of the book. The abbreviations follow the editorial guidelines of the *Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae*. Authors were encouraged, but not required, to provide detailed bibliographies. The general bibliography thus makes it possible for the readers to study various issues in greater depth, if they so wish.

In this volume, the history of Ostia is told with many voices, both ancient and modern, presenting syntheses of years or decades of studies on a specific topic, but also preliminary first results of new, ongoing research projects, to provide food for thought and generate new ideas for future interpretations and fruitful collaborations. That is the aim of this book: to show the strength and the marvellous results of international collaboration and interest in Ostian studies.

I

The Harbour of Rome

SHIPPING AND SHIPS

The Role of Ostia and Portus in Roman Seafaring – The Literary Evidence

Christa Steinby

This article discusses the ship types that are mentioned in our sources arriving in or leaving from Ostia and Portus, respectively. The ports played a key role in the long history of Roman trade and warfare at sea. Overseas food transports for the growing population of Rome are stated from the sixth century on. The navy was used in the Roman expansion in Italy and later on in the competition for power in the Mediterranean, when the Romans defeated the fleets of Carthage, Macedon, the Seleucid state and many lesser sea powers. Ostia along with the river port in Rome, was the base for these functions. In the Imperial period, the tasks were separated; Misenum housing the war fleet and Portus being built by Claudius and Trajan to enable the use of transport ships with larger tonnage. Archaeological evidence will also be discussed, as well as the co-operation and connectivity between Portus, Ostia and Rome.

Rome as a city of seafaring and trade

The traditional date for the founding of Rome was 753 BCE,[1] and the fourth king Ancus Marcius (642-617) is said to have founded a colony at the mouth of Ostia.[2] The data in archaeology, however, shows the earliest discoveries of cremation tombs from about 1000 BCE in Rome.[3] The city of Rome emerged because of its good location: in the Tiber valley, it controlled the river traffic as well as the Via Salaria through which salt was transported from the salt beds at the mouth of the Tiber towards inland. Rome was also able to control the coastal route that run from Etruria to Campania, and at downstream from the Tiber island, crossed the Tiber at a natural ford. The Forum Boarium was located there as well as the Pons Sublicius – Rome's first bridge, and the Portus Tiberinus, the city's commercial port.[4]

Seafaring and commerce at the Italian coast were intensified in the ninth and eighth centuries thanks to the foundation of the Greek and Phoenician colonies. A number of intertwined economic factors lay behind the colonization: a need for land, a need for metals, an interest to expand trade, an interest to develop craft industries, the pressure on resources caused by increasing populations. The colonies were founded in strategic places that were easy to access by ship, by using winds and currents – from colonies one could monitor the sailing routes that run along the coast. The western Mediterranean was divided in areas controlled by the Phoenicians and the Greeks, respectively, and there was a strong competition on the possession of Sicily. The new innovations that came to Italy with the colonists included writing, coinage, art and intellectual pursuits, ports, the potter's wheel, olive oil, banking techniques and large-scale cultivation. The

1 Cornell 1995, 57-63.

2 Liv. 1, 33. Cornell 1995, 120.

3 Cornell 1995, 48-49.

4 Coarelli 2007, 307.



Figure 1. A merchant-vessel and a war-galley depicted on a black-figured *kylix*. This drinking cup was produced ca 500 BCE, and it was found in Vulci in Etruria. British Museum, inv. 1867,0508.963. Photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

colonists explored not only the coasts but also the river valleys. There was a lively traffic in Latium and the Tiber valley, Rome made trade with the colonists gaining new wealth, and it has been estimated that by the end of the sixth century BCE, the population of Rome was about 35,000, making it the largest city north of Tarentum.[5]

The colonists used newly invented ship types, the triacontor and pentecontor that had been developed in the eastern Mediterranean. A triacontor required thirty rowers, placed on one or two levels. A pentecontor required fifty rowers with a similar placement. The ships had a detachable main mast in the middle with a rectangular sail. These types of ships could be used for commerce, warfare or piracy, according to the situation. The ships did not need any particularly built port but any natural bay would do. It was important to beach the ships after every voyage to let the timber dry out – this process kept the ships light and enabled their long life span – from twenty to thirty years. This method of maintaining ships applied with all the vessels in ancient seafaring. The ships had a bronze ram attached that was used to break the oars or to punch a hole in the hull of the enemy vessel. The ships had a pair of steering oars at the back, but besides these, the course of the ship was directed by the rowers as well – so every rower had to be skilful and a ship that had lost its oars was easy to conquer. The Greeks, Phoenicians, Etruscans and Romans used these ship types for centuries.

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5 Holloway 1994, 166-73; Cornell 1995, 204-08; Pugliese Carratelli 1996, 141-76; Aubet 2001, 159-65, 212-45; Morel 2007, 488-97.

After Carthage had taken control of other Phoenician colonies in the 6th century, it made trade contracts with Etruria and Rome. Caere was the leading city in seafaring in southern Etruria. In 540 BCE, in the sea battle of Alalia at Corsica, the Etruscan fleet led by Caere together with the Carthaginian fleet fought the fleet of the Phocaean colony. It has been assumed that since the reason for the battle was to reduce the influence of the Phocaeans in trade, some Roman ships took part in the battle too, as the Roman interests coincided with those of Caere.[6] The contacts between Carthage and Etruria are also known from the golden tablets from about 500 found in Pyrgi, the port of Caere. The other port of Caere was called Punicum, which also refers to the presence of the Carthaginians.

The treaties Carthage made with Rome concerned trade and seafaring. In the first treaty concluded in 509, the western Mediterranean was divided into political spheres of influence. The area which extended 100 kilometres south from Rome and included the cities Ardea, Antium, Laurentium and Circeii, was under Roman protection and the Carthaginians were not allowed to build any fort in Latium. If they entered the land in arms, they were not allowed to pass a night therein. The Romans, on the other hand, had the permission to do business in the Carthaginian controlled part of Sicily, in Sardinia and in the Carthaginian area in Africa.[7]

There are reports of famine in Rome from 508 to 384 BCE caused by wars, epidemics and climatic irregularities. The senate arranged grain to be transported from Campania, Etruria and Sicily. In the fourth century Roman wars were fought further away from Rome, in the enemy territory and the Roman agriculture did not suffer that much.[8]

Rome extends its territory in Italy

There was a fierce competition for the control of the Tiber valley between Rome and Veii. The fleets clashed at Fidenae in 426 BCE.[9] In 396, Rome conquered Veii, took its lands and thereafter the fort, *Castrum*, was built at the mouth of Tiber. It has been dated to 380-350[10] and with it, Rome was able to control all the incoming river traffic in the Tiber valley. During the wars with Veii, the Romans visited the temple of Apollo in Delphi twice, in 398 asking for advice from the oracle for the war and in 394 taking a golden bowl to Apollo. It was placed in the treasury of Rome and Massilia.[11]

The Romans made attempts to send a colony to Sardinia[12] and Corsica[13] in the fourth century. The enterprises failed; however, the clauses in the Roman-Carthaginian treaties were changed. In the second treaty from 348, Sardinia and the Carthaginian area in Africa were closed to the Romans, apparently as the Carthaginians wanted to develop their trade there. The Romans were still allowed to visit the Carthaginian controlled western part of Sicily and they had access to the city of Carthage. The Carthaginians were

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6 Mazzarino 1966, 196; Torelli 1981, 72; Coarelli 1997, 347. Hdt. 1, 166.

7 Polyb. 3, 22.

8 Liv. 2, 9-14; 2, 34, 2-7; 2, 41, 8; 2, 51, 2; 2, 52, 1; 3, 31, 1; 3, 32, 2; 4, 12; 4, 13-16; 4, 25, 2; 4, 52, 5-8; 5, 13, 4; 5, 31, 5; 5, 39-48; 6, 20, 15; 6, 21, 1-6; Dion. Hal. *ant. Rom.* 5, 21-27; 5, 32; 5, 65; 6, 17, 2-4; 6, 94; 7, 1-2; 7, 12-15; 9, 25; 12, 1-4; 13, 4; Plut. *vit. Cor.* 16; *vit. Cam.* 23, 1; Cass. Dio 5, 18, 4; Oros. *hist.* 2, 19, 8. Ogilvie 1965, 256-57; Garnsey 1988, 168-81; Cornell 1995, 268; Meiggs 1997, 481.

9 Liv. 4, 33-34.

10 Meiggs 1997, 9-23, 479-82; Zevi 2002, 15.

11 Liv. 5, 15, 3; 5, 16, 8; 5, 28, 1-5; Diod. Sic. 14, 93; Plut. *vit. Cam.* 8, 3; App. *Ital.* 8.

12 Diod. Sic. 15, 27, 4. Torelli 1981, 72.

13 Theophr. *hist. pl.* 5, 8, 1-2.

welcome to do business in Rome.[14] In the third treaty in 306, a clause was included that Corsica became a no-man's-land. Yet another division into political spheres of influence took place: this time the Romans were obliged to stay away from all of Sicily and the Carthaginians were obliged to stay away from all of Italy. The Carthaginian ambassadors, who had come to arrange the treaty, were treated with courtesy and given presents.[15]

In 348 BCE, the immediate Roman coastline was attacked by a fleet from Magna Graecia, possibly from Syracuse or Tarentum. The Romans prevented the Greeks from landing, and as they run out of water and food, they left.[16] It has been estimated that the *Castrum* and colony in Ostia played a role in defending the mouth of the Tiber, as our sources do not say anything about the Greek vessels sailing into the Tiber.

The Roman *navalia*, ship shed, is mentioned for the first time in 338, when Rome took Antium and burned some of its ships and confiscated some that were placed in the Roman *navalia*. The rams (Lat. *rostrum*) of the burned ships were placed at the Forum at the speakers' platform, which then was renamed as the Rostra.[17] The public display of war booty was a common phenomenon in the ancient world. To mention one example, Athens celebrated the victory over the Persians by sending the *rostra* of the Persian ships to be put on display in Delphi, where all the visitors from the Greek world would see it. Antium and its fleet was defeated as it worked as a base for piracy, thereafter the Roman fleet had more possibilities to work at the coast of Italy, and continue with the expansion southwards. Rome took Naples in 326.[18] Naples and Tarentum were the leading Greek seafaring cities in Italy.

Rome introduced triremes in its fleet probably in 311. According to Livy, two officials, *duoviri navales* were elected in that year and they were in charge of equipping and refitting the fleet.[19] We can assume that until then, the fleet had mainly operated with pentecontors. The trireme was probably invented at Sidon and Corinth at the end of the eighth century and the first part of the seventh century BCE. The oarsmen were located on three levels on each side of the ship, one man pulling an oar. The triremes were light, efficient, highly specialized war ships and equipped with a ram. Skilful rowers were required to operate them.[20] Triremes are mentioned for the first time in Italian waters in the battle between the fleet of the Lipari islands and the Etruscans before 474[21] and in 474 at the battle of Cumae,[22] in which Syracuse deployed triremes as it defeated the Etruscan fleet.

Compared with pentecontors, a fleet of triremes was in every aspect more expensive to build and maintain: triremes needed four times the number of men that were required for pentecontors, permanent harbour and dockyard facilities were necessary, as well as a large stock of supplies, including timber. An efficient administration was needed for the recruitment of skilled crews. The financing of the trireme fleet can be explained with the economic growth which Rome experienced in the second half of the fourth century. Rome's wealth was based on its position as an important manufacturing and trading centre, taking part in

14 Polyb. 3, 24.

15 Polyb. 3, 26; Liv. 9, 43, 26; Diod. Sic. 22, 7, 5; Serv. *Aen.* 4, 628; Val. Max. 3, 7, 10; Just. 18, 2.

16 Liv. 7, 25, 4; 7, 26, 11; 7, 26, 13.

17 *Fast. triumph.*; Liv. 8, 13, 12; 8, 14. Coarelli 1996, 339-40; Coarelli 1999, 212-14; Tucci 2006, 175-202.

18 Liv. 8, 26.

19 Liv. 9, 30, 3.

20 Casson 1971, 80-96.

21 Paus. 10, 16, 7.

22 Diod. Sic. 11, 51.

the 'trade triangle' formed by Rome, Carthage and Massilia. The new wealth is also reflected in the building of the Via Appia and the Aqua Appia in 312.[23]

In 310 BCE, the Romans sent troops by ship to fight Nuceria, which was at the time the strongest city in Campania, and occupied by the Samnites. The Romans landed at Pompeii and the crew set out to pillage the territory of Nuceria.[24] This serves as an example of ancient mobile warfare and how the troops were transported by ship and landed at the intended location.

The Romans sailed to the Gulf of Tarentum with ten warships in 282, obviously to stir trouble. They were defeated by the Tarentine fleet in a sea battle, thereafter the Roman envoys set unacceptable demands to the Tarentines and the war broke out. Pyrrhos, the king of Epirus was hired by the Tarentines and he represented himself as liberator of the Greeks with such success that also the Greek cities in Sicily, led by Syracuse, invited him to defend the interests of the Greeks. In 278, the Carthaginian envoys arrived in Ostia with a fleet of thirty ships;[25] the fourth Roman-Carthaginian treaty was made in the situation when Pyrrhos was about to move over to Sicily and Rome and Carthage agreed on co-operation to stop him.[26] Our information about ships and shipments during the Pyrrhic war are limited, as Livy's book 10 ends in 293 and the following ten books are missing, and Diodorus' complete text ends with the year 302.

In 267 BCE, the number of *quaestors* was increased from four to eight. It is plausible that the job of these new officials was to oversee the supply of ships by the Roman allies to the Roman fleet. One of the *quaestors* was stationed in Ostia.[27] The excavations at the Egadi islands in west coast of Sicily have brought to light bronze rams from the sea battle that took place in 241. The rams come with Latin inscriptions that indicate that the *quaestor* (in Ostia) was in charge of approving – perhaps the ships or perhaps just the rams of war ships.

??---------*S. C. QVAISTOR. PROBAVET*

L. QVINCTIO L.F. QVAISTOR PROBAVET[28]

The First (264-241) and Second Punic War (218-201)

At the beginning of the First Punic War, the Romans introduced the quadriremes and quinqueremes in their fleet. In these ship types, rowers were placed in two or three levels and there were two men pulling each oar. In the Hellenistic period the problem of finding skilful oarsmen became an increasing problem. When more than one man sat to an oar, then only one skilled rower was needed for each oar-gang, and the rest of the rowers were used for power. The tactic and method of fighting remained the same as in triremes. The Romans chose to build quadriremes and quinqueremes as the Carthaginians used them in their fleet. In the course of this war, the Romans built several fleets which included hundreds of ships and also captured Carthaginian ships. Interestingly, our sources do not mention Ostia or Rome as the place from where the ships departed or where they returned and we do not even know, where the ships were built – it is likely that they were built in

23 Morel 1989, 479-80; Cornell 1995, 385-90.

24 Liv. 9, 38, 2-4.

25 Val. Max. 3, 7, 10; Just. 18, 2; Liv. *perioch.* 13; Diod. Sic. 22, 7, 5.

26 Steinby 2014, 47-49.

27 Steinby 2007, 71-72.

28 Ram nos. 4 and 5. Coarelli 2014, 99-114.

Ostia and Rome.[29] This is due to the fact, that our main source for this war, Polybius describes the building process in a passive form, speaking of "those to whom the construction of the ships was committed" and "those who had collected the crews".[30] Details are missing. Polybius wrote about this war to give his readers the background to his work, which he actually started from the Second Punic War with the purpose of explaining to his readers how the Romans were able to conquer nearly the whole inhabited world in just about fifty years. (from 218 to 167 – the end of the Third Macedonian War, when Polybius was taken to Rome as a hostage).[31] Livy's work on the first Punic War is missing. There must have been plenty of action in ports, as Rome sent fleets to Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica and made many invasions and raids to the Carthaginian territory in Africa.

In the Second Punic War, our main source is Livy and there is plenty of information about how ships left Ostia or arrived there: to mention some examples, in 217, the Carthaginian fleet captured transport ships, *navis oneraria*, off the port of Cosa. The ships had been sent from Ostia to carry supplies to the army in Spain. A fleet of 120 quinqueremes was gathered from ships that were in Rome or Ostia, a levy was conducted in Rome and the men who were under thirty-five years old were sent onboard the ships. This fleet then chased the Punic fleet.[32] In 216, king Hiero of Syracuse sent transport ships to Ostia carrying 300,000 *modii* of wheat and 200,000 *modii* of barley.[33] In 215, the Romans patrolling at the coast of Calabria, caught a ship with envoys from Macedon and Carthage onboard. The envoys had just concluded negotiations with Hannibal at Capua and made a treaty of co-operation against Rome. The envoys were taken by ship to Rome and interrogated. The Romans sent a fleet of fifty ships from Ostia to Tarentum with purpose of protecting the Italian coast.[34] In 210, the Romans sailed with thirty quinqueremes from Ostia to Emporiae in Spain.[35] In 208, they prepared thirty old warships that were in Ostia and manned twenty new ships with crews to defend the coast near Rome.[36]

The special position of Ostia is visible in the fact that when the status of some other coastal cities was changed in 207 and Alsium, Anxur, Minturnae, Sinuessa and Sena Gallica were given orders to furnish soldiers to the Roman army, Ostia and Antium were still exempt.[37]

The above-mentioned rams are the only tangible evidence so far of Roman war ships. Generally, no hull of a war ship has been discovered anywhere in the Mediterranean, probably as they were expensive to build and were reused whenever possible. Ostia functioned as the main Roman fleet base until the era of Augustus; unfortunately, the port installations in Ostia have never been excavated, this is mainly due to the destruction caused by the change of the course of the Tiber in the sixteenth century.[38] The power of Ostia as a war harbour is reflected in the iconography of Roman Republican coins, where dozens of coins were minted depicting the prow of a war ship. The first coins of this type are from 225-217.[39]

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29 Anyway, we learn from Polybius that the war booty, from which the *columnae rostratae* and temples etc. were built, was taken to Rome. See Pietilä-Castrén 1987, 28-48.

30 Polyb. 1, 21, 1-3.

31 Polyb. 1, 1.

32 Polyb. 3, 96, 8-14; Liv. 22, 1, 6-9; 22, 31.

33 Liv. 22, 37.

34 Liv. 23, 34; 23, 38.

35 Liv. 26, 19, 11.

36 Liv. 27, 22.

37 Liv. 27, 38.

38 Keay 2012, 41.

39 Steinby 2014, 118.

Transport ships, generally called in Latin *navis oneraria*, come in many different types. The round hull makes them easy to recognize and separates them from warships. One could use oars, but the largest vessels travelled on sails. Among other things, grain, olive oil, vine, timber and rocks as building material were transported to Rome. In Roman overseas wars, the operations depended on the control of sailing routes, ports and safe coasts that enabled the transport of troops, grain, money and arms. Hundreds of transport ships were used; however, our sources do not mention them on regular basis, but tell only about them when something went wrong, when for instance ships were lost in a storm. In the Second Punic War, the looting of Syracuse started a new fashion, in which the Roman generals took the artefacts and other treasures from looted Greek cities to Rome.

Rome as a centre of international politics

The result of the Second Punic War granted Rome an important position in international politics. Rome had defeated the Carthaginians and dictated their position as a land-state in Africa with no right to independent foreign policy. Rome had waged war against Macedon in (211-205). The Second Macedonian War began in 200, soon after the end of the Second Punic War.

Now war ships departed from Ostia to participate in Rome's wars in the east. The departure of ships is mentioned at the beginning of the war or the return at the end of the war. For instance, in the war with Antiochus, (191-188) Livius narrates how *praefectus classis* Gaius Livius departed from Rome and on the way towards east, made stop-overs taking ships from allies.

> *C. Livius praefectus Romanae classis, cum quinquaginta navibus tectis profectus ab Roma Neapolim, quo ab sociis eius orae convenire iusserat apertas naves, quae ex foedere debebantur, Siciliam inde petit fretoque Messanam praetervectus, cum sex Punicas naves ad auxilium missas accepisset et ab Reginis Locrisque et eiusdem iuris sociis debitas exegisset naves, lustrata classe ad Lacinium, altum petit*.[40]
>
> C. Livius was in command of the Roman fleet. He proceeded with fifty decked ships to Neapolis, where the open vessels which the cities on that coast were bound by treaty to furnish had received orders to assemble. From there he steered for Sicily and sailed through the strait past Messana. When he had picked up the six vessels which had been sent by Carthage and the ships which Regium and Locris and the other cities under the same treaty obligation had contributed he performed the lustration of the fleet and put out to sea.

Prisoners of war and war booty were transported to Rome. In 167, when Perseus was defeated, Macedon was thoroughly plundered.

> *(Lucius Aemilius) Paulus ipse post dies paucos regia nave ingentis magnitudinis, quam sedecim versus remorum agebant, ornata Macedonicis spoliis non insignium tantum armorum, sed etiam regiorum textilium, adverso Tiberi ad urbem est subvectus, completis ripis obviam effusa multitudine*.[41]

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40 Liv. 36, 42, 1-2.

41 Liv. 45, 35, 3.

> A few days later Paulus himself sailed up the Tiber to the City in the king's ship, a vessel of enormous size propelled by sixteen banks of oars and adorned with the spoils of Macedonia in the shape of glittering armour and embroidered fabrics which belonged to the king. The river banks were crowded with multitudes who had streamed out to greet his arrival.

Ships such as the sixteen belong to the category of big ships that were developed in the eastern Mediterranean by the generals of Alexander the Great who competed for his legacy. In the arms race conducted by the Successors, ships such as the 'seven', the 'nine', the 'ten', etc. were constructed. We do not know their structure or how the oarsmen in them were arranged but it seems clear that they were a fleet phenomenon: they were used for ramming and needed the support of smaller vessels in the navy, which protected the larger ships. Only the wealthiest of the Successors could afford to have the whole range of ships. These vessels could also be used to carry catapults and siege engines – besieging cities from land and sea was a common feature in the Hellenistic period.[42]

Rome's new position in international politics is also visible in its role of being the mediator in conflicts. Many Greek cities turned to the Romans in their disputes, and plenty of foreign envoys arrived in Ostia. This way the Romans got to interfere in the business of others, and the states thus eroded their independence even before Rome finally conquered them.

There is a description from the port of Ostia in 162, when Demetrius I Soter, then hostage in Rome, fled to Syria and then became the ruler of the Seleucid state. Polybius tells about the escape from Ostia:

> [...] γενομένων δὲ πάντων καθὼς προείρηται, προῆγον εἰς τὴν Ὠστίαν νυκτὸς ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα τοῦ Τιβέριος [...] παρῆσαν οἱ περὶ τὸν Δημήτριον κατὰ τρίτην φυλακὴν λήγουσαν, ὄντες ὀκτὼ καὶ παῖδες πέντε καὶ παιδάρια τρία. τοῦ δὲ Μενύλλου κοινολογηθέντος αὐτοῖς καὶ παραδείξαντος τὴν τῶν ἐπιμηνίων παρασκευήν, ἔτι δὲ συστήσαντος τῷ ναυκλήρῳ καὶ τοῖς ἐπιβάταις ἐκτενῶς, οὗτοι μὲν ἐπέβησαν, ὁ δὲ κυβερνήτης ἅρτι διαφαύσκοντος ἄρας τὰς ἀγκύρας ἐτέλει τὸν πλοῦν, ἁπλῶς οὐδεμίαν ἔννοιαν ἔχων τοῦ πράγματος, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς στρατιώτας τινὰς ἄγων παρὰ τοῦ Μενύλλου πρὸς τὸν Πτολεμαῖον.[43]
>
> [...] he and his friends went to Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, by night [...] Demetrius and his friends arrived about the third watch. There were altogether eight of them, besides five slaves and three boys. Menyllus entered into conversation with them, showed them the provisions in store for the voyage, and commended them earnestly to the care of the shipmaster and crew. They then went on board, and the pilot weighed anchor and started just as day was breaking, having absolutely no idea of the real state of the case, but believing that he was conveying some soldiers from Menyllus to Ptolemy.

In 87, in the Civil War, Marius occupied and destroyed Ostia. This is intriguing in the sense that in Rome's overseas wars not even the Carthaginians attempted to cut off the Roman food supply or to attack Ostia from the sea. Now the Romans were doing it! In 68 BCE, Ostia was attacked by pirates and in 67 Ostia is mentioned as a base where the fleet fighting the pirates was gathered.

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42 See Murray 2012, passim.

43 Polyb. 31, 14.

Portus

A great rearrangement of port capacity took place in the Imperial period. The war fleet was stationed at Misenum in the Bay of Naples. The grain and other transports destined to Rome needed more space. The need for a new port is already mentioned in the plans of Julius Caesar. He had seen cities in the east, including Alexandria and noticed that the capacity of Ostia was insufficient.

> [...] καὶ τόν Τίβεριν εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ὑπολαβὼν διώρυχι βαθείᾳ καὶ περικλάσας ἐπὶ τὸ Κιρκαῖον ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν πρὸς Ταρρακίνῃ θάλατταν, ἀσφάλειαν ἅμα καὶ ῥᾳστώνην τοῖς δι᾽ ἐμπορίας φοιτῶσιν εἰς Ῥώμην μηχανώμενος πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τὰ μὲν ἕλη τὰ περὶ Πωμεντῖνον καὶ Σητίαν ἐκτρέψας πεδίον ἀποδεῖξαι πολλαῖς ἐνεργὸν ἀνθρώπων μυριάσι, τῇ δὲ ἔγγιστα τῆς Ῥώμης θαλάσσῃ κλεῖθρα διὰ χωμάτων ἐπαγαγών, καὶ τὰ τυφλὰ καὶ δύσορμα τῆς Ὠστιανῆς ἠϊόνος ἀνακαθηράμενος, λιμένας ἐμποιήσασθαι καὶ ναύλοχα πρὸς τοσαύτην ἀξιόπιστα ναυτιλίαν.[44]
>
> [...] he intended also to divert the Tiber just below the city into a deep channel, give it a bend towards Circeium, and make it empty into the sea at Terracina, thus contriving for merchantmen a safe as well as an easy passage to Rome; and besides this, to convert the marshes about Pomentinum and Setia into a plain which many thousands of men could cultivate; and further, to build moles which should barricade the sea where it was nearest to Rome, to clear away the hidden dangers on the shore of Ostia, and then construct harbours and roadsteads sufficient for the great fleets that would visit them.

Emperor Claudius (41-54 CE) built Portus, a basin enclosed by two artificial moles that lay 2 kilometres to the north of Ostia. Moreover, he encouraged and rewarded the building of transport ships capable of carrying at least 10,000 *modii* and which were used to transport grain for six years.[45] Emperor Caligula had the obelisk – which now stands in the St. Peter's square – transported from Alexandria to Rome in a superfreighter that was probably modelled after the great Alexandria-Rome grain carriers. The vessel must have been impractical for commercial use, as it was first kept on display and then Claudius had it filled with concrete and it was sunk to form a part of the mole in the new port.[46]

Trajan enlarged the port so that it comprised the Claudian basin (depth up to 7m), a small rectangular basin Darsena (depth of 3,5m) and the new hexagonal basin (depth of 5m) with warehouses. It has been estimated that their area together, c. 233ha, would have been sufficient to absorb all of the ships bound for Rome, together with a proportion of those that subsequently were transported to Ostia. These interconnected basins were used to take in the ships from the sea, and deal with their cargo. First, they would wait in the safety of the Claudian basin and were then taken to the hexagonal basin to unload the goods. One could also transfer the goods onto smaller boats, Darsena seems to have had this function. We cannot estimate the scale of traffic that used Portus at any one time. Only nine Roman wrecks have been discovered from the site. Likewise, we do not know the anchorage capacities of the basins and which of the known ship types were used in any particular part of this port system.[47]

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44 Plut. *vit. Caes.* 58.

45 Gaius *inst*. 32c; Suet. *Claud*. 18-20. Houston 1988, 553-64.

46 Casson 1971, 188-89.

47 Keay 2012, 44-48. According to some calculations, there was space for some 330 large ships in the two large basins, in addition to this, several hundred smaller ships berthed elsewhere.



Figure 2. Sestertius of Nero, 64 CE. The reverse of the coin shows a bird's-eye view of the artificial harbour built at Portus, with the legend *(Augusti) S(enatus) POR(tus) OST(iensis) C(onsulto)*. Nero issued bronze sestertii to celebrate the construction of the harbour commenced under the emperor Claudius. The image depicts the harbour with a lighthouse, surmounted by a statue holding a sceptre, possibly Claudius or Neptunus. At the bottom, the river-god Tiber is shown reclining, right hand holding a rudder, leaning on a dolphin. To the left, crescent-shaped pier with portico, terminating in a building, to the right the breakwaters. In the centre a large merchant ship, surrounded by seven smaller boats. Cf. *RIC I* (second edition), Nero, no. 178; Weiss 2013. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 3. Sestertius of Trajan, 112-114 CE, with the legend *PORTUM TRAIANI S C* (*senatus consulto*). The bird's eye view shows the hexagonal harbour basin built by Trajan, warehouses and porticoes flanking the basin on five sides and three ships anchored in the centre; the sixth side is open. Cf. Parisi Presicce *et al.* 2017, 421-22; below, **Cat. no. 6.** Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The co-operation of ports was arranged by a network of roads and canals. Northern canal built by Claudius connected the sea shore to the Tiber, another canal connected Portus to Ostia and the Fossa Traiana connected Portus to the Tiber.[48] In the second century CE, the network of roads was fully developed: Via Flavia ran from Portus to Ostia, and Via Severiana connected Ostia, Laurentum and Antium. An extension was built to connect Via Campana to Portus - Via Campana had existed since the Republican period connecting *Campus Salinarum Romanarum* and the city of Rome.[49]

In 359 CE, storms prevented the grain ships from arriving in Portus and famine was anticipated. The city prefect Tertullus made an offering:

> [...] *dum Tertullus apud Ostia in aede sacrificat Castorum, tranquillitas mare mollivit, mutatoque in austrum placidum vento, velificatione plena portum naves ingressae, frumentis horrea referserunt.*[50]

48 Keay 2012, 40, 51.

49 Keay 2012, 48-49.

50 Amm. 19, 10.

> [...] while Tertullus was sacrificing in the temple of Castor and Pollux at Ostia, a calm smoothed the sea, the wind changed to a gentle southern breeze, and the ships entered the harbour under full sail and again crammed the storehouses with grain.

Conclusions

Information drawn from the literary sources – and supported by discoveries in archaeology – give in general the idea that there was constant traffic through the mouth of the Tiber to Rome; however, there is surprisingly little direct evidence of ships sailing in or leaving Ostia or Portus. This is noteworthy, given the many functions of that traffic: the colonists visiting, the Romans making and utilizing treaties with Carthage about trade and areas of influence in the western Mediterranean, the Roman food transports, the use of warships in Rome's expansion in the Tiber, along the Italian coast and around the Mediterranean, war booty taken to Rome, Rome as the hub of international relations etc.

Rome went through the usual development of ship types: first probably using triacontors and pentecontors, then upgrading the fleet to triremes and adding quadriremes and quinqueremes. As Rome never adapted the strategy popular in the eastern Mediterranean with the big ships involved, the Romans only got to witness the arrival of a sixteen as war booty from Macedon. Transport ships were deployed in hundreds in Roman overseas wars, but we only learn about them in our sources when something went wrong. Besides the literary evidence, coins with the ram depicted show the might of the Roman Republican navy and Ostia as its base – as do the rams with the inscriptions about the *quaestor*'s approval. Moreover, the mosaics give an idea of everyday life at the port dealing with cargo. Finally, it would be of huge interest to be able to excavate the Roman war harbour at Ostia.

HARBOUR

The Portus Romae

Simon Keay

The establishment of Portus by Claudius

Portus lay c. 2 km to the north of *Ostia*, close to a key bend in the Tiber and to the west of the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum* (**Fig. 1**). It was initially established by the emperor Claudius by AD 46, probably on land that had passed into Imperial ownership and which therefore formed part of the imperial *patrimonium*. Although it was clearly in use at the time of the great storm of AD 62 which was recorded by Tacitus (*Annals* 15, 18, 3) and which caused the destruction of c. 200 ships in the harbour, it seems likely that it was not formally inaugurated until AD 64, when the *Portus Augusti* is recorded on a prolific *sestertius* issued by the emperor Nero. Its main feature was a basin that encompassed an area of 200 ha and which had a maximum depth of c. 8 m. It was enclosed by two large artificial moles to the north and the south that projected into the sea to the west. The primary entrance into this basin lay on either side of a monumental lighthouse (*Pharos*) that stood between the two moles, although there may have been a secondary entrance on the north-eastern side of the basin. A secondary feature was the small 1.07 ha rectangular basin, or *Darsena*, which was located on the south-eastern side of the Claudian basin and had a depth of c. 6 m. The port was connected to both the Tiber and the sea by two canals. The southernmost of these, the so-called *Fossa Traiana* (modern *Canale di Fiumicino*) remained in use for throughout the life of the port down to c. the 11th c. It facilitated the rapid movement of cargoes up to Rome and at the same time provided flood relief to the City of Rome further upriver, as is recorded monumental inscription from the site found at the site. The canal which lay some distance to the north of Portus, by contrast, seems to have passed out of use quite soon after the establishment of the port (**Fig. 2**).

The Claudian basin must have acted primarily as a space for the anchorage and mooring of sea-going ships, whose cargoes would have been transhipped on to smaller lighters. These would have passed eastwards along an internal canal that provided entry into the *Darsena*. Here their cargoes would have been unloaded into adjacent warehouses for storage. These included the predecessor of the *Grandi Magazzini di Traiano*, whose western façade opened on to the Claudian basin and was defined by a series of monumental rusticated travertine columns running from north to south. This was intersected by the famous rusticated columns of the *Portico di Claudio*, which ran from east to west and separated the *Grandi Magazzini di Traiano* from another large complex, which was labelled by Lanciani as the *Foro Olitorio* and is now known to have also been used for storage.

The line of the north-south alignment of columns was extended c. 300 m by a massive *opus caementicium* mole of uncertain date that is supposed to have terminated in a lantern or small lighthouse. Cargo bearing ships entering the port from the west could thus have moored in front of the western façade of the port, or navigated around the lantern, into the east-west canal and into the *Darsena*. Once the cargoes had been loaded onto smaller boats (*naves caudicariae*), they would have left the *Darsena* and then moved down the *Canale Trasverso* to access the *Fossa Traiana* to the south.

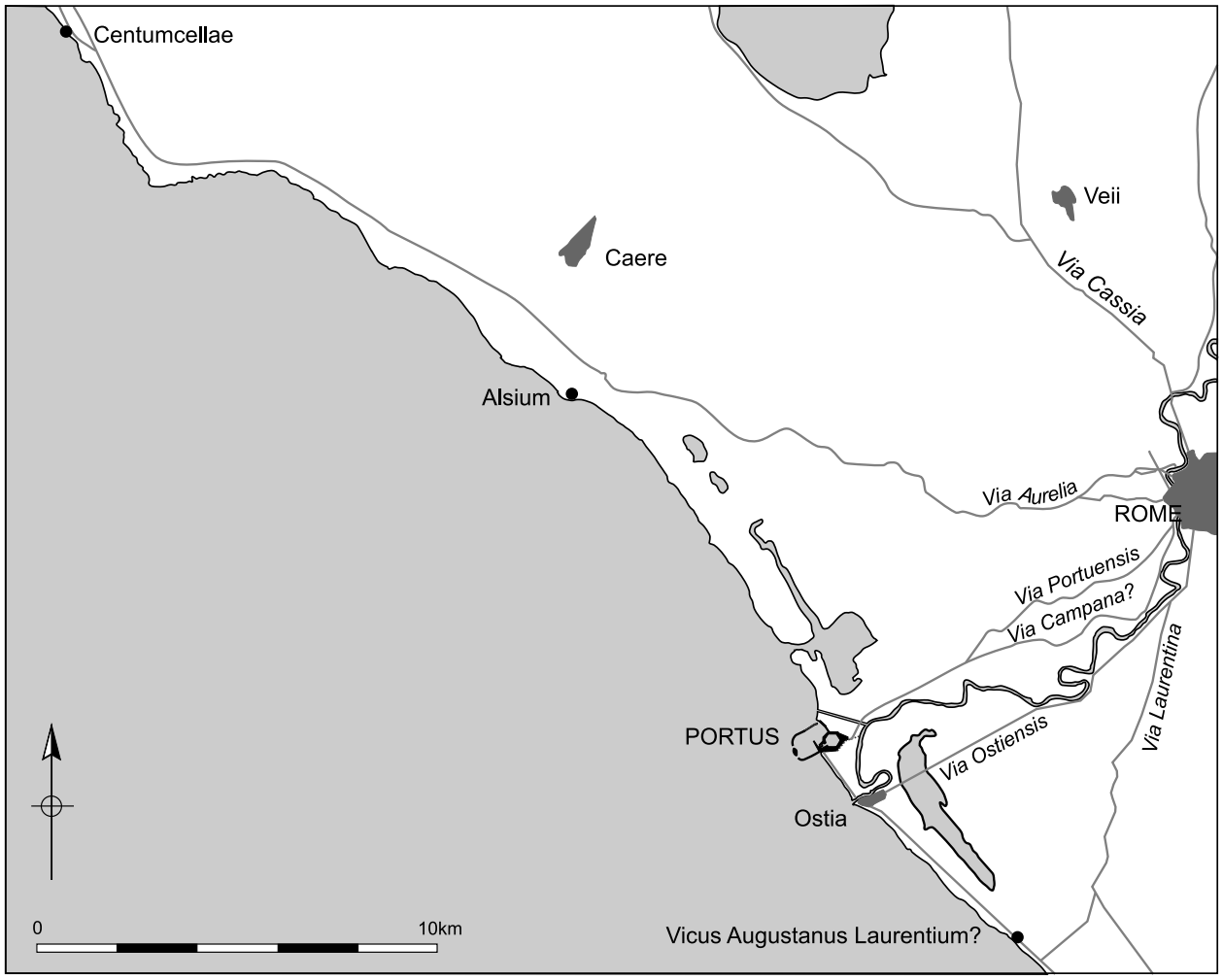


Figure 1. Map showing the location of Portus in relation to Ostia and the Tiber (Keay *et al.* 2005 Fig. 8.1).

Although definitive evidence is lacking, it seems likely that the administrative centre for the port at this time lay somewhere between the *Foro Olitorio* and the *Canale Trasverso*, and land lying to the east of this. Excavations beneath the later Basilica Portuense have uncovered the remains of buildings of 1st c AD date, while a monumental tomb of Flavian date was found some distance to the east. This area was supplied by an aqueduct that approached this part of the port from the line of the Tiber to the east. Additional evidence for buildings comes from the south side of the *Fossa Traiana* on the northern edge of the Isola Sacra. Here a settlement[1] and a cemetery (*Necropoli di Porto*)[2] to the south of it developed on either side of a road (*Via Flavia*) that connected Portus and Ostia from the late 1st c AD onwards.

Enlargement of Portus by Trajan

Portus underwent a complete transformation under the reign of Trajan. Construction began, probably with work on new canals in AD 109, and was still unfinished by the time of his death in AD 117. It was left to his successors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius to complete the project. Its centre piece was a new 32 ha harbour basin which was 7m deep and which came to form the core of the harbour system at *Portus* (**Fig. 3**). Its re-

1 Veloccia Rinaldi – Testini 1975.

2 Baldassarre 1978; Baldassarre 1985.

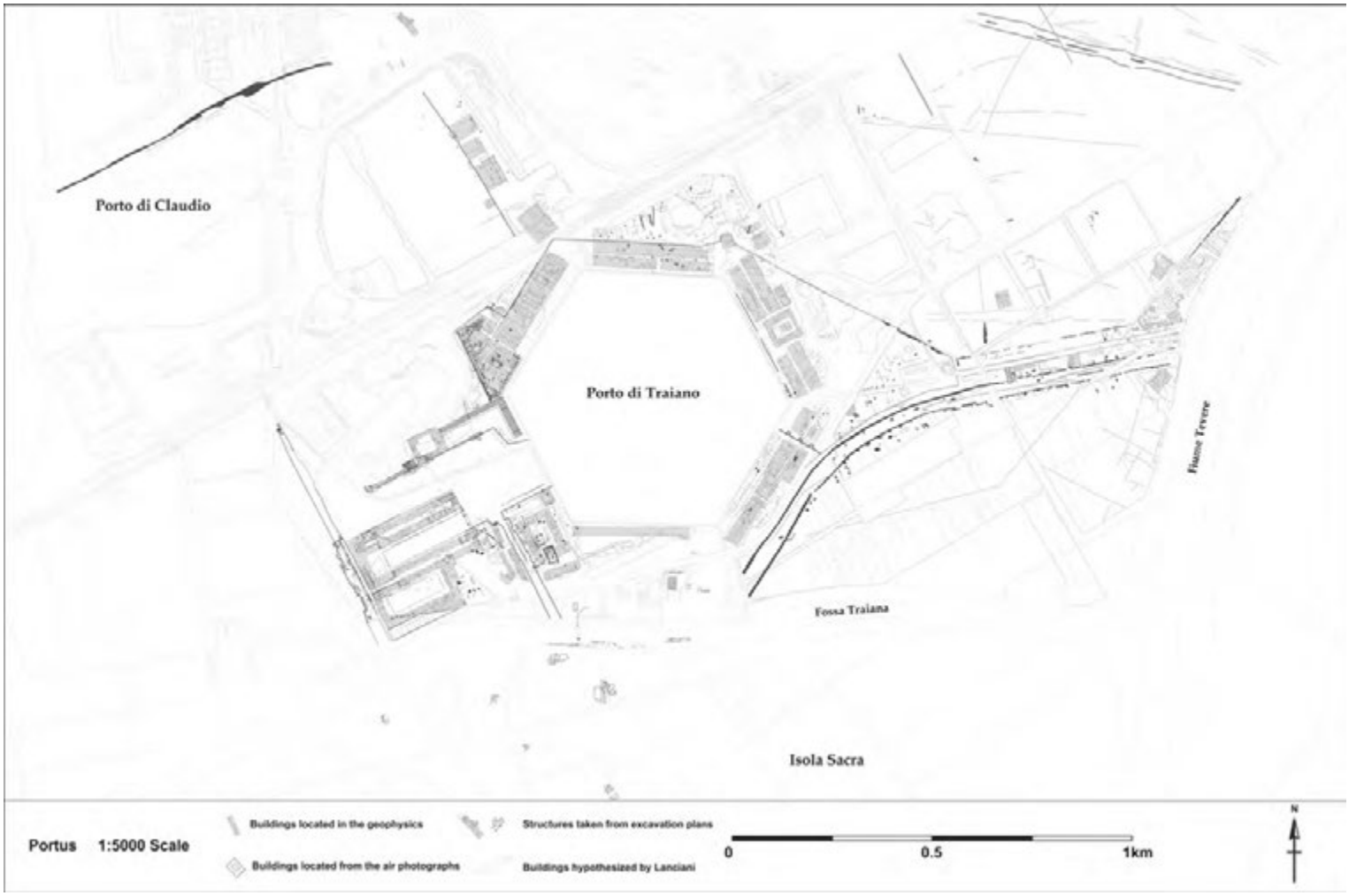


Figure 2. Overall interpretative plan of Portus based upon the results of a geophysical survey of the port (Keay *et al.* 2005: Pull-out 2).

lationship to the outer and earlier Claudian basin by the *Canale di Imbocco al Porto di Traiano* recalls that between the inner and outer harbours (*limen kleistos*) of earlier Hellenistic military harbours in the eastern Mediterranean. Furthermore, its hexagonal plan would have facilitated the sequence of entry, unloading and departure of large numbers of ships and boats. Sea-going ships entering the basin from the Claudian basin via the *Canale di Imbocco del Porto di Traiano* could have anchored temporarily at the centre of the basin until such time as a mooring space along one of its six sides became free, while the regular sequence of numbered marble columns and stone mooring rings that have been discovered along several of them suggests that there was a strict order and procedure in docking the ships. At a later date, unloaded cargoes that were moved between the quays and warehouses behind them had to be funnelled through narrow doorways in an internal wall that ran around at least two sides of the basin. This procedure would have facilitated the checking of cargoes by officials.

Arguably the three most important buildings in the whole port lay on a narrow isthmus of land that at once defined the northern side (II) of the hexagonal basin and the south side of the Claudian basin. This position was central to the whole port. The first was the *Palazzo Imperiale*, a unique three-storey imperial villa complex covering 3.5 ha that looked out over the Trajanic and Claudian basins (**Fig. 4**).[3] Recent research

[3] Keay – Paroli 2011.



Figure 3. Aerial view of the central area of Portus, with the hexagonal basin visible in the middle background (S. Keay/Portus Project).



Figure 4. Aerial view of the area of the Palazzo Imperiale and Imperial *navalia* (S. Keay/Portus Project).



Figure 5. View of the Portus Project excavations of the Palazzo Imperiale (S. Keay/Portus Project).

indicates that the building was on a truly palatial scale, with a magnificent colonnade gracing its western façade, a series of luxuriously appointed and architecturally innovative peristyles and bath blocks on its first floor, together with mosaic floors, marble sculptures and monumental inscriptions (**Fig. 5**). Although the *Palazzo Imperiale* was conceived as an imperial villa for use by Trajan, it seems that his untimely death led to a rethink of its function of this and, perhaps, the Trajanic enlargement as a whole. By the later 2nd c AD, it had become an administrative complex, perhaps for an Equestrian official working on behalf of the *praefectus annonae*. Specific activities that might have been centred here may have included the coordination of the movement of maritime traffic within Claudian and Trajanic basins, the registration of incoming and outgoing ships, allocation of mooring bays, coordination of the unloading and registration of cargoes, allocation of warehouse space and collection of customs dues (*portoria*) for incoming ships.

The second major building was the Imperial *navalia*, a contemporary complex that was situated immediately to the east of the *Palazzo Imperiale*.[4] It measured c. 240 m × 58 m and may have stood well over 20 m. It consisted of three integrated building sections, each of which was subdivided into a sequence comprising 1 passage, 3 narrow bays, 1 passage and one wide bay on a north to south orientation. In the original conception of the building, the bays were intended to be used for the sheltering and repair of galleys and other ships, probably to be used by the emperor his officials. At some stage in the later 2nd c AD, however, several of the bays were converted into smaller spaces on an east-west orientation so that they could be used as storerooms. This meant that much of the *navalia* would have effectively served as a warehouse. The third building was the *Grandi Magazzini di Settimio Severo*, a late second century AD complex that was built immediately adjacent

4 Keay *et al*. 2012.



Figure 6. Reconstruction of the overall port in the 2nd c AD (Artas Media/Portus Project).

to the *Palazzo Imperiale* to the west, and was physically joined to it at a later date. Although this is usually interpreted as a large warehouse, its unusual architectural form, juxtaposition to the *Palazzo Imperiale* and central position within the port as a whole, suggest that its role was closely associated with that of the *Palazzo Imperiale*. To the west of these buildings, the central isthmus narrowed to form a long *opus caementicium* mole which terminated in a small lighthouse, or lantern, whose foundations have been dated to the Trajanic period.[5] Both this lighthouse, another one at the northern end of the north-south mole and the Pharos itself would have formed key points of reference for ships and boats moving through the port (**Fig. 6**).

Four of the six sides of the hexagonal basin were dominated by large oblong warehouses. The distinctive arrangement is unlike those at Rome and *Ostia* and lack courtyards. It has been cogently argued that it is best explained by the need to arrange the buildings around the sides of the hexagonal basin.[6] The western side (II) opposite the entrance to the basin (V) was dominated by a temple within a monumental *temenos* that was fronted by a large statue of the emperor Trajan. This complex lay on axis to the entrance to the basin and was flanked on each side by double pairs of oblong warehouses. In terms of the movement of cargoes through the port, the south-eastern side (III) of the hexagon seems to have played a key role. The strip of warehouses running along this side are defined to their east by the 40m wide canal of Trajanic date (*Canale Romano*) that branched off from the *Fossa Traiana* to meet the Tiber just over one kilometre to the east. It enabled cargoes from sea-going ships to be stored in warehouses before being transhipped onto smaller river-boats or barges bound for Rome. While this arrangement inevitably speeded up the process of movement of cargoes in this part of the harbour, it is unclear whether all cargoes being unloaded in the basin passed through here, and if so, how they were moved here from their original point of storage. The southern side (IV) was distinguished by two warehouses defining a triangular space (**Fig. 7**).

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5 Lugli – Filibeck 1935, 81-82.

6 Rickman 1971, 130-32.



Figure 7. Reconstruction of the Palazzo Imperiale, Imperial *navalia* and other buildings at the centre of the port in the later 2nd c AD (Artas Media/Portus Project).

There is as yet, however, little evidence as to which commodities were stored in any of the warehouses at *Portus*, although grain is often assumed to have been the principal commodity. The warehouses on side III of the hexagonal basin and along the northern side of the *Magazzini Traianei* provide good evidence for this.[7] Although their initial contents are not known, the fact that both had *suspensurae* suggests that they held grain from at least the later second century AD onwards. Marble, on the other hand, was not unloaded and stored within the main part of the port. It was deposited in the marble yards (*statio marmorum*) on the southern bank of the *Fossa Traiana*, prior to being moved up-river to the marble yards (*statio marmorum*) at Rome from the late first century AD onwards.[8]

Subsequent development of the port

Trajan's enlargement created the topographical framework for the subsequent development of the port as a whole. Recent excavations have shown that building activity at warehouses, moles and other elements of port infrastructure continued apace throughout the later 2nd and into the earlier 3rd c AD. For example, a small amphitheatre was added to an open area between the *Palazzo Imperiale* and the *Imperial navalia* in the early 3rd c AD. It is also known that the port was granted urban status under the emperor Constantine by c. AD 334-345,[9] during a period which also saw the establishment of a probable house church in the built-up area between the *Canale Trasverso* and the Trajanic basin.[10] Furthermore, a sequence of Imperial edicts preserved in the *Codex Theodosianus* clearly reflect the port sustaining its role as a nexus for the import

7 Bukowiecki – Panzieri – Zugmeyer 2012.

8 Pensabene 2007.

9 Thylander 1952, B336.

10 Maiorano – Paroli 2013.

of fiscal cargoes bound for Rome throughout the 4th and into the early 5th c AD.[11] There are also very good grounds to believe that the port retained this role until at least the middle of the 5th c AD, with epigraphic evidence for the repair of structures such as the *Porticus Placidiana* on the southern mole of the Claudian basin, a re-embellishment of the *Palazzo Imperiale*, and the continued import of ceramics and foodstuffs in amphorae from north Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. At some time around AD 450, however, the core area of the port around the Trajanic basin including the central isthmus and mole, the warehouses around the *Darsena* and the built-up area to the east of the *Canale Trasverso*, was surrounded by a substantial defensive wall. This seems to have been erected in response to the sustained raids by the Vandals during the first half of the 5th c AD which culminated with the sack of Rome by Gaiseric in AD 455. While the port continued to function subsequently, it was serving a reduced population at Rome. Consequently, the Claudian basin had begun to silt up and some warehouses ceased to store goods and instead were used for occasional burials. Indeed, the evidence from recent excavations also suggests that its commercial role was much diminished. While grain continued to be imported to the port until at least the later 5th c AD, North African, East Mediterranean and Italian amphorae and ceramics that are common at many other western Mediterranean port sites at this time are absent. However, the position of the port close to the mouth of the Tiber meant that the port was still of strategic significance to Rome. It was thus fought over by Ostrogothic and Byzantine troops on several occasions in the course of the Gothic wars (AD 536-552), until the eventual Byzantine victory in AD 553. Following this, the Byzantine authorities appear to have demolished buildings in the isthmus between the Claudian and Trajanic basins, so that the functioning area of the port was much reduced and largely limited to the area between the Trajanic basin, the *Canale Trasverso* and the *Fossa Traiana*. Nevertheless, the port continued in use albeit on a much reduced scale through until the 11th and 12th c AD.

11 Keay *et al*. 2005, 322-23.

The Isola Sacra

Simon Keay

The Isola Sacra formed the land bridge between Portus and Ostia. A knowledge of its topography is thus of key importance to our understanding of the roles of, and inter-relationships between, both ports.[1] The land bridge originally formed the northern sector of the territory of the Colonia of Ostia,[2] (**Fig. 1**) and was defined by the Tiber to the east and south, and the Tyrrhenian sea to the west. It was only following the excavation of the so-called *Fossa Traiana* (Canale di Fiumicino) in the north by Claudius, that the northern limit of the Isola Sacra was created, thereby transforming the land between Portus and Ostia into an island encompassing c. 300 ha.[3] (**Fig. 2**)

Recent archaeological research has identified some of the main features of the ancient topography of the Isola Sacra. Along the south side of the *Fossa Traiana* in the north there was a substantial road with basalt paving that ran from west to east.[4] To the east of this lay the marble yards (*statio marmorum*) which lay close to the junction of the *Fossa Traiana* with the Tiber close to the modern Capo Due Rami. These were established in the late 1st century AD and were a holding point for marble that was imported to Portus for onward transport to Rome.[5] To the south of this lay a settlement of some importance, although the patchy coverage of archaeological research makes it hard to gain a sense as to whether or not it was formally laid out, or the density of buildings. Excavations in the 1970s indicate that these included a bath complex, *Isaeum* and other structures.[6] While we do not yet fully understand the development of the settlement, the evidence that we do have suggests that it probably began in the mid to late 1st century AD, following the establishment of Portus, developed during the 2nd and 3rd century AD and continued down into the late antique and Medieval period, with the establishment of the church of Sant' Ippolito, which still stands today.

The main route of communication which ran from Portus in the north down to Ostia in the south, was the *Via Flavia* which was established in the late 1st century AD. (**Fig. 3**) Its alignment on a straight line between the Ponte Matidia over the *Fossa Traiana* at Portus and the Roman harbour at Ostia clearly illustrates the conceptual and functional relationship between both ports. The road was bordered by scattered burials in the vicinity of the settlement immediately south of the *Fossa Traiana*,[7] as well as the more formally

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1 I wish to acknowledge the contribution of my colleagues Paola Germoni of the *Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica*, Martin Millett and Kris Strutt in undertaking the work that forms the basis of this paper, and in the preparation of two reports on the results (Germoni *et al.* 2011; Germoni *et al.* 2018).

2 Pellegrino 2004.

3 It measured 2.7 km from north to south and 1.6 km from east to west.

4 Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Site 3.

5 Pensabene 2007.

6 Veloccia Rinaldi – Testini 1975; Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Sites 7 and 12, 13, 14.

7 Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Sites 32, 34-5.

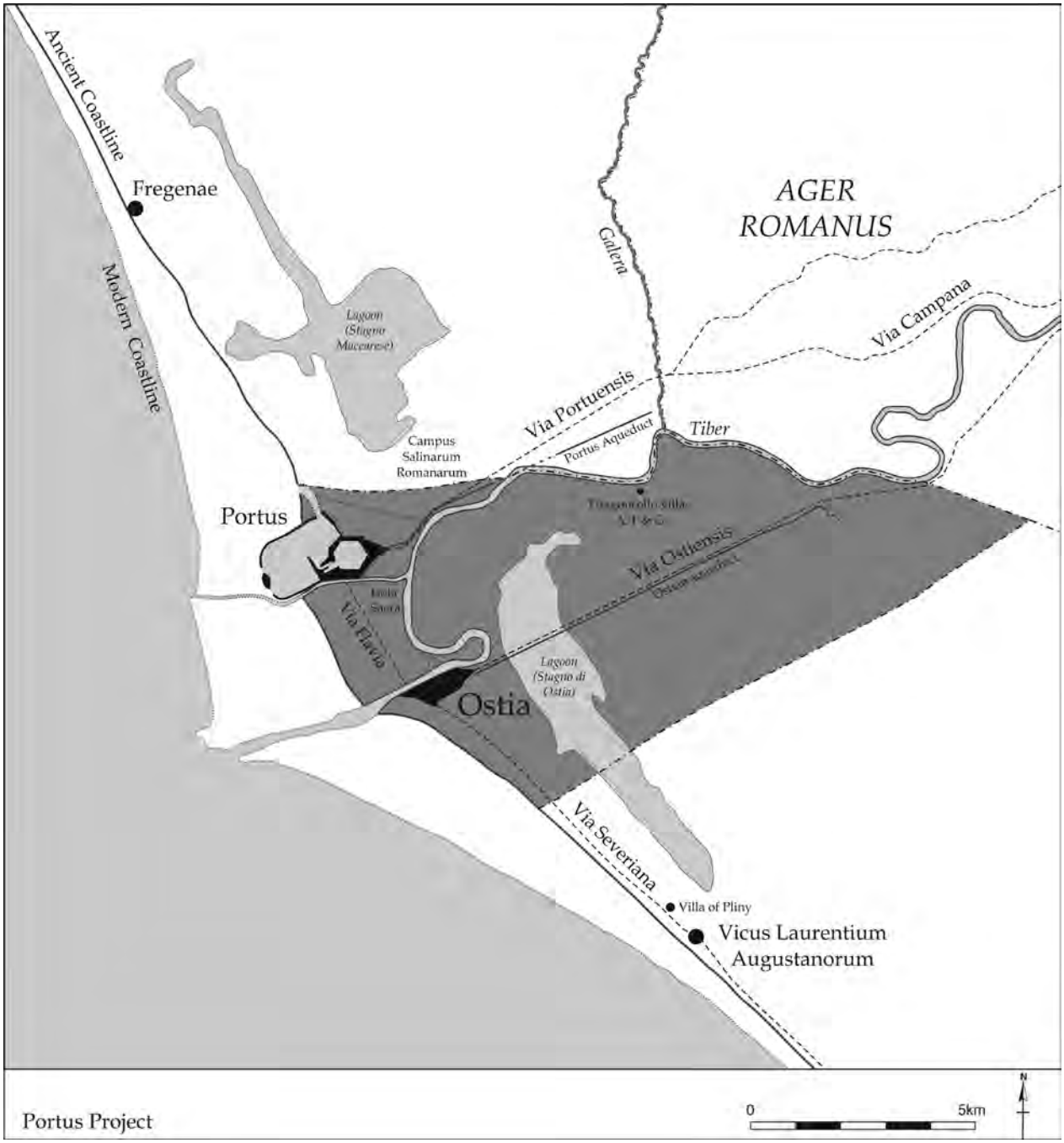


Figure 1. Map showing the approximate territory of Ostia, following Pellegrino 2004 (S. Keay).

organized *Necropoli di Porto.*[8] Much less was known about the centre and southern side of the Isola Sacra until recently, but included occasional burials[9] and structures on the northern bank of the Tiber identified as possible warehouses.[10]

Recent geophysical survey by the Portus Project in conjunction with the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, has substantially transformed our understanding of the Isola Sacra, particularly the south. In the first

8 Calza 1940; Baldassarre 1978; Baldassarre 1987; Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Site 35; fig. 6: Site 35.

9 Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Sites 39 and 40.

10 Zevi 1972, 406-07; Germoni *et al.* 2011, fig. 6: Sites 41-46.

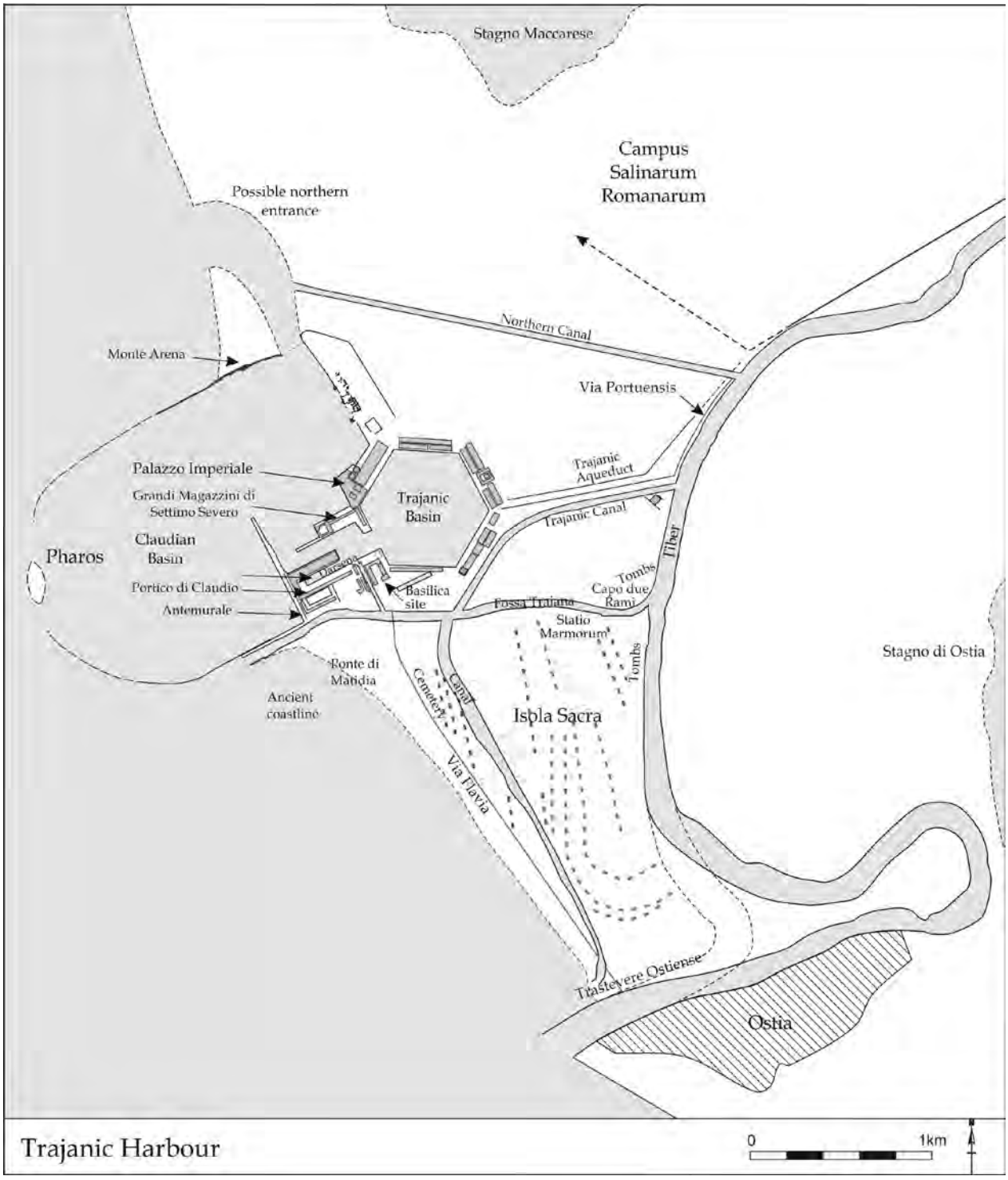


Figure 2. Map showing Portus, the Isola Sacra and Ostia in antiquity, together with some of the principal sites mentioned in the text (Portus Project).

instance, a major new structure of uncertain character was discovered in the north near the *Via Redipuglia*.[11] This suggests that the area between the Medieval church of Sant' Ippolito and the *statio marmorum* was larger and more intensively settled than had been previously thought, and may indicate that the settlement on the south side of the *Fossa Traiana* as a whole was more intensively occupied than previously supposed.

11 Keay *et al.* 2020.

The survey has also revealed that much of the Isola Sacra to the south was subdivided into an orthogonal grid of drainage ditches or channels that ran from west to east. (**Fig. 4**) These clearly relate at least in part to a field system or artificial drainage system, possibly that mentioned by the *Liber Coloniarum*.[12] However, the estuarine context of the Isola Sacra was clearly not ideal for agriculture, and it is noticeable that the survey did not reveal identifiable traces of rural settlements or, indeed, many other kinds of structure. It is noticeable, however, that the west bank of the Tiber on the eastern side of the island was lined with a series of what appeared to be monumental tombs, clearly placed to ensure maximum visibility from boats and ships moving up and down the river.



Figure 3. Aerial photograph of the Isola Sacra, looking southwards from Portus, with the *Necropoli di Porto* visible in the bottom right of the photo, with the Tiber on the left and in the background, and Ostia just beyond (S. Keay/Portus Project).

The most extensive feature discovered during the survey was a massive canal. This lay to the east of the Via Flavia and ran southwards from the *Fossa Traiana* in the north at a point opposite the mouth of the Trajanic canal (*Canale Romano*) at Portus, towards the mouth of the Tiber west of the small harbour of Ostia.[13] (**Fig. 4**) The canal has a maximum width of c. 90 m, although it narrows significantly to the south. An alignment of magnetic anomalies with a surviving *opus caementicium* pier a short distance to the south of the northern settlement, indicate that the canal was traversed by a bridge, and that a road branched off the *Via Flavia* and headed north-eastwards towards the *statio marmorum*. Although the role of the canal is unclear, it was probably used for smaller ships and boats moving between Portus and Ostia and, in conjunction with the *Via Flavia*, may have also facilitated the movement of people between the two.[14]

The most unexpected of all the discoveries made by the survey, however, concerned the southern part of the Isola Sacra. The geophysical results here revealed a sequence of very large structures that represent a new and hitherto unsuspected extension of Ostia to the northern side of the Tiber. The buildings covered an area of c. 600 m × 200 m and lay some distance to the east of the line of the Portus to Ostia canal. (**Fig. 5**) They are defined to the north by a major defensive wall c. 3-4 m thick with external 6 m × 8 m rectangular bastions, which shares the same alignment as the field divisions detected by the survey in the area to the

12 See above, p. 49.

13 Germoni *et al.* 2011; Salomon *et al.* 2016; Keay *et al.* 2020.

14 Recent rescue excavations in advance of preparatory work for a new bridge over the Tiber on the eastern margin of the *Via della Scafa* revealed the remains of two ships (Boetto *et al.* 2012) which probably sank in the canal during the 2nd c AD.

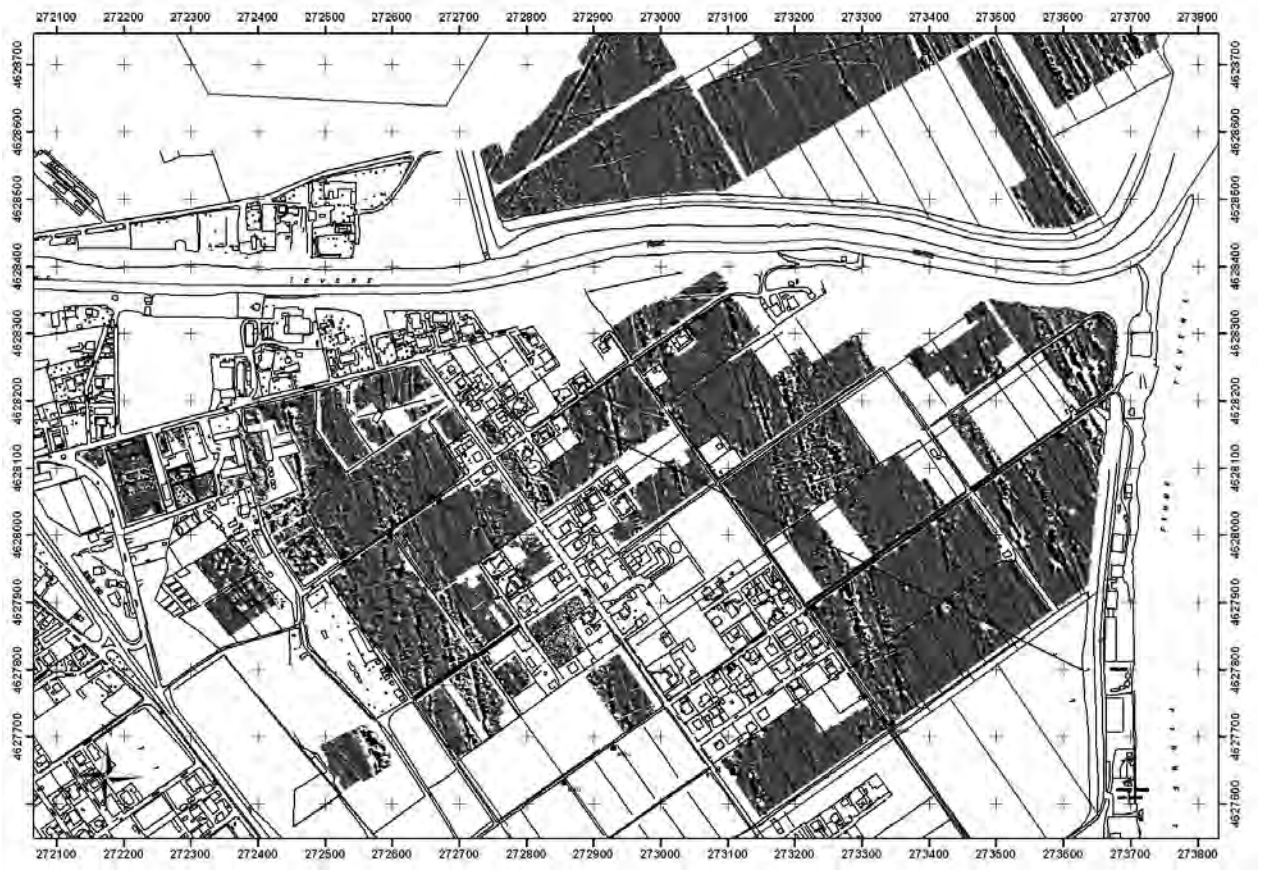


Figure 4. Greyscale image of the magnetometer survey results in the more northerly part of the Isola Sacra, showing geological features running from north to south, with the outlines of the Portus to Ostia canal visible on the left side of the image (K. Strutt/ Portus Project).

north. The wall runs for c. 345 m from west to east, with much of the rest of its remaining course being probably destroyed when the Tiber changed direction after the flood of 1557. Since its alignment seems consistent with the 1st century BC wall that enclosed the west, south and eastern sides of Ostia, there is a logic to suggesting that it formed part of this defensive scheme. However, there is reason to suggest that the wall may have dated to the late antique period.[15]

Between this wall and the banks of the Tiber c. 300 m to the south, was a large open space that was occupied by a sequence of at least five major buildings running from west to east.[16] Available evidence suggests that they were probably constructed at some time during the first two centuries AD. The most complete of these lay to the west and measured c. 175 m × 175 m (Building 1). It appears to comprise a range of standardized rooms facing onto a portico which surrounded a courtyard, and while the layout of its southern part is uncertain, there may have been a second courtyard facing on to the Tiber. At first glance, the plan of this building bears similarities to that of the *Grandi Horrea* at Ostia, and would thus suggest that it was a large warehouse. Adjoining it to the east, and sharing a common boundary with it, was a further courtyard complex with similar standardized rooms (Building 2), which is also likely to have been a *horreum*. There is a gap in the magnetometry data to the east of this building, although there would be enough space to contain a further *horreum* of similar size. To the east of this lay a building section of similar form (Building 3), with a north–south range of store rooms facing a portico to the west. To the north-east of this lay the corner of

15 Keay *et al.* 2020.

16 Traces of which had been found during rescue excavation in the 1960s (Zevi 1972, 406-07).

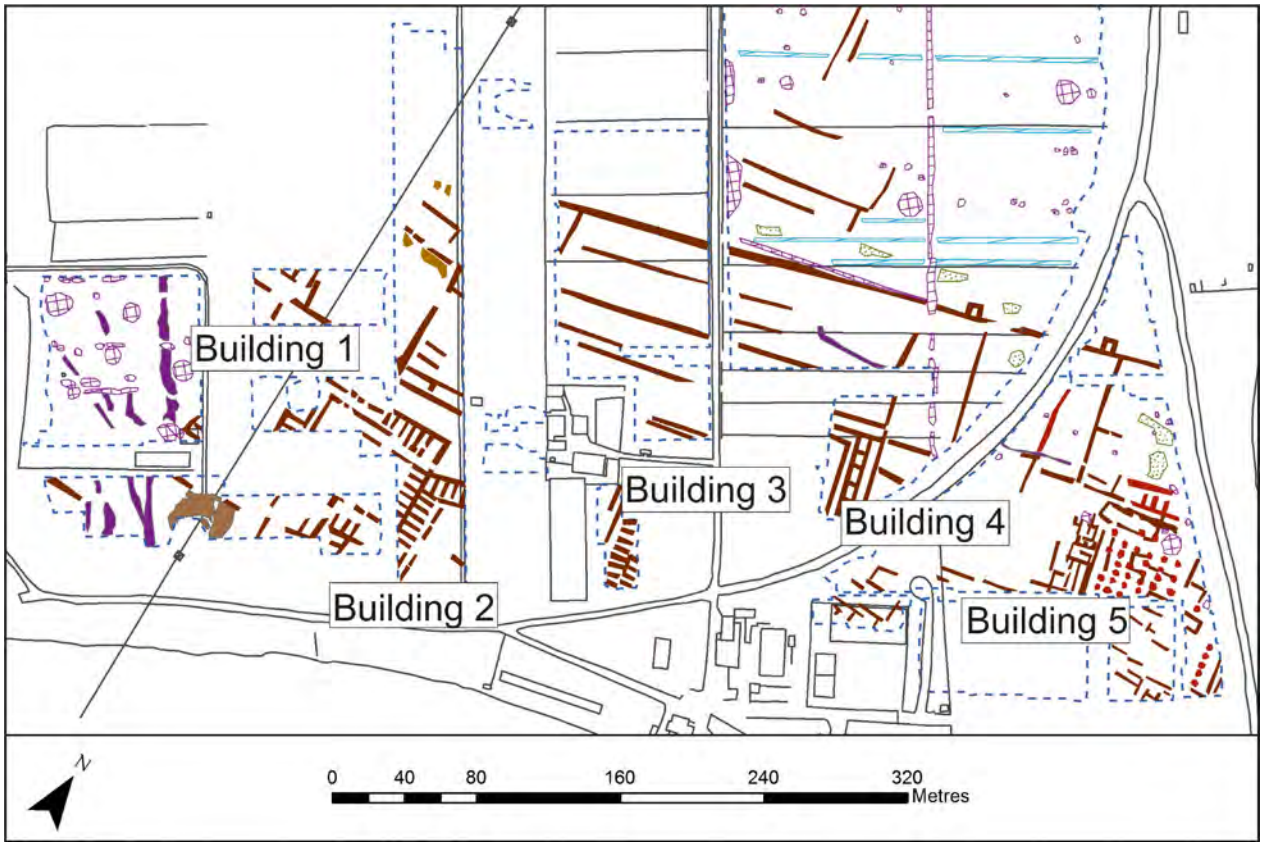


Figure 5. Interpretation image of the survey results from the southern part of the Isola Sacra, showing the interpreted outline of the warehouses and defensive wall (K. Strutt/Portus Project).

another courtyard structure (Building 4), which had a slightly different layout to the other buildings. The rooms were of different proportions and were flanked by a corridor on both sides (Building 4), suggesting a different function to those of Buildings 1-3; it was also more distant from the Tiber. The most enigmatic of all of these structures, however, was Building 5. This lay to the east of Building 4 and close to the modern north-south course of the Tiber, but was set back from its southern course. It appears to have comprised a structure c. 50 m wide and at least 50 m deep that was divided into two by a north–south wall. The space to the west contains three or perhaps four rows of large regularly spaced column bases c. 8 m apart. The plan of the building does not resemble a *horreum* and its function remains uncertain. Since these buildings were all on alignment with the southern stretch of the Tiber they were presumably approached from it. However, the modern embankment and various buildings have obscured the remains of the quays that are likely to have been associated with them.

The implications of these results are quite significant. The first is that the encroachment of Ostia onto the Isola Sacra that is implied by them means that Ostia was more extensive than has been thought to have been the case in the past. In particular, it raises major questions about the topography of the port, when the northward expansion took place, and chronology of the defences, that can only be answered by excavation. The second implication is that Ostia was, in effect, considerably "closer" to Portus and the *Necropoli di Porto* than it had been in the past. The third is that the buildings on the north side of the Tiber were well-placed for rapid communication with Portus by virtue of the new Portus to Ostia Canal and, to the west of it, by the *Via Flavia*. The fourth is that while the plans of the newly discovered warehouses on the Isola Sacra have parallels with similar buildings at Ostia, it is very possible that they might have hosted other activities in addition to, or instead of storage.

In any event, the results of the geophysical survey suggest that the development of infrastructure on the Isola Sacra during the first two centuries AD fostered a much more closely integrated relationship between Ostia and Portus than has hitherto been thought to have been the case. In particular, the system of canals and roads facilitated communication between both ports, and between the sea and the Tiber. The close relationship between Ostia and Portus underpinned the broader network of ports that has been labelled as the "port system of Imperial Rome".[17] The enhanced communication between Ostia and Portus relied upon the spinal role played by the Tiber, with the network of river ports between them and the *Emporium* at Rome representing the key link between Rome and its Tyrrhenian ports. These in turn acted as key nodes of communication with the port of Centumcellae (Civitavecchia) to the north, and a string of ports ending with Puteoli (Pozzuoli) to the south.

17 Keay 2012.

COMMERCE, ROAD AND RIVER TRANSPORT

Ostia between Rome and the World

Ray Laurence

Food supplies to Rome

Ostia was always conceived of as a place that connected Rome with the rest of the world. This connection was identified by Livy as a means to relieve pressure on the supply of food to Rome. He suggests that, in 492/491 BCE, ships were sent in search of food to Etruria, the territory of Volscians (to the south) to the Greek city of Cumae on the Bay of Naples and even to Sicily was a place from which Rome sent ships and imported grain.[1] Supply from Sicily, Sardinia and Etruria of grain seems to have been secured by the time of the second Punic War,[2] and food was stock-piled at Ostia to support Rome's armies and, presumably, shipped to supply them from other ports such as at Vulturnum and Puteoli.[3] The purpose was to supply the army through the winter. Ostia's importance for the supply of the Roman state is made clear by the appointment of one of the Quaestors to supervise the supply of food at Ostia,[4] which was regarded by Cicero as a troublesome and vexatious appointment.[5] It is at this time that the Roman state directed by Cicero constructs a new defensive circuit of walls that was completed in 58 BCE.[6] The landing of goods at Ostia was a necessity to lighten the ships arriving, so that they could sail up river,[7] but was not in any way a safe environment for shipping.[8] Yet, the river was the means to supply Rome with food – either upstream from Ostia or downstream from Etruria, the Sabina, and Umbria, and disrupting these two routes made the city vulnerable at times of war, for example in 87 BCE, when the river was blocked to all boats upstream and downstream.[9] Even though no harbour was constructed till the second half of first century CE, it is clear from our sources that Ostia was a major port and Rome's naval base from a much earlier date. Strabo[10] reports that large vessels sailed from Spain and Africa to both Puteoli and Ostia. The very largest vessel known at the time of Caligula transported the enormous obelisk to be erected in the new Vatican circus from Egypt to Ostia and up the Tiber to Rome,[11] that would later be incorporated into the breakwater of Claudius'

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1 Liv. 2, 34.

2 Liv. 22, 37; 23, 38, 7.

3 Liv. 25, 20. Steinby 2004 for discussion of role of the fleet in the Second Punic War.

4 Cic. *Sest.* 17; *Vat.* 5.

5 Cic. *Mur.* 8.

6 *CIL* XIV 4707.

7 Str. 5, 3.

8 Plut. *vit. Caes.* 58, 2.

9 App. *B Civ.* 1, 8, 67.

10 Str. 3, 2.

11 Plin. *nat.* 16, 76.



Figure 1. The sea gave life to the city of Ostia, and this made marine decorations popular in the city. This mosaic emblema depicts a marine procession escorting Neptune and Amphitrite, the royal couple of the sea. The procession features various hybrid creatures typical to marine mythology. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 143 (Cat. no. 2). Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

harbour. Even after the completion of the harbour, food supplies continued to be stored at Ostia, perhaps as a reserve supply in case of fire destroyed food in Rome.[12]

12 Tac. *ann.* 15, 49.

The fleet at Ostia in the Republic

It was perhaps on the beach at Ostia that warships were drawn up from as early as 217 BCE[13] with at least 1500 men stationed there.[14] In 215 BCE, twenty-five ships were built and launched from Ostia to supplement the twenty-five already at sea and five that had been captured.[15] The fleet was created to protect the coast of Italy, but we may assume that the sailors formed part of the community at Ostia. Polybius[16] suggests that in the second century, it was the poorer Roman citizens who manned the fleet; whereas the wealthier citizens were conscripted into the army. The Italian allies also provided manpower for the fleet, as did freed-slaves and their children.[17] Even with the mobilisation of large numbers of ships in 208 BCE, fifty vessels were to be dedicated to the defence of the coast of Italy – with Ostia likely to have been at the centre of those operations. This involved the refitting of thirty ships at Ostia and manning thirty new ships.[18] Clearly, the city was associated with ship building and recycling or repair of ships. In 172 BCE, Gaius Licinius enrolled freedmen, who were Roman citizens, to man twenty-five ships with a further body of sailors recruited from the Italian allies to man another twenty-five ships – in all cases the ships were old quinqueremes that had been stored in Rome in need of repair.[19] At the end of a campaign, 168 BCE, sailors were discharged and the ships placed in storage or moored on the Tiber.[20] By 169 BCE, sailors were not just recruited from Roman freedmen and Italian allies (2/3rd freedmen: 1/3rd allies) with these numbers matched by recruitment from Sicily. This can be seen as the start of the process of internationalizing the Roman navy through the inclusion of recruits from areas of the empire. The presence of the fleet in these numbers at Ostia, including the associated trades of ship repair, as well as significant numbers of freed slaves and foreigners from Italy and beyond.[21] These republican fleets expanded with as many as 900 warships fighting at the Battle of Actium.[22] Augustus set up two fleets one based at Ravenna and another at Misenum with the express purpose of protecting Italy[23] and capable of spending four days at sea, but requiring a place to land.[24]

Sailors in Ostia under the Principate

Epitaphs of sailors from the imperial navy have been found in Ostia's cemeteries.[25] Interestingly, all examples use the standard Latin *tria nomina*, for example Lucius Licinius Capito.[26] However, these inscriptions also reveal the nation or *natio* from which the member of the fleet was recruited. Ostia shows us examples of men

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13 Liv. 22, 11.

14 Liv. 22, 57, 7. Steinby 2007 for full history of the fleet and its development.

15 Liv. 23, 38, 7.

16 Polyb. 6, 19.

17 Liv. 22, 11, 7-9; 36, 2, 15.

18 Liv. 27, 12.

19 Liv. 42, 27, 2-3; compare 171 BCE 2/3rd Roman freedmen and 1/3rd Italian allies in fleet.

20 Liv. 45, 2, 10-12.

21 Spaul 2002 for inscriptions of the fleet; Heinzelmann – Martin 2002 for location of the Navalia at Ostia, discussed by Rankov 2008, 58-60; Blackman 2008 for review of locations of shipsheds in Roman ports; *CIL* XIV 376 refers to a second century restoration of the Navalia.

22 Saddington 2007.

23 Suet. *Aug.* 49; Tac. *ann.* 4, 5.

24 Saddington 2007.

25 Reddé 1986, 202-03, 402 fleet at Ostia.

26 *CIL* XIV 238.

coming from Thrace,[27] Pannonia,[28] Sardinia[29] and Corsica.[30] Sailors were assigned to a particular named ship, that was often included in their epitaph – these were frequently named after the gods, such as Sol.[31] Looking the bigger picture of all inscriptions associated with sailors in Rome's fleet, commemorated round the coast of Italy but particularly at the major bases of Misenum and Ravenna, we find that recruits came from at least twenty-one nations and the most frequent of these were from Egypt, Thrace, Dalmatia, Sardinia and Cilicia.[32] The process of joining the fleet is set out in two letters sent back to Egypt.[33] The recruit arrived in Portus on the 20th May and then made his way to Rome by the 25th May, where he was assigned to the fleet at Misenum but at the time of the letter, he had not been assigned to a ship. He also says that for the health of his family, he had made supplication before the local gods. Another letter sent by another recruit from Egypt at Misenum[34] notes also that his name had been changed from Apion to Antonius Maximus and he was assigned to the ship Athenonike. A second letter, some years later reveals the sailor had a wife, Aufidena, and three children all with Latin nomenclature: Maximus, Elpis, and Fortunata.[35] These examples demonstrate the integration of 'foreigners' into the fleet and into Roman culture but, at the same time, revealing in their epitaphs their nation of origin. Prior to 70/71 CE, sailors would have kept their native names – rather than adopting a Roman name.[36] No ship would seem to have contained just one nation, thus we see in the navy a multi-ethnic group of sailors, who were becoming Roman.

The fluidity of Ostia's population

Recent stable isotope studies of skeletons from the cemetery at Isola Sacra have identified approximately one third of the population were not born in the region around Rome.[37] The same study also revealed that many of these migrants moved to the area as children. This has challenged a traditional assumption that young adult males were the main migrants to Rome and its satellite cities in antiquity. Ostia's expansion in population, suggested to be 40,000 persons,[38] through to the mid to late second century CE is difficult to relate to wider discussion on migration to Italy, that focuses on much earlier periods down to early first century CE.[39] We should also expect a significant proportion of the population to be supplemented by the importation of slaves.[40] An expectation that the processes of migration might continue at a similar velocity under the early emperors is not beyond reason, and the establishment of Portus as a safe harbour would have had a local effect on the

27 *CIL* XIV 234.

28 *CIL* XIV 238.

29 *CIL* XIV 242.

30 *CIL* XIV 4496.

31 *CIL* XIV 242. Tuck 2006 analyses the names of ships.

32 De Vita 2016-2017 for a comparative study of the retention of Greek names by migrants to Puteoli.

33 *P. Mich*. 4527 and 4528. Discussed by Starr 1960, 78-82; Winter 1927 for text and translation; Dzino 2010 for identity formation of Dalmatians in the Roman fleet.

34 *BGU* 423.

35 *BGU* 632.

36 Heintz 1998.

37 Prowse *et al*. 2007; these findings dismissed by Tacoma 2016, 114, who argues in favour of male migration due to late marriage, whereas female migration was restricted by early marriage.

38 Wilson 2011, 182 makes this suggestion based on the southern expansion of Ostia, but recent geophysical survey to the north of the Tiber may cause this figure to now be too small.

39 Hin 2013; Scheidel 2004.

40 Killgrove – Montgomery 2016.



Figure 2. Marble relief depicting the Portus harbour. A ship is arriving at the Portus harbour in the left corner of the relief. It has been portrayed in great detail, including its technical features: the steering oar, the swan's head at the stern, the sails and the rigging. There is a dolphin in the sea in front of the ship. The first thing the ship encounters at the harbour is a lighthouse portrayed with similar attention to detail. It is, however, depicted with three floors that narrow towards the top instead of the correct four. There is a fire burning on the highest floor. The youngster in the right corner is a god symbolising Ostia and Portus. He is portrayed with a bull, a steering oar and an Egyptian lotus headdress as his symbols. The god-figure may also refer to Alexandria, the most important trading partner to Ostia, and its patron god Serapis. In Serapis, the Egyptian deities Apis-bull and Osiris, as well as Zeus and Pluto are joined together (cf. also **Cat. no. 3**). Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 49132. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

shape of migration. If the actual numbers escape us, perhaps, we see the effect of a fluid population composed of one third migrants. The study of names found in inscriptions, *onomastics,* has shown that a much lower number of names associated with freedmen and descendants of freedmen of former slaves owned by the elite than expected is associated with Ostia.[41] Moreover, the onomastic characteristics of Ostia are different from those of Rome and point to migration from the regions of Italy most associated with the transport of food to Rome: Etruria, Campania, Umbria with others from Central Italy.[42] As we saw above in the discussion of the fleet, migrants could become known by Latin *tria nomina.* Moreover, epitaphs reveal only the migration of those who died at Ostia. There were others moving through Ostia, who may have only been resident for a short period of time. The *vigiles* (firemen) assigned to Ostia came down the Tiber to the city, but were only resident for just four months.[43] This example raises the possibility that the population of Ostia was added to not just by migrants to Italy, but also by what Laurens Tacoma points out is the counterstream to migration: persons moving away from Rome.[44] Ostia, in the second century, was a rapidly expanding city with plenty of opportunities for work that would have been known of in Rome, just a half-day journey away. Thus, the figures for migration derived from the skeletons studied at Isola Sacra (one third from outside the region associated with Rome/Ostia) needs to expand to include the hidden migration that was more localized and included persons from Rome. This factor may help to explain the anomaly of an absence of names of freedmen or their descendants associated with the names of the local elite.[45] Ostia was a city of far fluidity than that found in other cities, thus the onomastic patterning found in inscriptions is quite different to that of other cities.

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41 Salomies 2002, 153-59.

42 Salomies 2002, 137-44, 150-53; Tacoma 2016, 248.

43 *CIL* XIV 4469. Meiggs 1973, 307.

44 Tacoma 2016, 168.

45 Salomies 2002, 153-59.

The Emperor in Ostia

Ostia was a point of arrival and departure for members of the imperial family. Tiberius left from Ostia, when seeking seclusion on the island of Rhodes.[46] Claudius left for Britain through Ostia in 43 CE travelling by sea to Marseilles and then north to Boulogne by road, prior to crossing the Channel.[47] This occurred prior to the building of the harbour at Portus. The measures taken by Claudius to build that harbour[48] and station a cohort of the Vigiles (firemen) at Ostia[49] appears to be driven by experience. The debate over whether a harbour should be built had a currency in the training of rhetoricians in the first century CE, as a means to understanding the role of conjecture,[50] which may represent the sense of controversy over this project successfully pushed through by Claudius.[51] There are numerous instances of Claudius being in Ostia across his relatively short reign of thirteen years.[52] The most interesting of his visits was by sea, when he complained that his arrival had not resulted in boats coming to meet him.[53] Clearly, the arrival of the emperor was an opportunity for pageantry. A clue to its absence and an explanation why it may have occurred could have been that Claudius had abolished the stationing of a senatorial magistrate – a quaestor at Ostia.[54] The ceremonial nature of these encounters with the emperor can be most clearly seen in Suetonius' account[55] of Caligula's reception of the ashes of his brother and mother. These were brought to Ostia on a warship. Caligula with his own hands deposited the ashes of his dead relatives into urns, prior to transporting their remains to Rome for incorporation into the imperial mausoleum. Claudius' successor, Nero, seems to have also visited Ostia coming downstream by boat and had big plans for its development, including the



Figure 3. Emperor Trajan (98-117 CE) renewed the harbour of Ostia in Portus, which made him an important figure in the city's history. The new hexagonal basin in Portus facilitated the sequence of entry, unloading and departure of large numbers of ships and boats. Museo Ostiense, inv. 17 (**Cat. no. 5**). Photo: Arja Karivieri.

46 Suet. *Tib.* 10.

47 Suet. *Claud.* 17.

48 Suet. *Claud.* 20.

49 Suet. *Claud.* 25.

50 Quint. *inst.* 3, 5; compare 2, 21.

51 Compare rhetorical discussion of Nero's attempt to build a canal from the Bay of Naples to Ostia (Suet. *Nero* 31) and Julius Caesar's earlier plans (Plut. *vit. Caes.* 58, 2).

52 Suet. *Claud.* 12; Tac. *ann.* 11, 26-29; 11, 32.

53 Suet. *Claud.* 38.

54 Suet. *Claud.* 24.

55 Suet. *Cal.* 15.

creation of walls from Rome to Ostia and connecting Ostia by canal to the Bay of Naples.[56] He also planned, initially in 68 CE, to escape from danger with the fleet at Ostia.[57] These instances of emperors visiting the city underline the importance of Ostia for the empire. Pliny[58] records distances to the western provinces from Ostia: Baetica – six days away; Hispania – three days away; Gallia Narbonensis – two days away, and Africa just a day's journey.[59] Thus, Ostia was a communications hub – confirmed by the departure of an ambassador to Ptolemy of Mauretania from Ostia.[60] This significance is also brought home by the fact that a cohort of the praetorian guard was stationed here.[61]

56 Suet. *Nero* 16 and 31.

57 Suet. *Nero* 47.

58 Plin. *nat.* 19, 1.

59 Casson 1971, 282-91 for discussion of speeds at sea under favourable and unfavourable winds.

60 Suet. *Cal.* 55.

61 Tac. *hist.* 1, 80; 2, 63.

Imported Ceramics at Ostia: A Bibliographical Survey

Carlo Pavolini

The oldest imported ceramics at Ostia are those discovered in the non-stratigraphic soundings carried out in the deepest levels of the *Castrum* area in around 1938-1942. The red-figure pottery was catalogued first by F. Zevi,[1] and later by B. Adembri;[2] the dates are distributed over the 4th century BCE and the productions can be attributed to Attica, the Faliscan area, Etruria (including "Genucilia" plates; see p. 281, fig. 6) and to a very limited extent to Magna Graecia, the area of the Greek colonies in South Italy.

In part on this basis, the historical research tradition of the last century dated the foundation of the mid-Republican colony of Ostia to between 400 and 340 BCE, for preference around this latter date. However, the results of a stratigraphic survey near the *Castrum* wall in 1971-1972 were later published:[3] in this context the most recent (and therefore significant for dating purposes) fragments are of no earlier than the end of the 4th or perhaps the beginning of the 3rd century BCE.

In any case, for the pottery trade at Ostia between the second half of the 4th and the 2nd centuries BCE we now have the results of an archaeological and archaeometric study, which also uses statistical calculations,[4] covering numerous sites on both the right bank (Nuova Fiera di Roma area) and the left bank (Acilia, Dragoncello, Malafede) of the Tiber. These settlements are contemporary with the earliest phases of Ostia's existence and can perhaps be attributed to the colonists themselves.

At these sites, the dates of the amphorae and ceramics fall into two main phases. In the first (mid-4th/first half of the 3rd century BCE), we find red-figure pottery, attributed to productions from Caere and including plates of the "Genucilia" type. The classes of black gloss pottery consist of vessels *à petites estampilles*, *Heraklesschalen,* and productions generically termed "Etrusco-Latial". The amphorae are predominantly Greco-Italic, but also Etruscan and (in fair quantities) Punic.

In the second phase (mid-/second half of the 3rd century BCE), the picture for black gloss pottery changes little, but also includes Faliscan vessels in "Campana B" and possibly "Romana E" fabrics, alongside some artefacts that may come from Cales in Campania. "Campana A" is attested by only a single fragment, which is nonetheless important given the low presence of this class in the Rome area. The formal repertoire of amphorae shrinks: both Greco-Italic productions (perhaps Latial, but the production centres remain uncertain) and Punic amphorae are represented by just one type each. Imports, in any case, are not numerous: for both phases, laboratory analyses have shown the existence of a prevalent local or sub-regional "*ager Portuensis*/Ostia group".

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1 Zevi 1973b.

2 Adembri 1996.

3 Martin 1996.

4 Olcese – Coletti 2016.

In the only ceramic context of the city of Ostia published in the volume under consideration[5] (from the 1969-1971 excavations under the Tempio dell'Ara Rotonda), the residual materials ascribable to the period between the late 4th and early 2nd century BCE differ significantly – as confirmed by archaeometric analyses – from the predominantly Etrusco-Latial picture of the *ager*: there is a massive presence of Neapolitan Campana A, to which we should add the Etruscan *kylikes* with ear handles and some Punic imports of common table ware. The other classes, characterized by qualitatively higher technical standards than those of the *ager*, may have been produced by Roman workshops. However, the overall proportion of imported ceramics is much higher; these include Greco-Italic amphorae from Campania and containers from Apulia, Marseilles, the Punic world and the Aegean.

For the late Republic and the early decades of the imperial period – under Augustus and up to the principate of Claudius – stratigraphic data for numerous sites and considerable quantities of materials have been published, but virtually no statistical analyses. An exception are the quantifications for the amphora deposit of Longarina near Ostia (1-10 CE),[6] where Campanian and northern Italian productions prevail among the wine containers, while amphorae from Tarraco, Baetica and the east are present in smaller, though already considerable, percentages.

The series of stratigraphic excavations (Domus delle Pareti Gialle, Piazzale delle Corporazioni, Insula dell'Invidioso) begun at Ostia – thanks largely to the efforts of Fausto Zevi – in the late 1960s were differently organized; they resumed in the 1990s (Domus dei Pesci). The relevant reports in the *Notizie degli Scavi* were published, between 1970 and 2007, by Zevi himself, I. Pohl, M. Carta and others.[7] The soundings – carried out on the occasion of the detachment and restoration of mosaic floors – were of limited extent (except in the case of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni). However, this does not diminish the importance of these contributions, and not just because of the scholarly rigour of the excavation and study criteria. The publications describe a large quantity of finds, dating from the late Republic onwards, but particularly to between Augustus and Trajan and in one case (Domus dei Pesci) up to the 3rd-4th century CE, catalogued fragment by fragment and layer by layer; however, given in part the chosen place of publication, they do not tackle the problem of the ceramic trade at Ostia.

For the late Republic and early empire we now also have a report on the ceramics from the 2002-2010 excavations under the so-called "Schola del Traiano",[8] and in particular the data on the *domus* beneath the current building. Leaving aside the residual finds,[9] of significance for the period of Caesar is the foundation level of the Domus dei Bucrani, in which – among the fineware – "thin-walled" Italic productions prevail, but Iberian artefacts such as *sombreros de copa* are also present. There are two Augustan contexts, belonging to the destruction of the Domus dei Bucrani (30-20 BCE) and to a renovation phase of the Domus a Peristilio (up to 10 CE): Italian sigillata (TSI) appears already in the first context and its presence increases in the second, together with thin-walled pottery and a small group of "Roanne" ceramic imports, probably from the vicinity of Vienne.[10] The same layer contained Italian wine amphorae, Baetic and Gaulish containers, eastern amphorae (perhaps for wine) and African (possibly oil) amphorae.

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5 Manzini 2016, 163-74.

6 Hesnard 1980; Panella 1985, 185-86 and fig. 161.

7 All the bibliographical references are in an *Addendum* to *Ostia VI* (433-35); see below on this volume.

8 Deru *et al.* 2018.

9 Indeed, the analysis that follows will not – as a rule – take into account the often enormous impact of residual finds.

10 On imports from Gaul, see also, for the decades between 40 and 70 CE, the works of A. Martin on the spread of South-Gaulish sigillata (TSG) in Italy (Martin 1985, Martin 1994), which highlight a strong concentration specifically at Ostia of the decorated vessels of this class. The Gaulish producers are thought to have attempted to compensate for the temporary scarcity of fine table





Figure 2 (Cat. no. 108). Plate in South-Gaulish "marbled" sigillata ware, ca. 40-70 CE (type Dragendorff 18). This vessel features a maker's mark, 'CALV F(…)', which probably refers to a producer named Calvus, who is known to have worked in the largest production centre in France, La Graufesenque. It is possible that this plate was among those brought to Ostia as supplementary cargo in a Gaulish cargo ship. Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. no. 4837. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Figure 1 (Cat. no. 9). Transport amphora (type Dressel 1 B), from the first century BCE. This wine amphora, produced in central Italy, was meant for transporting Italian wine abroad. This large and heavy amphora type can be found all around the Roman Empire, with imitations of it also produced. Ostia, Grottoni, inv. 16125. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

We could continue with an account of the Flavian, Severan and late-antique ceramic levels from the excavations in the "Schola del Traiano", but starting from the principate of Nero and up to the abandonment of Ostia (i.e. between around 50 CE and the 8th century) we can rely on much more substantial data, thanks to surveys conducted by different teams in several areas of the city. There are basically two bibliographical sources on these: the series of excavation reports on the Terme del Nuotatore and a group of articles on the results of the soundings conducted in many areas of the city by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut and the American Academy in Rome (henceforth DAI/AAR) between 1998 and 2001.

With regard to the latter, the resulting vast quantity of ceramic evidence was summarized and published – between 2002 and 2008 – mainly by E. De Sena and A. Martin, on different occasions and in jointly or separately authored texts examining and analysing the same data from different points of view. These publications thus inevitably present some elements of repetition, but we should nonetheless stress their methodological soundness, ensured by the use of up-to-date analytical criteria and the extensive use of statistical processing (expressed through histograms and other types of graphs). One of their greater merits is

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wares in Italy, which may have arisen between the decline of Italian sigillata (TSI) proper and the establishment – with Domitian – of decorated Late Italian sigillata. This sort of "market specialization" culminates in the popularity at Ostia, in these decades, of the so-called "marbled" ware (like the previous type produced mainly at La Graufesenque), which in some contexts in Ostia reaches 21% of the total of smooth South-Gaulish sigillata (see **Fig. 2**; **Cat. no. 108**).

that of clearly explaining the various systems used to calculate the recorded ceramics, without concealing difficulties and gaps.

Two articles,[11] in particular, help to provide an interpretative *fil rouge* running through the DAI/AAR survey data, for two reasons: they reconstruct the chronological phases identified by the excavations in an almost identical way and they complement one another, with the former analysing only "domestic pottery"[12] and the latter only amphorae. Below I will try to unify the information they provide.

In Phase I (50-100 CE), fine tableware is dominated by Italian sigillata, TSI (18.5%), with an equivalent percentage of thin-walled pottery of varying provenance, whilst the instances of other imported sigillata ware are negligible. Even among the cookware, imports (from Campania and Africa) account for a high proportion, roughly 1/5 of the total. 1/4 of the amphorae are Italian, 1/3 Iberian; other provenances (Gaulish, for example) are present in lesser or negligible quantities.

In Phase II (100-150 CE) we see the beginning of the economic rise of the Maghreb, for the time being not exceptional, at least if we look at the African red-slip ware (ARS), which accounts for 6% of all table and storage wares (**Fig. 3**; **Cat. no. 109**): however, the African kitchen ware already represents 1/3 of all cook ware and amphorae from this region are 16% of the total. Moreover, the amphorae recorded at this period mark the culmination of the commercial flourishing of the Iberian peninsula (44%). The percentages of Italian containers decrease proportionately, and the crisis in Gaulish wine becomes even more marked.[13]



Figure 3. Bowl in African red-slip ware, 2nd century CE (type Hayes 9A). Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. no. 16627. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Phase III (280-350 CE) sees a step forward towards the economic hegemony of Roman Africa, with ARS (productions C and D) accounting for 1/4 of the table and storage ware, and African cook ware reaching 2/3 of the pottery in this class. Imports of the little-known "Central Tiber red-slip ware", transported along the river, are of much lesser statistical importance.

For the latest period the periodizations differ slightly: De Sena identifies both a Phase IV and a Phase V (325-375 and 375-450 respectively), though he nonetheless reports the data for both together; for Martin, there is only a Phase IV (350-475). This does not really matter, since we can in any case speak of a late antiquity in the Ostian ceramic trade,[14] during which the influx of imports from North Africa reaches its peak. This is signalled less by "domestic" pottery, for which the percentage presences of both ARS[15] and African cook ware do not vary significantly compared to the level reached in the

11 De Sena 2002; Martin 2008.

12 De Sena uses this term to refer to all forms of vessels used in the home, and thus table/storage wares on the one hand and cook wares on the other; moreover, for him the term "table ware" includes both fine and "common" wares, mostly regional (a term that the author prefers to "local").

13 The aforementioned article by Martin (2008) also tackles the theme of amphora-borne foodstuffs phase by phase. From these and many other pieces of evidence it emerges that Italy, Gaul and the eastern Mediterranean mostly produced wine, Spain and later Africa *garum* and oil, whose containers cannot always be distinguished from one another (see *ibid.*).

14 On this see also the additional observations in Martin – De Sena 2005.

15 40% of table and storage vessels (see *ibid.*).

previous phase,[16] than by the study of the amphorae. Between the second half of the 4th and the second half of the 5th century, 61% of these are African[17] (**Fig. 4**; **Cat. no. 10**), and **Fig. 6**), 12% eastern (**Fig. 5**; **Cat. no. 11**) and 10% Italian (with negligible percentages for other provenances). These data are in line with a well-known phenomenon, that is to say that remarkable Italian wine production that persisted in Late and very Late Antiquity, especially in Calabria, as well as in eastern Sicily.

The publications summarized above cannot account for the percentage increase – largely chronologically postdating the 5th century – in the presence of mainly Aegean and eastern amphorae at *Portus* (and Rome),[18] a phenomenon that surely also affected Ostia: however, for the present the bulk of the pub-



Figure 4. Transport amphora (type Africana II D), late 3rd - early 5th century CE, used to transport oil or fish sauce *garum*. Ostia, Grottoni, inv. 15508. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 5. Transport amphora (type Kapitän II), produced in the eastern Mediterranean, from 3rd to 4th century CE. These amphorae probably contained wine. Ostia, Grottoni, inv. 15590. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 6. African oil amphora made in Tunisia, late 2nd - early 5th century CE (on temporary display at the Castle of Ostia, 1977). Photo: Carlo Pavolini.

16 However – again in the "domestic" context, but with regard to table ware – De Sena notes an absence of imports from the east in this phase: in my opinion this is an inaccurate observation, since substantial numbers of the trilobed pitchers or boilers and the corresponding "jugs with a collar ridge" from the eastern Mediterranean are certainly attested at Ostia at least up to the 4th century (Pavolini 2000, 150-58). Furthermore, the class that De Sena terms "African white-surface ware", with 1-2% of that present, are probably the pitchers made in the Maghreb (ibid., 125-34, nos. 46-54) that – with other "common" service vessels of similar origin – reach Ostia particularly between the 3rd and the early 5th century (on the "common" ware imported from the Aegean and Africa, see also Martin 2005b, and, for another form of African pitcher imported to Ostia in the 5th century, see **Fig. 7** = Pavolini 2000, no. 60). Finally, the bibliographical references provided by De Sena in note 61 for the "white-surface" ware are not pertinent: the specimens catalogued in Pavolini 2000, 236-37 are not African, and Olcese 1993, 154, speaks of African cook ware, which is a completely different thing.

17 91% of the oil and fish sauce are African and these products together make up 68% of the foodstuffs imported to Ostia in amphorae in this period. 50% of the wine is from the east, but 44% still comes from Italy.

18 See the mention in Martin – De Sena 2005, 387.

lished Ostian evidence does not generally go beyond the 5th century.[19] There are exceptions, such as the information on the 6th-7th century provided by soundings in the Constantinian Basilica (showing significant presences of eastern containers), but at this excavation site we must reach the abandonment layers of the church in the late 8th century before we see a radical change in the ceramic *facies*, now characterized by an almost complete cessation of Mediterranean imports and a picture that already reflects the early medieval situation.[20]



Figure 7 (Cat. no. 102). Common ware pitcher imported from Africa, 5th century CE. Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. no. 17839. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Readers will have noticed that the data from the DAI/AAR soundings present a chronological gap for the decades between roughly 150 and 280 CE. Fortunately, this lacuna can be filled thanks to the other fundamental contribution to our knowledge of maritime trade at Ostia mentioned above: the publication of the excavation of the Terme del Nuotatore, a research project carried out in 1966-1977 by the University of Rome under the direction of A. Carandini and C. Panella.[21] At this point, therefore, we must not just take a chronological step backwards with respect to the early medieval phases we had reached, but also provide a brief advisory of a bibliographical nature.

The publication of the stratigraphic evidence and materials from the Terme del Nuotatore also presents a gap. The first volumes,[22] published between 1968 and 1977, essentially belonged – from the point of view of the publishing criteria and the presentation of evidence – to that "Lamboglian" tradition that was at the time very isolated in Italian archaeology, but that was also followed at other sites at the same time as at Ostia (see above). Nonetheless, at the Nuotatore excavations we see a clear qualitative improvement, in three respects: the aim of excavating and publishing an entire building in Ostia with the related finds; the increasing use of summary tables for attestations of the various ceramic products (though not yet statistical quantifications); and the ample and growing space devoted to an examination of the historical and commercial role played by some classes, especially amphorae.

After a long silence, the volume *Ostia V* (2013) was dedicated to examining the stratigraphic and construction phases of the Baths, while the publication of the ceramic materials saw a new start with *Ostia VI* (2014) and in particular with the resumption – using different criteria from the past – of the study of the amphorae, conducted by Giorgio Rizzo under the general scientific direction of Clementina Panella.[23] Whilst

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19 Probably the period to which a context recovered under the Casone del Sale belongs, already published by Martin in 1993 (similar to another at Pianabella, see Ciarrocchi 1993) and then studied again by Martin himself (2005b). In the context of these excavations, the quantitative relationships between the various classes do not change significantly compared to those mentioned above, despite some variations in the percentages.

20 On all this see Martin 2005a.

21 For the history of the excavation of the building, see now *Ostia V*, 198.

22 *Ostia I*; *Ostia II*; *Ostia III*; *Ostia IV*.

23 Cfr. *Ostia VI*, respectively 17-40 (C. Panella, overall contextualization) and 65-390, 391-431 (G. Rizzo, catalogue of containers and section on amphorae and economic history).

overall the dates of the pottery recovered in the building extend, with few interruptions, from the principate of Domitian to the 4th century, the analysis in *Ostia VI* concentrates on the excavation of the north-east area, its focal point being the late-Antonine materials (roughly 160-180/190):[24] this is a stratigraphic sequence corresponding to a colossal rubbish dump, a "mini-Testaccio", chronologically quite homogeneous though composed of ceramic discards and other waste from drains in the city or the neighbourhood.

Whilst the importance of this context for the reconstruction of trade on a Mediterranean scale had been known since long time – thanks to partial or summary contributions, published in various places – and whilst the introductory chapter of *Ostia VI* considers all classes of materials and not just amphorae, an in-depth and definitive treatment is reserved for the latter, as already noted. Thus, the section edited by G. Rizzo[25] highlights the decline of Italian, Gaulish and Iberian containers between the Flavian and late-Antonine periods – although the percentages oscillate – and the corresponding increase in the presence of North-African amphorae, achieving a true *tour de force* under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus and perhaps still in the early period of Severan rule (the data from the north-east area of the Terme do not go beyond this point).

As concerns the foodstuffs transported, the wines of Campania no longer dominate among those from Italy, being replaced by those of the central-northern Adriatic, the Tiber valley and Etruria; additionally, some wine amphorae from Bruttium and Sicily begin to make an appearance, prefiguring production processes that become important in Late Antiquity (see the brief mention above). It is also surprising that the trade in Gaulish wine continues to "resist" up to the Hadrianic-Antonine period and then declines, while imports from the Aegean, the Black Sea and the Levant (Cilicia, Syria, Palestine) increase constantly.[26] With regard to oil,[27] Dressel 20 amphorae from Baetica make up almost half of the Flavian oil containers and as much as 61% of those documented between Trajan and the Antonines. However, these percentages collapse suddenly under the last emperors of this dynasty: this is easily explained by the exactly inverse trend in the presence of Tunisian and Tripolitanian oil amphorae, which reach 75% in the period of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. The analysis of *garum* imports is complicated by the fact that the containers for fish sauces cannot always be distinguished from those for oil, as we know: however, it is probable that in the late-Antonine period Baetic containers still represented 72% of those attested at Ostia (followed by Lusitanian containers), but certainly large amounts of fish sauce were already arriving from Tunisia as well.



Figure 8 (Cat. no. 111). Cup in Corinthian relief ware, 2nd-3rd century CE. Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. no. 5667. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The "mini-Testaccio" at the Terme del Nuotatore cannot be considered fully published, despite the great step forward made by *Ostia VI*. This volume, besides the amphorae, also covers coins[28] and African ceramics,[29] with reference to which I report only the

24 *Ibid.*, 29-33, Period 5, Activ. 13 (= *Ostia V*, Phase 3b, Activ. 40).

25 See in particular *Ostia VI*, 398-408.

26 Coming to represent 22% of the late-Antonine wine amphorae in this context. Even greater, as we have seen, is the commercial importance of eastern wines in Late Antiquity.

27 Cf. taking account that Rizzo has added to the percentages from the Terme del Nuotatore those from the excavations of the Pareti Gialle, Corporazioni and Pesci (see above).

28 G. Pardini, in *Ostia VI*, 41-46.

29 S. Napolitani, *ibid.*, 47-63.

two most striking facts: in the late Antonine period ARS (production A) reaches almost 66% of the table ware, and African kitchen ware accounts for 56% of the cook ware. A systematic study of the other classes is still lacking, both those attested in very high percentages (such as the other classes of common ware), and those present in smaller or "niche" quantities,[30] but historically important, such as non-African sigillata, oil lamps[31] and glass.

30 We can include here, among other things, the Corinthian relief ware of the 2nd-3rd century. (**Fig. 8**): see Pavolini 1980 and the mention in Martin – De Sena 2003, 45.

31 However, for a general picture of lamp production and trade in central Tyrrhenian Italy (including Rome and Ostia) up to the Severans, see Pavolini 1981; on the oil lamps from the Antonine layers of the north-east area of the Terme del Nuotatore and on their maker's stamps, Anselmino Balducci 1994.

Contacts over the Sea: Evidence from Mosaics Decorating the Piazzale delle Corporazioni and the Terme delle Province

Katariina Mustakallio & Arja Karivieri

The *Piazzale delle Corporazioni* is one of the most interesting areas (**Fig. 1**) in the Regio II of Ostia Antica, excavated in 1929 on the northern side of the Theatre of Ostia. It is a huge square (107m × 78m), separated nowadays from the theatre by a row of columns. Around the square, on the three sides, there is a double colonnade with 61 "*stationes*", small rooms, with black-and-white mosaics from the late second and third centuries CE, related to the different cities of the Mediterranean. There has been a long debate concerning the function of these *stationes* and the temple in the centre of the square (**Fig. 2**). The identification of the temple is not clear. It has been connected with Vulcan, but also with Ceres or Pater Tiberinus, *inter alia*[1] (see Mustakallio in this volume).

The rest of the square was left as an open space, as a public piazza for honorary statues (**Fig. 3**). The statue bases preserve inscriptions, many of which are dedications by the administrators and other people working with the *annona*, providing important information about many families who had an active role in



Figure 1. Piazzale delle Corporazioni after the excavations of the year 1915, before 1927. Photo: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, Photo Archive.

[1] See also Van Haeperen 2019, 248-50 for previous studies and bibliography.



Figure 2. Temple in the centre of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Ostian society as traders, merchants and members of various guilds and associations.[2]

The square has been interpreted as a showroom for various guilds. The *Praefectus annonae* controlled all the guilds and groups that were involved in the state import of the *annona*. The square has been seen as a commercial forum, as a counterpart of the Forum of Ostia, which was the centre of administration and the political life of the city. According to this interpretation, the various "rooms" are offices for the various guilds and shipowners.[3] However, Ingrid Pohl has criticized this interpretation. She argues that the theatre and the porticoes were built as one huge building project, and that the theatre was connected to the cult of the temple in the middle of the square. Pohl referred to the Roman manner of placing the theatres near a temple, or building a temple inside the theatre area. Already Vitruvius emphasized that porticoes need to be built behind the stage so that the audience may take refuge in the porticoes if a shower of rain came on suddenly.[4] Pohl concluded that the Piazzale was thus a theatre portico for the spectators who could get shelter from the sun and rain during the intervals and between the several plays that made up a theatre festival.[5]



Figure 3. An honorary statue at the square. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

2 Pavolini 2006, 70.

3 Cf. Pellegrino 2017, 62-65, figs. 42-49.

4 Vitr. 5, 9.

5 Pohl 1983, 65.



Figure 4. One of the most famous mosaics of Ostia, where the lighthouse of Portus, ships and a dolphin are represented, *statio* no. 46. Photo: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, Photo Archive.

The *stationes*, small rooms, of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni with black-and-white mosaics were decorated with symbols and allegorical representations of different areas of the Mediterranean world (**Fig. 4**) with trade relations with Ostia, cities importing goods to Rome by ship via Ostia.[6] Most of the mosaics are dated to the end of the second century CE and some to a restoration at the beginning of the third century CE. According to Carlo Pavolini and Angelo Pellegrino, the walls over the mosaics in the inner part of the porticoes were constructed in the third century CE.[7]

On the Eastern side of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, two professions are often mentioned in the mosaics of *stationes*, i.e., *navicularii*, shipowners, and *negotiantes,* traders (**Fig. 5**). There are different guilds or *collegia* named in these *stationes*, like that of the *stuppatores,* tow makers[8] (**Fig. 6.** *statio* no. 1[9]), or *Corpus pellion(um) Ost(iensium) et Porte(nsium) hic* (*statio* no. 2, of the furriers). People from Sabratha (*statio* no. 14) in Libya are represented by a figure of an elephant, and an inscription: *stat(io) Sabratensium* (the *statio* of Sabratha; cf. Licordari's article, p. 168, fig. 1). In many mosaics, different types of ships are depicted according to the local custom, as in the mosaic of Carthage (cf. van der Ploeg's article, p. 182, fig. 1): *navicul(arii) Karthag(inienses) de suo*, "at their own expense" (*statio* no. 18). Here we also have dedications of the shipowners and traders of the largest ancient city of Sardinia, Cagliari, on the southern coast of the island: *Navicul(arii) et negotiantes Karalitani* (**Fig. 7.** *statio* no. 21), and *(navi)culari Syllec(tini)* (*statio* no. 23), from Syllectum in Africa. A lighthouse with four floors and two dolphins is depicted in *statio* no. 22, identified as the lighthouse of the Claudian harbour of Portus,[10] and another lighthouse with two ships is visible in the floor mosaic of *statio* no. 46.[11]

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6 See Becatti 1961.

7 Pavolini 2006, 72; Pellegrino 2012, 65.

8 Hermansen 1982, 121-22, 125. Hermansen emphasizes that the guilds of *stuppatores* and *restiones* (the ropemakers) shared a stall in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni that could indicate a close working relationship between these two (*CIL* XIV S 4549 58; *CIL* XIV S4549 1).

9 The presentation of the floor mosaics in the *stationes* in this article follows the numbering counted from the south-eastern corner of the three-sided corridor and used by Carlo Pavolini and Angelo Pellegrino in their latest Ostia guidebooks. Jan Theo Bakker has recently studied and created a new plan of the mosaics of Piazzale delle Corporazioni and developed a new numbering system, quite different to that of Pavolini and Pellegrino, http://www.ostia-antica.org/piazzale/p-contents-stationes-frames.htm (retrieved 19-03-2020). Bakker has collected the available archaeological information on his page from published sources, and he aims to continue the study of the mosaics and the Piazzale in Ostia.

10 Pavolini 2006, 72-73.

11 Identified as a lighthouse of the Port of Claudius by Caldelli 2019, 142, fig. 42.



Figure 5. *Naviculari(i) Gummitani*, shipowners from the city of Gummi on the northern coast of Africa. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 6. *Stuppatores*, the mosaic of tow makers. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 7. *Navicul(arii) et negotiantes Karalitani*, the mosaic of shipowners and traders from Cagliari. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

On the northern side, there is a mosaic with a scene of the transportation of amphorae from one ship to another (**Fig. 8**; *statio* no. 24), a very common scene in the harbour, when the cargo of the ships from the sea were transported in smaller river boats (*navis caudicaria*) to be delivered in Rome. Then there is a depiction of the river Nile, as a symbol of Egypt, related to corn trade and the Roman *annona* (**Fig. 9**; *statio* no. 26). Luxury products, such as ivory, were imported from Africa, as well as animals that were transported to Rome for animal fights in the amphitheatres, such as elephants, deer and wild boar that are depicted in these

mosaics as well (**Fig. 10**; *statio* no. 27; cf. also the article of MacKinnon, p. 223. fig. 2). Not only towns from North Africa, but also from the northern part of the Mediterranean, are mentioned, such as Narbo in Gaul (**Fig. 11**) in *statio* no. 31, *navi(cularii) Narbonenses* (shipowners from Narbonne).[12]



Figure 8. Transportation of amphorae from one ship to another. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 9. The river Nile. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 10. *Navi(cularii) Narbonenses*. The mosaic of the shipowners from Narbo in Gaul. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

12 See the plan in Pavolini 2006, 71, following Becatti 1961, with numbered *stationes*.

On the western side of the square there is a mosaic that mentions Alexandria, (*Ale)xandria*, the great Egyptian metropolis (*statio* no. 39). According to studies of the corn supply of Rome, it was especially the Alexandrian ship owners and merchants that dominated the corn trade to Rome via Puteoli and Ostia.[13] In addition to shipowners, traders, tow makers, furriers and ropemakers, river barge operators too donated mosaics (*statio* no. 42: *codicari de suo*). Two palms and an amphora with the stamp *M(auretania) C(aesariensis)* on the shoulder are depicted in room 47 (**Fig. 11**): we know that olive oil amphorae of the same type were transported from Mauretania to Ostia in the third century CE.[14] On this side of the Piazzale, there are more decorations with ships and amphorae (*statio* no. 50), a scene with *venatio,* a hunter with a bull (*statio* no. 51), some mythological scenes with nereids and hippocampus, as well as the goddess Diana and a deer (*statio* no. 56). The level of the mosaics in the southwestern part of the portico is lower here than on the eastern side; in fact, they are on the level of the Claudian era. Nevertheless, according to Pavolini, the style of these mosaics does not allow this early date. In any case, the mosaic decorations were re-made over and over again in the course of the centuries.[15]



Figure 11. The mosaic symbolizing Mauretania Caesariensis. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Other significant structures and finds were found in this area of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. An altar of Mars and Venus, originally from the Flavian era but newly dedicated to the god Silvanus in 124 CE, has been found in the excavations of the last room of the western side (the original is now in the Museo Nazionale, Palazzo Massimo in Rome). The decoration of this altar emphasizes the strong connection between Rome and Ostia with mythological scenes of the legendary past of Rome (**Fig. 12**).[16] Also, a marble inscription with the text *Navicularii Africani*, shippers from Africa, has survived.[17]

The images and inscriptions of the mosaics in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, funded by local professionals of the provinces, indicate that the main interest towards Ostia came from Sardinia and the southern part of the Mediterranean, especially from Alexandria, Carthage and Mauretania after the construction of the port of Trajan.[18] Ingrid Pohl interpreted the mosaics as a gift for a service or as a donation that a guild, a group of rich merchants or shipowners had made to the theatre of Ostia: they paid for a play or for a theatre group, gave an amount of money for the restoration of the stage or machinery, donated ropes or in some

13 Rickman 1989.

14 Ben Abed-Ben Khader – Bonifay – Griesheimer 1999.

15 Pavolini 2006, 73. For a detailed analysis of the mosaics, see also Clarke 1979, 33-37, 73-74, 83-87.

16 La Regina 1998, 99.

17 Inv. no. 1018. Bloch 1953, 285; Meiggs 1973, 285.

18 See Keay – Sebastiani 2017, 190-96.



Figure 12. The altar of Mars and Venus. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

other ways participated in the maintenance costs of the theatre.[19] The *curia* of Ostia honoured the donors by giving them the permission to advertise their activities with an inscription or an image in the portico mosaics. Spectators who walked in the porticoes could in this way see who had contributed to the maintenance

19 Pohl 1983, 65.

of the theatre. Later, in the third century CE, the donors were allowed to build partition walls on the floors to separate "their" mosaics, to get an honorary lounge in the portico, where they could meet and talk, have refreshments, to take wine and cakes, and to demonstrate their generosity. According to Pohl this shows that the interest in theatrical performances continued in the third century.[20]

Russell Meiggs pointed out that there is an earlier series of mosaics below the ones that are visible today (see above), but it has been possible to study only four of them in detail. These earlier mosaics have a different kind of emphasis in their iconography: two depict mythological motifs, one a victor in the games, and only one, with the letters S.R., may refer to *stuppatores restiones* and thus refer to overseas trade in the same way as the mosaics of the later phase.[21] Meiggs suggested that 'the small rooms were rented to local trading groups and any others who wished to take space here', so that they could have representatives in their offices, where orders could be placed and progressed. He holds that this function of the *stationes* was probably already established before the harbour of Claudius was built in Portus.[22]

According to Filippo Coarelli, there are several similarities between the area of the Crypta Balbi in Rome, constructed during the first century CE, and the area of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni in Ostia. Coarelli argues that there was a close connection between the *praefectus vigilum*, the high officer responsible for order in the city and the head of the firefighters, and the cult of Vulcan, the god of fire. The storerooms that were constantly under the threat of fire were guarded by the *vigiles*. The *vexillationes,* which were placed in Ostia and Puteoli had, according to him, the same function. This helps us to understand why the barracks were placed near the original place of the *annonaria* in the Regio II, where the vast storehouses near the Piazzale delle Corporazioni were later constructed.[23] The closeness of the water supply was also essential for the firefighters. During the Claudian era, the Piazzale took its final form and the temple – probably dedicated to Vulcan – was built in the centre of it.[24] In Coarelli's view, there was a close connection in Ostia between commerce, store buildings, water supply, the cult of Vulcan, and the *vigiles* – in the same way as in Rome.[25] Nevertheless, Taco Terpstra sees a connection between the Piazzale delle Corporazioni at Ostia and the Tyrian trading station documented in an inscription from Puteoli, i.e., in how communities of foreign merchants were clustered in Roman cities.[26]

However, the Piazzale delle Corporazioni is not the only place in Ostia where we can find mosaics showing the contacts over the sea. In the so-called Terme sotto la Via dei Vigili*,* or the Terme delle Province, we find even earlier traces of the relations across the Mediterranean.[27] There is a large mosaic (13m × 9m) under the level of the street dated to the Hadrianic era, which has been identified as a part of a building project from the Claudian era, of the first baths of Ostia. This mosaic shows us the commercial relations and their importance during the time of Claudius, who started to build a new harbour for Ostia. There is also an inscription telling about the canalization process of the Tiber and the works that finished there in 46 CE.[28] The construction of the new harbour took more time than planned, before it was finished during the reign of Nero.[29]

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20 Pohl 1983, 65-66.

21 Meiggs 1973, 283.

22 Meiggs 1973, 285-88.

23 Meiggs 1973; Pavolini 2006, 70-73; Caldelli 2019, 142; Coarelli 2019, 397-99.

24 Pellegrino 2012, 65, 68; Coarelli 2019, 399; contra Zevi 2009, 560.

25 Coarelli 2019, 399.

26 Terpstra 2017, 58-60.

27 Becatti 1961, 45-47, fig. 14, pls. CXII-CXXIII; Pavolini 2006, 61; Pellegrino 2017, 33-34, fig. 10.

28 *CIL* XIV 85. Caldelli 2019, 142.

29 Pavolini 2006, 283-84.

In the northern part of the mosaic in the Terme delle Province, there is a representation of the province of Spain allegorically represented as a lady with a crown of branches of an olive tree, and in the next row of panels a symbol of Sicily represented by *Triskeles* (**Fig. 13**). In the southern part of the mosaic, we find a female allegorical figure of Egypt with a crocodile, and Africa with an elephant's head. According to Pavolini, the allegorical figures represent the four provinces that were the most important commercial centres and trade contacts for Rome, which provided the main food supplies during the reign of Claudius: grain came from Sicily, Egypt and Africa, and oil from Spain. The mosaic images emphasize also the importance of favourable winds for maritime trade; this is why the winds are also depicted as allegorical figures in the mosaic.[30]



Figure 13. Mosaic in the Terme delle Province. In the northern part there is a representation of the province of Spain allegorically represented as a lady with a crown of branches of an olive tree and in the next row a symbol of Sicily represented by *Triskeles*. The two male figures represent the winds as allegorical figures. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Trade contacts over the sea, and especially the well-organized grain import to Rome, protected and controlled by the administrators of the emperor, were essential for Ostia and its wellbeing. The great store houses were constructed near the city centre and on both sides of the Tiber, and their logistics were strongly in the hands of the Roman high-ranking administrators and their trusted traders. In the mosaics of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, we have explicit evidence of the overseas contacts, as well as of the importance of

30 Pavolini 2006, 58-61; Caldelli 2019, 142-43.

the different workers of the guilds connected to the maritime trade and the ships. Evidently, these sources show us the strong identity of these people and their self-esteem, as well as their central importance for the everyday life of Ostian society.

Measures and Measuring Merchandise in Ostia

Ria Berg

In a commercial harbour town, measuring was a crucially important activity, especially considering the massive bulk imports of products like grain, oil and wine. Grain measuring in particular was a time-consuming operation that had to be repeatedly performed at the various stages of loading and unloading the goods in ships and warehouses. This article presents a short overview of the material evidence from Ostia for such measuring operations, consisting of weighing equipment, pictorial depictions of measuring devices and inscriptions.

Roman rule in the Mediterranean also entailed a vast operation to uniform and control weights and measures.[1] Starting from the Augustan period, the state imposed a standardized measuring system throughout the Roman empire, which in part facilitated interregional commerce and the calculation and payment of taxes.[2] However, there is evidence that local measuring systems were not completely abolished: for example, the old Ptolemaic measures continued to be used in Egypt.[3] The late antique *Carmen de ponderibus et mensuris* (ca. 400 CE) offers a vivid picture of the practical ways of coping with and memorizing the different Roman, Greek and Egyptian measuring systems.[4] The *macellum* at Lepcis Magna (8 BCE) hosted a measuring station with a stone relief showing the Alexandrian cubit (52.5 cm), the Punic cubit (51.5 cm), and the Roman foot (29.6 cm); similar conversion points are not known in Italy.[5]

The Imperial standard specimens of measures were displayed primarily in the Capitoline temple of Jupiter and the temple of Castor and Pollux in the Roman Forum; these were replicated in the *ponderaria* set up in the *Fora* of all other towns.[6] A number of inscriptions mention the setting up of such public *pondera* in the *macellum* of Ostia. P. Lucilius Gamala junior, a descendant of one of Ostia's most illustrious families and a *duumvir* in the Antonine period, certainly remade both the weights at the *macellum* and also the capacity measures for the wine market (*pondera ad macellum et mensuras ad forum vinar(ium) s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit), CIL* XIV 376), as recorded in an inscription found at Portus.[7] More problematic is an in-

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1 *Lex Silia de publicis ponderibus* 244 BCE. Fest. s.v. '*publica pondera*'. The Roman system of standard weights was established as early as 244 BCE, and its basic unit was the *libra* (the Roman pound) weighing ca. 329 g, divided into twelve parts, with 1/12 being an *uncia,* an ounce.

2 Cassius Dio reports Maecenas, in a fictional speech, recommending to Augustus the suppression of all local weights and measures (52, 30, 9): "None of the cities should be allowed to have its own separate coinage or system of weights and measures; they should all be required to use ours" (translation by E. Cary).

3 Duncan-Jones 1982, 370-71; Mayerson 2006, 101.

4 Attributed to Rem(m)ius Favinus (ca. 400 CE), Riese 1906, no. 486, v. 89-90: "*artaba, cui superest modii pars tertia post tres, namque decem modiis explebitur triplex*", "a threefold *artaba* is filled up with 10 *modii*". See Mayerson 1998, 194.

5 Rice 2008; McKendrick 2000, 146; Berrendonner 2009, 361.

6 Rizzi 2013, 318; Baratta 2016a, 15, n. 1 with bibliography. Official measures were also available for consultation at other temples in Rome.

7 Cuyler 2019, 130, fig. 5. The *macellum* with its *pondera* seems to have been restored for the last time in the years 418-420 CE by Symmachus, *praefectus urbi* (*CIL* XIV S, 4719).

scription referring to an earlier member of the same Gamala family, mentioning a similar euergetic action (*pondera ad macellum*, *CIL* XIV 375).[8] An undated text found in the Forum area (*CIL* XIV, 423) may report an identical donation, connecting the event in some way with the city of Tharros in Sardinia (or referring to a construction in this city): *[L(ucius) Fla(?)]v(ius) L(uci) [l(ibertus)] Storax* / *[---]us macellum et [pon]dera Tarrensibus* / *[s(ua) p(ecunia) f(ecit) i]demque dedicavit.*

No material evidence for a room holding standard weights has been found in the Ostian *macellum*, but it is possible that the *ponderarium* or *sacomarium* (from Greek *sekomata*) was originally located in a larger hall in the S-W corner of its central court. At least five small so-called *mensae ponderariae* with rounded cavities that would have held bronze vessels have been found scattered around the city, most of them near the *macellum*: two at the House of the Harbour mosaic (**Fig. 1**, *Caseggiato del Mosaico del Porto* I, XIV, 2), one near the Baths of Mithras,[9] one at the *Domus dei Tigriniani* and one along the Decumanus Maximus. The latter may be identical to the fragment of a *mensa ponderaria* with four circular cavities found with two stone weights along the Decumanus, South of the *Grandi Horrea*, according to the *Notizie degli Scavi* of 1913.[10] In Ostia, the presence of a guild of *sacomarii*, and therefore a so-called weighing station, is attested by several inscriptions.[11] By comparison, we know that in the harbour of Puteoli the station for weights and measures, the *sacoma*[*rium*], was one of the most famous sights along the city's waterfront, and is shown among the major monuments in an engraved view on a souvenir glass flask.[12]



Figure 1. A so-called *mensa ponderaria* from Ostia, now in the Caseggiato del Mosaico del Porto I, XIV, 2. Photo: Ria Berg.

Duumviri like P. Lucilius Gamala were often responsible for setting up the public measures of small towns,[13] but in Ostia the *praefectus annonae* also played a role in controlling the measures, especially those for grain.[14] This is clearly shown by the discovery, in the Baths of the Seven Sages (perhaps originally from the *ponderarium* of the nearby *macellum* area), of an inscribed model bronze weight. It can be dated to be-

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8 The euergetic act of the younger Gamala seems to imitate the dedication made by an ancestor ca. 150 years earlier with exactly the same onomastic formula, P. Lucilius Gamala senior, "*idem pondera ad Macellum cum M. Articuleio sua pecunia fecit*", *CIL* XIV 375, Cuyler 2019, 129, fig. 4. The controversial date of this earlier inscription is variably placed in the late Republican or early Imperial era. For a summary of this long-debated question, see most recently Cuyler 2019. However, as the earlier inscription, now lost, is known only from a reproduction by Pirro Ligorio, we might even be dealing with the same inscription, with imaginary additions by Ligorio. See also Caldelli – Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Zevi 2010, 100; Berrendonner 2009, 354, 359; Rizzi 2013, 313-14.

9 Pensabene 2007, 362, n. 1190, inv. 30916.

10 *NSc* 1913, 215-16. See also n. 14.

11 Hermansen 1982, 56; *CIL* XIV 51, 309, 409. The latter inscription mentions *togati a foro et de sacomario*, referring to a civil servant working in the standard weights chamber.

12 The flask, found in Populonia, is held in the National Museum of Prague, Rodriguez Martorell – Ruiz de Arbulo Bayona 2016, 177, fig. 15; Frel 1951.

13 Public weighing stations may sometimes have been funded by wealthy private citizens, as in Tibur, where the freedman M. Varenus Diphilus paid for the construction of the city *ponderarium*, see Caporossi 2012; Baratta 2016a, 21-22. For numerous other examples of private euergetism of *ponderaria*, see Baratta 2016a, *passim*.

14 On the checking of the measures by the *praefectus annonae*, Seneca in *dial.* 10, 19, 1 discusses his father-in-law Pompeius Paulinus, *praefectus annonae* in 45-55 CE, mentioning that he was responsible *ad mensuram pondusque.* See Rizzi 2013, 309-11.

tween 107 and 111 CE thanks to the inscription, referring to a regulation governing public measures decreed by the Emperor Trajan (*pondera fecit exacta*) and enacted by the prefect of the *annona*, M. Rutilius Lupus.[15]

It seems, then, to have primarily been the duty of the *aediles* (or the *agoranomoi* in the Greek world) to materially ensure that the use of these measures was respected in the retail trade and to inflict punishments for fraud.[16] Private traders like shopkeepers replicated their own measuring equipment for use in their everyday business transactions from the standard measures produced by the authorities. Ship-owners also carried their own measuring equipment on board their ships in order to ensure that reliable measures were available everywhere. We have only some indirect evidence for such on-board measuring procedures in the iconographical sources. From an Ostian tomb comes the famous painting now in the Vatican Museums demonstrating that the capacity measuring of grain using a large *modius* was also done onboard river cargo ships, on arrival of the goods bound for Rome (**Fig. 2**).



Figure 2. In the funerary image of ship Isis Geminiana, the grain measuring operation takes place on a riverboat bound for Rome. The grain carriers, *saccarii*, empty the sacks into the measuring vessel, supervised by a measurer, labelled with the name Abascantus. He holds a rod to level the surface of the grain. A man in a black hooded cloak, on the left, holds a string holding small rectangular pieces like beads. He is probably counting the number of units measured, putting one token on a string for each. Musei Vaticani, inv. 79638. Photo: Adam Eastland, Alamy Stock Photo.

Ships' captains and *naviculari* were personally responsible for ensuring that the quantity of their cargoes was correct and remained unaltered during transport. Alongside weights and capacity measures they therefore also had to carry certified and sealed samples of the cargo (*ante missum exemplar*, *deigma*), stating its total amount and quality to guarantee that it had not been changed. One such sample vessel in terracotta is known from Egyptian Oxyrhynchus, with the written transport contract covering its surface (2 BC), certified with the seals of the river boat captains.[17] Two sample *amphorae* are known from Pompeii, specifying on their surface the total amount of grain in the cargo, the date of its reception, the names of the captains and the ships, their tutelary deities, and the percentage of grain given to the shipper.[18]

Outside Ostia, a good example of weighing equipment found onboard is the Roman shipwreck (19-12 BC) found at Comacchio (Ferrara) in 1981 and carrying a wide variety of cargo: Spanish lead ingots, Adriatic pottery, wine from the Greek islands, perfumes. It was also equipped with small bronze scales and a heavy limestone weight (32 kg) with an iron handle attached with lead – likely a *centussis*, 100 *librae* – engraved with the text *T. RVF M*, probably in reference to the captain, *magister navis*.[19]

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15 Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. 3591. The bronze weight is in the shape of a double cone, flat at the top and base, base diam. 5.4 cm, h. 4.5, weight 1600 g, and has silver letters: "*Imp(erator) Caesar Nerva Traianus Aug(ustus) Germ(anicus) Dacic(us) Pont(ifex) Maximus trib(unicia) potes(tate) co(n)sul V p(ondera) fecit exacta cura M(arci) Rutili Lupi prae(fecti) annonae*"; see *NSc* 1953, 248; Caldelli – Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Zevi 2010, 231.

16 Corti 2001b, 192; Berrendonner 2009, 354-55.

17 Guéraud 1950.

18 Varone 2015, 20-21.

19 Corti 2003, 319-21; Rodriguez Martorell – Ruiz de Arbulo Bayona 2016, 166.

Weights and scales

Weighing operations were thus carried out both on ships, on the docks of the harbour area and in storerooms. A harbour scene can be seen in a Pompeian fresco from the Casa del Larario del Sarno, depicting the banks of the Sarno river, where large bulk scales are set up near the docks, together with porters carrying baskets holding various goods, and, along the river, mules hauling a river boat.[20] The scales shown in the painting are large, crane-like wooden structures of which nothing remains in the archaeological record. They belong to the simplest type of Roman scales, the symmetrical scale with arms of equal lengths (*libra*), with two pans or hooks suspended from a horizontal beam. The object to be weighed was placed on the first pan; on the second, a series of calibrated weights of different sizes would have been tried until the scales were level. For heavy bulk materials, large stone weights were used.

Stone, bronze and lead weights of different shapes have been found throughout the urban area of Ostia.[21] According to Raffaele Finelli's unpublished and published excavation reports and the *Notizie degli Scavi*, there seems to be a concentration in the areas near the Quattro Tempietti, the theatre and the Caserma dei Vigili; indeed, the city's largest *horrea* were located in the vicinity.[22]



Figure 3. A stone weight with inscription, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 32202. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

A weight present in the exhibition (**Fig. 3**; **Cat. no. 13**) is a large oval stone (h. 7, max. d. 16), flat at the top and bottom, with convex sides, which originally had an iron handle fitted into lead sockets.[23] It was found near the waterfront towards the Tiber river, and may have been used to check cargoes on arrival. The weight shows signs of calibration by the removal of material during the verification process; its weight could also be increased by adding lead if needed. On the top, it has the inscription *X* / *P(ondo)* indicating its weight: ten *librae* (= *decussis*) with a total weight of 10 × 0.329 = 3.290 kg. The weight of such stones usually ranges from 1 to 20 *librae*. The text also states that the weight had been officially checked: *EXACTA (AD) ART(ICULEIANUM)*, meaning "has been equat-

20 Corti 2001a, 145, fig. 77.

21 In Descœudres 2001 some further weights are published. Stone: a spherical nephrite weight with flattened base and bottom h. 10, d. 13, with inscription X, inv. 33226. Bronze: a small bronze weight of the same shape, h. 1.7, d. 1.9, inv. 15782.

22 *NSc* 1909: A bronze 160 g weight in Via dei Vigili, 97; a pyramidal bronze weight in Via del Teatro, 124; a pyramidal lead weight in the area of the Caserma dei Vigili, 180. *NSc* 1910: a marble 620 g weight, 8 × 43 cm, in Via del Teatro, 70; *NSc* 1911, a lead 1745 g weight in Via dei Vigili, 264; *NSc* 1912, a circular bronze 120 g weight, in the Caserma dei Vigili, 52; a circular weight in slate (lavagna), 125 g, near the Terme di Nettuno, 163; a travertine 2400 g weight with inscription *XX TAV*, with a marble weight with text *II*, weighing 630 g, 162, near the "grande abbeveratoio"; *NSc* 1913, a basalt 985 g weight in the Piazzale in front of the Quattro Tempietti, 140; a fragment of a *mensa ponderaria* with four cavities, and a 3310 g weight, a travertine 595 g weight, along the Decumanus, South of the Grandi Horrea, 215-16; a travertine 315 g weight, taberna outside the theatre, 396.

23 Descœudres 2001, 419, cat. VIII.32.

ed *ad Articuleianum*".[24] The exact meaning of this expression is not entirely clear, but it may refer either to the name of the Capitoline building known as the "Articuleianum", where measures were officially verified, or to the new standard measures produced by an official, M. Articuleius, around 47 CE, in the context of a reform promoted by the Emperor Claudius.[25] However, the second line of text on the weight, which is difficult to read, seems to end with the word *CAST(ORIS)*, possibly in agreement with another series of inscriptions on measures stating *exactum/-a ad Castoris (aedem)*, referring to the temple of the Dioscuri in the Roman Forum, where a parallel series of standard measures was kept.[26]

For finer merchandise, precious metals, spices or incense, more sensitive measuring equipment would have been needed. A number of such small bronze and lead weights have been found in Ostia, exemplified in the exhibition by a small bronze 13 g weight, perhaps a half-uncia, *semuncia*, 13.7 g, rather than a 1/3 uncia, *duella*, weighing 9.14 g (**Fig. 4**).[27] A pair of bronze scales with arms of equal length, suitable for such a series of small weights, was also found in Ostia between Via del Sabazeo and the Decumanus (inv. 4222).[28]



Figure 4 (Cat. no. 12). A small bronze counterweight, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4079. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5 (Cat. no. 14). Bronze steelyard with three hooks, broken at one end. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4221. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The second and more complex type of Roman scales was a steelyard balance with just one sliding counterweight (*statera*).[29] On one end of the beam were hooks and a suspended pan to hold the object to be weighed. Numerals were incised along the beam and the mobile counterweight would be slid along it. An upper hook served to suspend the beam. The exhibition includes one example of a *statera* inscribed with the numerals X and V on the central beam, broken at the end (**Fig. 5**). The knob that served to stop the weight and the other numerals are missing. There are three hooks from which to hang the items to be weighed. The object was probably found in the *tabernae* outside the theatre of Ostia.[30]

Such steelyards could also have been produced on a more monumental scale. A large *equipondium* counterweight (38 kg) in the form of the protome of a goddess, possibly Aequitas, was found at the harbour

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24 Berrendonner 2009, 355; Daguet-Gagey 2015, 487.

25 The text *in Capitolio* that sometimes appears at the end of other inscribed weights may indicate that this place was identical to that, near the temple of Jupiter, mentioned by Polybius as the *tamieion* of the agoranomes (*Polyb*. 3, 26, 1).

26 Luciani – Lucchelli 2016, 265-67.

27 Similar small bronze weights with a ring for suspending them at the top, see Descœudres 2001, 418, cats. VIII.28-30, inv. 4578, 4078, 4577, weighing 25, 27, and 80 g. Lead weight in the form of an *amphora*, to be suspended, cat. VIII.24-25, inv. 5951, 4742, weights 371 and 344 g; conical, cat. VIII.26, inv. 14247, weight 338 g; a small bronze weight, spherical with flattened top and bottom, with the engraved letters *X R*, h. 1.7, d. 1.9, cat. VIII.31, inv. 15782.

28 Descœudres 2001, 418, cat. VIII.23.

29 Corti 2003. A few examples of bronze *staterae* have been found at Ostia. One is complete with the chains to suspend a cup, and the counterweight in the form of an acorn (inv. 4987), Descœudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.21.

30 *NSc* 1913, 315: a *scapus* of a bronze *statera*, with three hooks on three sides, and dotted marks for weights, found in the 'retrobottega' of a *taberna* on outside the theatre.

of Roman Tarraco, in Spain.[31] It must have been used in the local *ponderaria* station of the harbour area to check the quantities of goods for export.

Measuring grain

Solid foodstuffs were sold and redistributed by capacity, rather than weight. Depending on its origin, the weight of grain could vary between 6.5 and 7.5 kg per *modius*, and capacity was thus considered a more reliable measure. According to Pliny (*nat*. 18, 12, 67-68), Gaulish grain was lightest, while Alexandrian and Sicilian grain weighed half a pound more per *modius*, and Boeotian, African, and Northern-Italian grain were the heaviest.[32] The basic units of capacity were the *modius* (8.7 l) and the larger *modius castrensis* (17.5 l), which is the unit most commonly used for solids (grain, salt, lentils, beans etc) in the price edict of Diocletian (301 CE).[33] The *modius* was directly related to the older grain measure still in use in the Greek world, being a sixth of the Athenian *medimnos*. In Egypt, the Ptolemaic *artaba* (ca. 27 litres, 3 1/3 *modii*) continued to be used.[34]

Cargo ships arriving at Ostia could hold between 10.000-25.000 *modii* of grain, and it has been calculated that unloading them, sack by sack, may have taken from three to seven days.[35] Unloading a ship involved measuring the whole cargo and this process would be repeated at every steps of its transportation to a warehouse in Ostia and then to Rome.[36] Grain measurers belonged to one of the most important professional guilds in Ostia, the *mensores frumentarii*, who had a large guildhall with an incorporated temple of Ceres located in Via della Foce (I, XIX, 1.3). The floor of the guild hall was decorated with a mosaic showing the grain measurers at work at a large barrel, containing several multiples of a *modius* (**Fig. 6**).[37] There were



Figure 6. Aula dei Mensores, floor mosaic. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

31 Rodriguez Martorell – Ruiz de Arbulo Bayona 2016.

32 Rickman 1980, xiii.

33 Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 152-53; Virlouvet 1995, 9, n. 2.

34 Duncan-Jones 1976; Duncan-Jones 1982, 370-71; Minaud 2004.

35 Boetto *et al.* 2016, 205-06.

36 Hermansen 1982, 229.

37 Minaud 2004.

numerous subdivisions within the guild, as epigraphically attested: *nauticarii*, *acceptors*, and *adiutores*. The division of duties is not clear, but they may have involved, respectively, checking the grain on its arrival at the harbour, at warehouses, and when sent to Rome.[38]

As a material object, the *modius* was an unpretentious container in the shape of a truncated cone or cylinder made of wood with iron hoops like the traditional barrels of northern Europe.[39] They usually had three feet to ensure horizontal stability on the floor. As they were made of a perishable material, no examples from Ostia survive. Only few standard measuring vessels made entirely of bronze have survived around the Empire (Herculaneum, Carvoran in England, and Ponte Punide in Spain), with inscriptions stating their capacity.[40] These have a tripartite metal levelling grid on top, supported by a central metal pole, to ascertain further that the levelling was carried out precisely and without any possibility of fraud.

Smaller *modius* barrels were used also in bakeries to measure flour. These, of three diminishing capacities, can be seen in the scene on this funerary monument from Ostia, alongside sieves and other bakery equipment (**Fig. 7**; **Cat. no. 15**).[41]



Figure 7. Depiction of an Ostian bakery with a rotary grain mill (on the left) and various utensils (on the right), including three *modii* of different sizes. Urn holder, *CIL* XIV 393, Vatican Museums, Museo Chiaramonti, inv. 1343 (MCR 3496). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

The most important concentration of images of *modii* in Ostia, and indeed anywhere in the Roman world, can be seen in the mosaic floors of the stalls in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Twelve whole and one fragmentary image of *modii* appear, all of slightly different form, size, colouring and decoration. They may refer to the specific measuring vessels used by each guild of *navicularii*, active in grain imports, with different provenances, and perhaps, as material objects, kept in their own guild hall. Rather than referring

38 Meiggs 1973, 282; Hermansen 1982, 56-57; Cébeillac-Gervasoni 1994; Berg (forthcoming), n. 3.

39 White 1975, 168-69; Baratta 2013.

40 The bronze *modius* of Carvoran is of Domitianic date, and contained 17 ½ *sextarii*, ca. 9.65 litres. The bronze *modius* of Ponte Punide, with a capacity of ca. 9.7-10 litres, dates to 386 CE; see Corti 2001c; Berg, forthcoming. A bronze *modius* dating to the mid-first century CE, from Herculaneum, is in the Archaeological Museum of Naples (MANN inv. 6531/74600). It bears the inscription *D.D.P.P. HERC*, perhaps an abbreviation of *decurionum decreto praefecti ponderibus Herculanensium*, or *pecunia publica*, see Roberts 2013, 56 fig. 48 with the rim diameter 18 and h. 20, datable to the mid-first century CE.

41 Baratta 2013, 87-88, fig. 6. *CIL* XIV 393: "*P(ublius) Nonius Zethus Aug(ustalis) / fecit sibi et / Noniae Hilarae conlibertae / Noniae P(ubli) l(ibertae) Pelagiae coniugi / P(ublius) Nonius Heraclio*".

to the single, unifying Capitoline standard *modius* vessel, the foreign *navicularii* with their heterogeneous emblem *modii* underscored the reliability of their own measuring vessels.[42]

Measuring wine and oil

Wine, oil, and also *garum*, were the most copiously imported liquid products. Inscription *CIL* XIV 376, mentioned above, documents the wine measures (*mensuras*) set up at the *Forum vinarium*, presumably at Portus, near the temple of Bacchus. The *amphora* was not only the most popular transport container for liquids, it was also their measuring unit (25.9 litres), a multiple × 48 of the basic liquid capacity unit for commercial transactions, the *sextarius* (ca. 0.54 litres).[43] In practice, however, different types of transport *amphorae* had varying capacities. Whereas the Dressel 2/4 Roman wine-amphora held ca. 25 litres, the large Dressel 20 Spanish oil-amphora could contain ca. 40-80 litres.

Larger quantities of wine or oil were transported and stored in *dolia*. In Ostia, several larger storage complexes have significant numbers of half-buried *dolia defossa.*[44] Thirty-five such *dolia* can be seen in the so-called *Caseggiato dei Dolii* (I, IV, 5), each with a numeral inscribed on its lip, referring to the capacity in *amphorae* (**Fig. 8**). On average, 30 to 40 *amphorae* would have filled one of these *dolia* (up to 1000 litres).



Figure 8. *Dolia* in the Caseggiato dei Dolii. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

42 Berg, forthcoming. For the images of *modii*, in general, see Corti 2001c; Baratta 2013.

43 Approximatively: *Sextarius* 1=0.54 l, *congius* 1×6=3.2 l, *urna* 1×24=13.0 l, *amphora* 1×48=25.9 l. The capacity of one standard *amphora* (= *quandrantal*) was also directly related to the system of length, based on the measure of one foot (29.9 cm), with one *amphora* equalling one cubic foot (*cubus*); and to the system of weights, with one *amphora* of wine weighing 80 *librae*. Cato, *agr*. 57; Fest. s.v. *publica pondera*, p. 246; *carm. de pond. et mens*. 59-63.

44 Caseggiato dei dolii I, IV, 5 with 35 containers; Caseggiato dei dolii I, XIX with 21 containers; Magazzino Annonario (V, XI, 4-5) with ca. 100 containers; Magazzino dei dolii III, XIV, 3, with 21 containers.

However, imported liquids often travelled through Ostia towards Rome in the same sealed containers. Most would therefore only have been weighed to check the amount at the transit control. For such rapid checks, the weight of the empty *amphora* (indicated by *T P*, i.e. *testa pondo*), possibly with an indication of the weight of the wine, and/or the sum of both would have been inscribed or painted on the container.[45] Larger containers in particular, such as the Dressel 20, often had painted *tituli* recording detailed contractual data about the capacity and the quality of the contents, the shipper of the cargo, etc. Only in the Roman Emporium river port would they have been opened, measured for retail, and the containers smashed to gradually build up the *Mons Testaceus*.

Only the *amphorae* of wine destined for local sale in retail shops would have been unsealed, emptied and measured in Ostia, and in this instance smaller liquid capacity units were needed. From the literary sources we know that customers normally bought wine by *sextantes* (1/6 of a *sextarius*, ca. 9 cl).[46] The poet Martial, for example, speaks of two *sextantes* (ca. 18 cl), as his normal helping of wine.[47] Martial also comments that a famous drinker, Cinna, calculated his drinks using an even larger measure, the *deunx*, equalling 11/12 of a *sextarius*, or roughly a pint.[48] In a bar scene from Ostia, on the stepped shelves behind the counter, are a series of fourteen identical beakers (**Fig. 9**).[49] They are decorated with fine horizontal lines, and are quite probably the tall conical glass beakers that could have contained about a lavish *sextarius*.



Figure 9 (Cat. no. 100). A relief showing a ship arriving at the harbour of Portus, identifiable by its lighthouse. On the right, a scene in a tavern. From the Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 90. Museo delle Navi, inv. 1340 (MCR 3526). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

Some depictions of bars show series of jugs of decreasing size above the sales counters, with the different sizes referring to the quantities bought. Two terracotta plaques from Ostia, Isola Sacra (IPO A 169A and B), show a vendor – of water, drinks or wine, or oil, according to the various interpretations – labelled *Lucifer Aquatari*. Under his shop sign, in the form of a *tabula ansata*, hangs a series of pitchers. On the upper shelf, North African and Spanish *amphorae* of different sizes are shown (**Fig. 10**).[50]

The material furnishings – jugs, measuring ladles, and beakers – of the 30-40 food and drink outlets identified at Ostia can hardly be represented by the archaeological finds. However, some literary passages confirm the image provided by the relief plates from Isola Sacra, describing the *instrumentum* needed in a

45 Corti 2016.

46 *Sextarius* 1=54 cl, *sextans* = 1/6 *sextarius*.

47 Mart. 5, 64: "*sextantes duos, Calliste, infunde Falerni!*".

48 Mart. 12, 26: "*poto ego sextantes, tu potas, Cinna, deunces*".

49 See Descœudres 2001, 405, cat. VI.2.

50 Pentti-Tuomisto 2007, 311.



Figure 10. The terracotta relief plate from Isola Sacra showing a drinks vendor. Pentti-Tuomisto 2007, 311, cat. 306 (= IPO A 169b).

Roman bar. In particular, the law collection of the *Digest* describes a series of vessels for liquid measures – *urnae*, *congiaria*, *sextaria* – as the most fundamental equipment of a bar.[51]

Conclusion

The central importance of trade and the constant influx of merchandise to Ostia is reflected in the importance ascribed to measuring and measuring equipment in the city. The standard measures for weights and capacities were ultimately established by the highest political officials of the city and of the state, controlled in practice by the *aediles* and civil servants known as *secomarii*, and physically placed in the *ponderaria* at least in the commercial centres of the *macellum* and *Forum vinarium*. Weights and scales were also every-day utilitarian items widespread throughout the commercial fabric of the city, and frequently archaeologically attested. Liquid measures are, obviously, omnipresent in the archaeological record in the form of *amphorae*, whereas only literary and pictorial evidence survives of the calibrated standard measures set up in the *forum vinarium* and used in everyday transactions in bars. Likewise, vessels for measuring dry capacities, *modii*, are missing in the archaeological record, but are often depicted in Ostian iconography as emblems of the foreign *navicularii*. The shape of an *amphora* could also be an identity-building emblem of wine and oil traders, and its morphological variants were understood as symbols of local identities. Thus, the North-African transport amphora depicted in the floor-mosaic of stall no. 48 in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, heraldically flanked by two palm trees, with the text *M C* written on its shoulder, likely symbolized the *navicularii* of Mauretania Caesarensis. The *modii* also take on heraldic importance and appear in mosaics, and on Roman coins, sometimes containing three symmetrical ears of grain, or flanked by two palm branches, elevated to simulate the depiction of ritual and mythological vessels like *canthari* and craters.

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51 *Edict. imp. Diocl.* 33, 7, 13 pr. (Paul. 4 *ad Sab*.).

II

The City of Ostia

Apartment Living in Second Century Ostia

Janet DeLaine

Housing in Ostia at the height of its development in the second century AD was dominated by multi-storey blocks usually called *insulae*, containing a number of individual apartments, in order to accommodate the large population.[1] Given that the maximum height for buildings was reduced to 60 feet (c. 17.7 m) by Trajan, these apartment blocks are generally thought to have been at most five stories high, although some were only two to three stories. *Insulae* are distinguished in the ancient sources as being specifically investment properties providing rental accommodation, although we have to allow for some possible occupancy by owners or their families and dependents. The wide-spread use at Ostia of brick- and/or reticulate-faced concrete for these buildings produced solid but adaptable structures of great longevity, a long way from the more ramshackle and fire-prone structures that the ancient literary sources for Rome would seem to suggest (e.g. Juvenal *Sat.* 3, 5-9; 3, 190-202).

A wide variety of living space could be included in any *insula* to suit a varied clientele, from single rooms to smart town-houses. Some multi-occupancy *insulae* at Ostia incorporated very high-status ground floor apartments with large and numerous rooms, and lavish decoration of marble, mosaic and wall painting. While a few were elaborated around central courtyards, such as the House of the Muses, Domus delle Muse (**Figs. 1-3**), and the House of Jove and Ganymede, Insula di Giove e Ganimede (**Fig. 7**), the most easily recognised group comprises the so-called "*medianum*" apartments.[2] Their characteristic feature is a long rectangular central living space (the "*medianum*") from which all other rooms were accessed, usually with two large reception rooms of different sizes at either end (**Fig. 4**), all of which took their light through large glazed windows opening onto the street or, more rarely, an internal courtyard or garden. At least two rooms (often called *cubicula*), less well-lit but more private, opened off the other side of the "*medianum*". The larger of these apartments could have further rooms behind the reception rooms, and integral upper floors over all but the reception rooms. Both ground floor and some upper floor apartments usually had combined kitchens and latrines, and even occasionally private bathrooms, as well as piped water.

At a basic level, the underlying spatial organisation of the "*medianum*" design, with the main rooms opening off a circulation space, was virtually identical to that of Pompeian-style *atrium* houses, particularly ones with secondary rooms only on one side.[3] In contrast to atrium houses, however, the "*medianum*" apartment was particularly well-suited to insertion into long narrow blocks the width of either one or two rows of *tabernae*, and to upper floors, thanks to the use of window glass to provide strong natural light to the "*medianum*" and main rooms. A further significant difference was the lack of an axial entrance, which

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1 For an overview, see DeLaine 2013, 335-44, and Packer 1971 for detailed descriptions of all the *insulae*.

2 For *medianum* apartments, see Hermansen 1982; Gering 1999; DeLaine 2004.

3 Cf. also Mainet 2018 for two Ostian houses where the spatial organisation of the Pompeian-style *atrium* house was preserved: Domus a Peristilio and Domus di Giove Fulminatore.

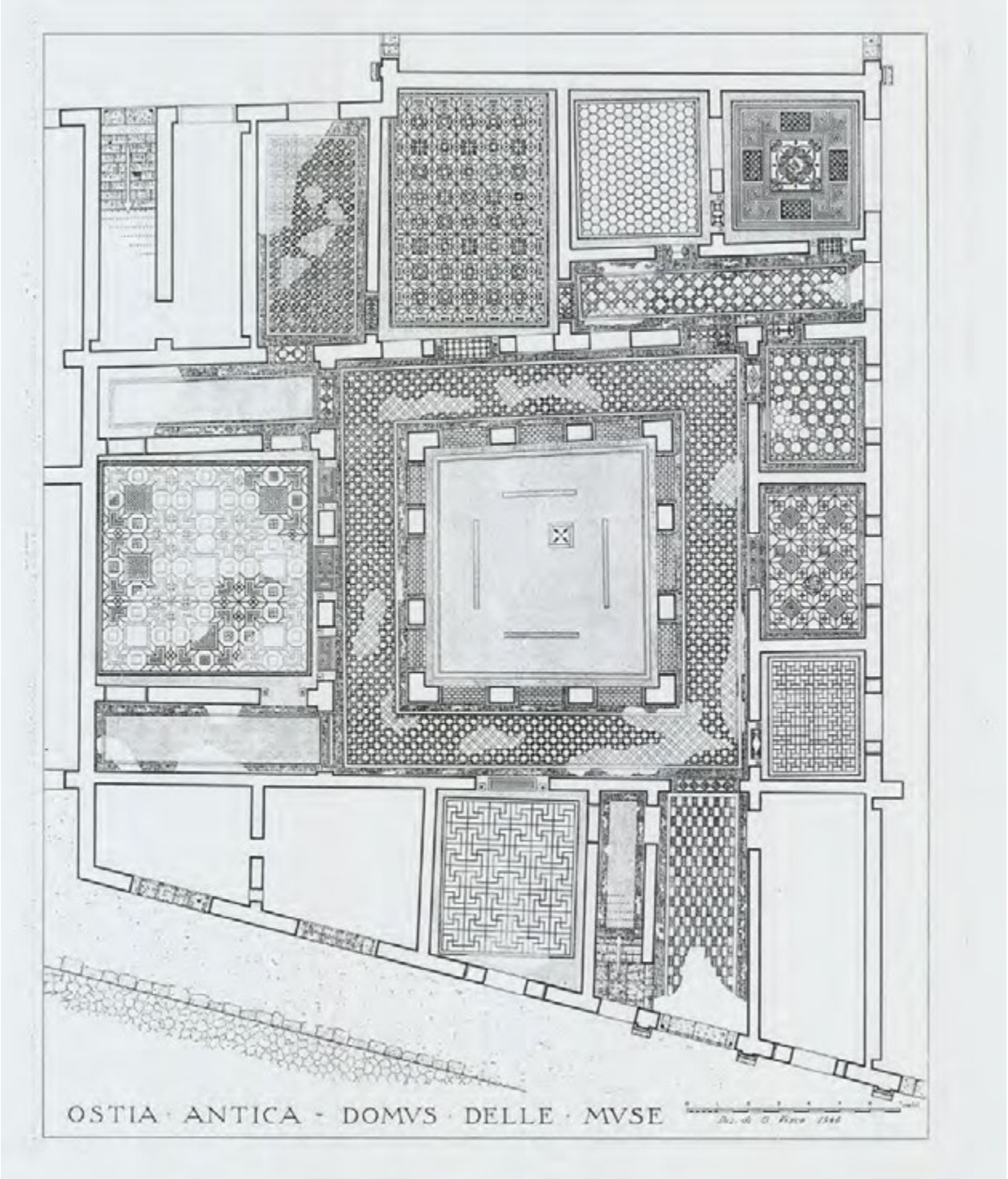


Figure 1. Plan of the Domus delle Muse showing the design of the mosaic floors. The house is located in the northeastern part of the Case a Giardino – complex. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Cartografico.

suggests that these were not designed for any type of formal reception such as the *salutatio*, a daily ritual where the patron met his clients and dependents. Nevertheless, the entrances to many ground floor "*mediana*" apartments, and to some of the external staircases leading from the street to the upper floors, are often distinguished by decorative pilasters crowned by pediments in the same way as some of the richer *domus*, reinforcing the idea that these served a clientele with some pretension to status. In addition, these Ostian apartments tend to have fewer, larger rooms than their Pompeian counterparts, at least on the ground floor,



Figure 2. Domus delle Muse, the inner courtyard. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 3. Domus delle Muse, wall paintings representing Apollo and the Muses. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

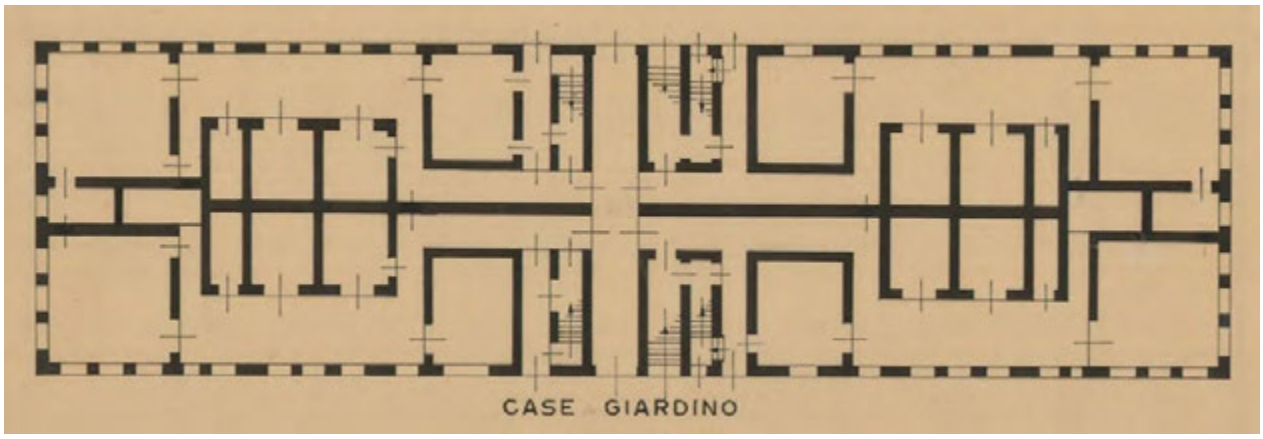


Figure 4. Plan of four *medianum*-apartments in the Case a Giardino. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

which suggests a different attitude to the use of space. The integral upper floors of these apartments are possibly the key, but unfortunately we can rarely reconstruct their layouts.

At this upper end of the range at least, these are large, well-appointed and even luxurious apartments which are in many ways comparable to the smaller *domus*. They are probably what are known from the written records as *cenacula*, which the legal sources suggest were the normal subjects of long-term lease, and must therefore have been for the wealthier inhabitants who could afford at least a half-year's rent (the minimum term) and be trusted to pay it in arrears. An exceptional example of this are the so-called Garden Houses, Case a Giardino (**Figs. 5-6**). The ground floor of this single building project originally comprised one large residence (the House of the Muses) and 17 "*medianum*" apartments, all with an integral upper floor, arranged around a large communal garden served by six fountains, while 21 independent staircases led to apartments on the upper floors. There is evidence to suggest that there were four floors, with toilets on at least three, and running water on at least the second.[4] The complex had limited entrances to the communal space, which could be closed off as required in the manner of a modern condominium. One of the most striking features of the complex is the sheer range of variation within the "*medianum*" apartments, only the eight central ones, arranged in two blocks of four, being closely similar. Despite the amount of variety, this whole complex was a single building project, and the variation was part of the architect's original design.

4 Stevens 2005.



Figure 5. Case a Giardino, general view. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

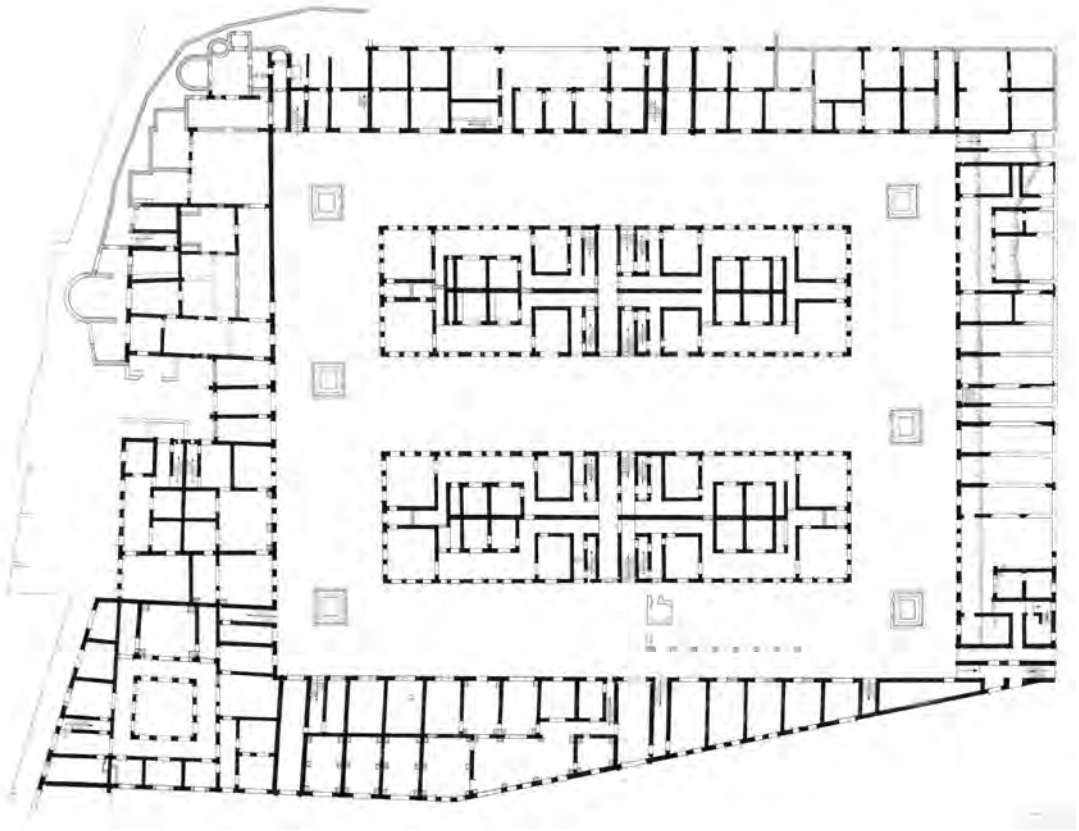


Figure 6. Case a Giardino, general plan. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Cartografico.



Figure 7. Insula di Giove e Ganimede, reconstruction drawing by Jesper Blid.

Sometimes this approaches the modern concept of modular design employed in flexible housing developments, for example with one apartment simply having one more *cubiculum* than another producing a longer "*medianum*". Whether this reflects the owners or developers adapting to the needs of particular prospective tenants, or anticipating a market which was interested in these specific variants, the Garden Houses' complex was clearly designed for long-term rentals to an economically comfortable clientele. The inhabitants thus most likely included wealthy merchants and the more prosperous members of the many *collegia* (associations) which serviced the city and its commerce, many of whom might have been resident only on a seasonal basis.

Such well-appointed apartments should not be thought of as the standard for the *insulae* of Ostia. Commercial units known as *tabernae*, sometimes fronted by porticoes, dominated the ground floors and street facades of the city, and many *insulae*, such as the Portico of Pius IX, comprised only *tabernae* plus one or more independent staircases leading to separate rental accommodation on the upper floors. At their most basic the *tabernae* were single rooms with a wide opening to the street which could be shops or workshops, but were sometimes linked to form larger units. Often these *tabernae* must have supplied living quarters for those employed there, in back rooms, on intermediate floors (*pergulae*) reached from inside the *tabernae*, or simply in the *tabernae* themselves once shut up for the night. That these were indeed living spaces as well as commercial premises is suggested by the occasional remaining evidence for latrines, for example under the internal stair of the large corner *taberna* of the Insula of Jove and Ganymede. Over 800 individual *tabernae* have been identified in the excavated area at Ostia, while a recent geophysical survey suggests there were many more; the Garden Houses, for example, included 56 *tabernae* around their perimeter, some facing out onto streets and some inwards onto the gardens. While the ground floors of some buildings consisted entirely of two rows of *tabernae* back-to-back, it was also common for them to be built around internal courtyards



Figure 8. Casa di Diana. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

or as the street fronts of other types of buildings, especially public baths and commercial structures such as *horrea* (warehouses).

Between the extremes of the basic *tabernae* and the luxurious "*medianum*" apartments were a variety of small apartments, some very simple with only two to four rooms, and others with more elaborate plans and some pretensions to higher status, presumably designed to cater for a whole range of socio-economic conditions. The variety of apartments in a single *insula* are typified by the House of Diana, Casa di Diana (**Figs. 8-9**), where inhabitants had access to a shared latrine and cistern for drinking water on the ground floor. There were six, one-room and two, two-room *tabernae*, all with mezzanines, on the street facades, together with two internal apartments, one of two and the other of three rooms, on the ground floor. The first floor had four more apartments, one of four rooms and the others with two, all well-lit, but it also included a multiple-occupancy apartment with a row of very poorly lit, narrow, cell-like rooms scarcely large enough for more than a bed, opening off a narrow corridor with a larger, shared, single living room at the far end. Even this communal room had only a narrow window opening off a narrow alley between buildings, and must have been lit with lamps.

The varied accommodation provided by the House of Diana useful for demonstrating the range of what can would have been available to those of relatively modest means. While the small apartments might, like the *cenacula*, have been rented on a half-yearly or yearly basis by respectable but medium-class elements of society, the small cells were more likely rented by the day or week, particularly by the transient or seasonal populations we might expect in a city like Ostia, forming a type of boarding house or *pensione*, with all occupants sharing the corner room for cooking and eating. The form fits well with the ancient references to *deversoria* or *meritoria* (e.g. *dig*. 7, 1, 13, 8 (Ulpian); Petron. 94-95) which offered single rooms for rent and which could supply meals to the occupants. We have, however, no direct evidence of this, nor of how many individuals occupied each apartment. Equally impossible to identify are examples where an apartment was actually shared by a number of unrelated individuals, rather than the small nuclear family we might assume, although the legal sources strongly suggest this was a common happening.

Even for those at the lower end of the scale, daily life in these apartments was not entirely without access to comforts. There is growing evidence for upper-floor latrines and piped water within the buildings,

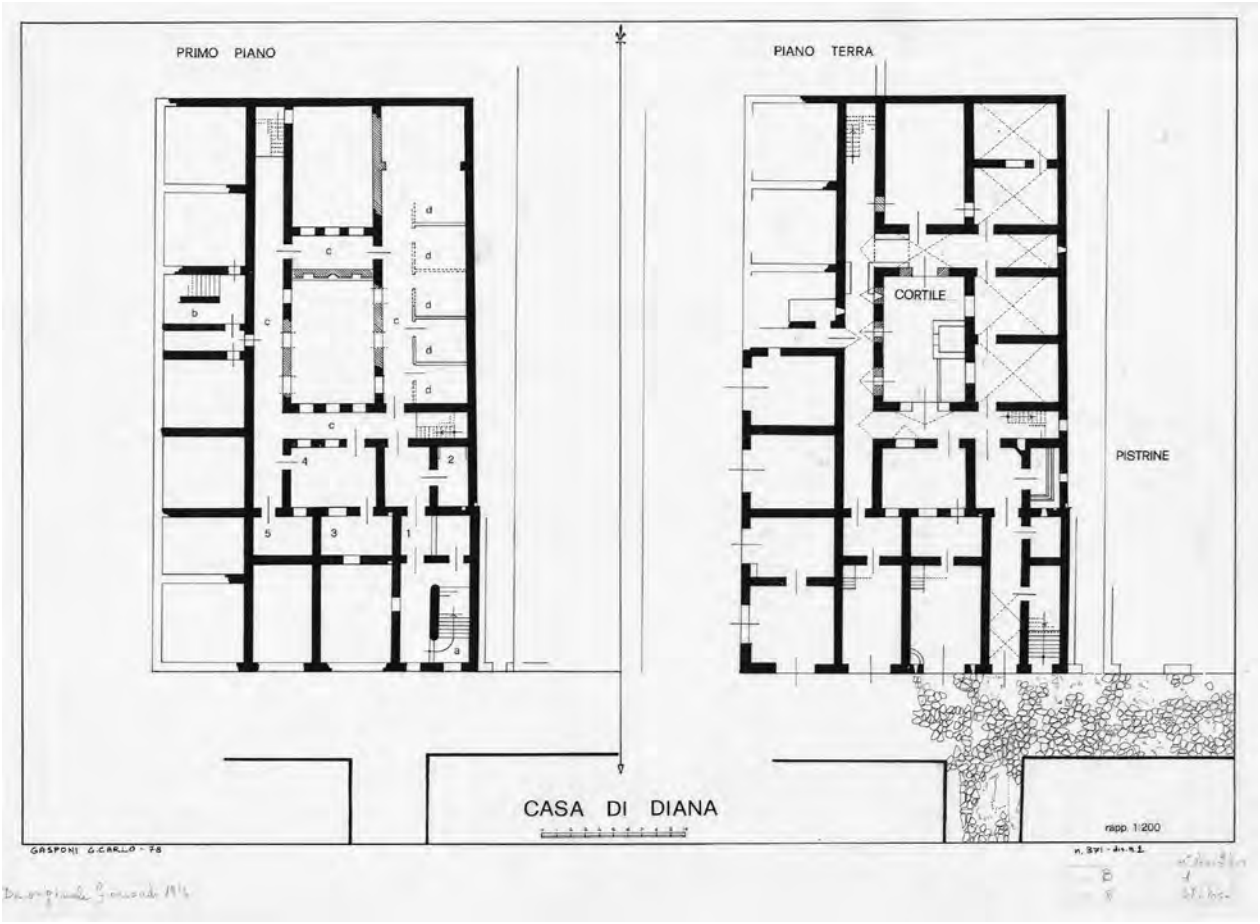


Figure 9. Casa di Diana, plan of the ground floor and the first floor. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

and few *insulae* in the excavated part of the city are more than 100 m from a set of public baths, with those in the centre only 50 m away. Although the evidence from the second century city is limited, some at least of the *tabernae* functioned as inns or bars, serving food as well as drink; Juvenal (8, 117-76) gives a satiric view of a contemporary establishment at Ostia. As the main trade port of Rome, Ostia was a busy market well-supplied with foodstuffs and imported goods which would also have contributed to the standard of living.

Ostia in the second century therefore presents a very wide range of residential accommodation within the *insulae*, from a single room behind or above a *taberna*, through apartments of different sizes and degrees of refinement, to large and luxurious town-houses on different plans. Despite the focus in much of the modern literature on the "*medianum*" apartments, these appear to have formed only a relatively small percentage of the overall housing stock. The street level of the city was instead dominated by commercial structures, the upper floors of which provided the city with much of its rental accommodation. Here is presumably where most of the population of Ostia lived, both permanent residents and those very many from all walks of life who were in transit, from merchants and those working in the commercial sector over the summer sailing period, to new arrivals on their way to Rome, and sailors or passengers waiting for a ship. Vertical zoning, with mixed use and status in the same building, was normal in these *insulae*, and these multi-storey apartments seem to have been conceived from the beginning as rental properties, aimed at a socially and economically varied clientele within the same building. The overall impression is of an exceptionally well-developed housing stock developed for an active and variable rental market.

Construction Work, Temples and Walls

Jesper Blid

The extensive architectural remains of Ostia present common patterns of ancient Roman construction techniques and principles of design.[1] For almost a millennium, the art of building at Ostia displayed the same general traits and developments as farther up the Tiber, in the city of Rome itself. While certain general principles remained the same, the ways of constructing and decorating buildings naturally underwent changes over the centuries. On the one hand, these changes were prompted by the increasing availability of new building materials as the Roman Empire expanded geographically; on the other hand, they were the result of more efficient and utilitarian ways of constructing the vast architectural complexes required in such a vibrant urban area. This brief overview aims to provide insight into the architectural history of Ostia by focusing on a selection of construction techniques and ways of decorating façades during the period from the early Republic to Late Antiquity (c. fifth century BCE to the fourth century CE).

The earliest substantial architectural remains at Ostia belong to the fortification wall of the Republican *castrum*, which was probably built during the first quarter of the third century BCE (**Fig. 1**).[2] The *castrum* was a rectangular military fortress measuring about 194 m by 125 m, and intersected by two main streets, the *cardo* and *decumanus*, which were connected to four gates. As Ostia continued to grow, the settlement spread radially beyond the old *castrum* wall, and much of the original structure was dismantled as the old fortification became obsolete. Parts of the wall, however, were reused in later buildings, as seen in *Regio* I, *Insula* I. These remains give us valuable insight into the early construction work of the city. The *castrum* wall was built with a masonry technique using large ashlar blocks of tufa in alternating courses of so-called "headers" and "stretchers". These ashlar blocks were used without a bonding agent such as mortar – a method common all over the Italic peninsula at the time and employed in Etruscan, Greek and Roman archi-



Figure 1. The *castrum* wall of the early third century BCE. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

[1] For further information about the discussed buildings and construction techniques, see http://www.ostia-antica.org and Pellegrino 2013.

[2] Martin – De Sena 2003, 43.

tectural constructions alike. An ashlar wall normally consisted of an exterior and an interior layer of blocks, bonded together with headers that were placed perpendicular to the stretchers, which followed the orientation of the wall. Reinforcing a wall with alternating courses of headers and stretchers is a characteristic feature of early Roman architecture and is evident as early as in the Servian city wall of Rome.[3]

This ashlar masonry technique is not only found in fortifications, but was also employed in monumental architecture in general throughout the Italic peninsula. In addition, there was a widespread use of wooden constructions. Wood remained the principal material for ceilings and roofs until vaults of mortared rubble (concrete) became common during the Imperial period. Wood, however, continued to be popular, alongside other building materials – it was, for instance, used for constructing walls by means of timber framing.[4]

Roman architectural constructions characteristically have a main load-bearing core, which is embellished by a decorative surface layer – a combination of structure (*firmitas*) and beauty (*venustas*), as the Roman architect Vitruvius described it in the first century BCE.[5] This beauty was created in different ways during different periods. A widespread form of wall decoration involved wall plaster and architectural mouldings modelled from stucco. The wall plaster was frequently painted, occasionally to imitate various types of stone. From the Archaic to the late Republican period (seventh-first century BCE), constructions both of wood and stone were typically decorated with revetment panels and tiles of terracotta (baked clay) nailed onto the supporting structure.[6] These architectural terracottas were often painted to increase their decorative qualities. The clay used for terracottas could be moulded into elaborate decorative reliefs, which were further accentuated by a rich polychromy. As they were highly versatile, architectural terracottas enjoyed long-lasting popularity. Fragments of early architectural terracottas have been found in the area of the *castrum*, including a broken *sima* (the upturned edge of a roof which serves as a gutter) that is dated to the fifth or fourth century BCE (**Fig. 2**).[7] This painted fragment bears witness to some of the earliest architectural remains of the city. It belongs to a rich roof decoration of an unknown building, perhaps an early temple, which stood here before the *castrum* was built.



Figure 2 (Cat. no. 20). Fragment of a painted *sima* from the *castrum* area, fifth or fourth century BCE. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Building with heavy ashlar blocks, as seen in the *castrum* wall, was later replaced by concrete masonry, consisting of lime mortar and aggregate. This flexible building material was cast in wooden frames and allowed for faster and cheaper constructions than before. The coarse concrete core was faced with a smooth surface layer of stone and later, during the Imperial period, often of fired bricks. The smooth surface was frequently covered by wall plaster or marble slabs. Blocks of tufa and travertine were still used for more

3 See Adam 1994, 110, fig. A1; Lugli 1957, 181.

4 Adam 1994, 122-24.

5 Vitr. 1, 3, 2.

6 For further information on various types of façade decorations and architectural polychromy of the Roman period, see Zink 2014, 236-55.

7 See Descœudres 2001, 400.

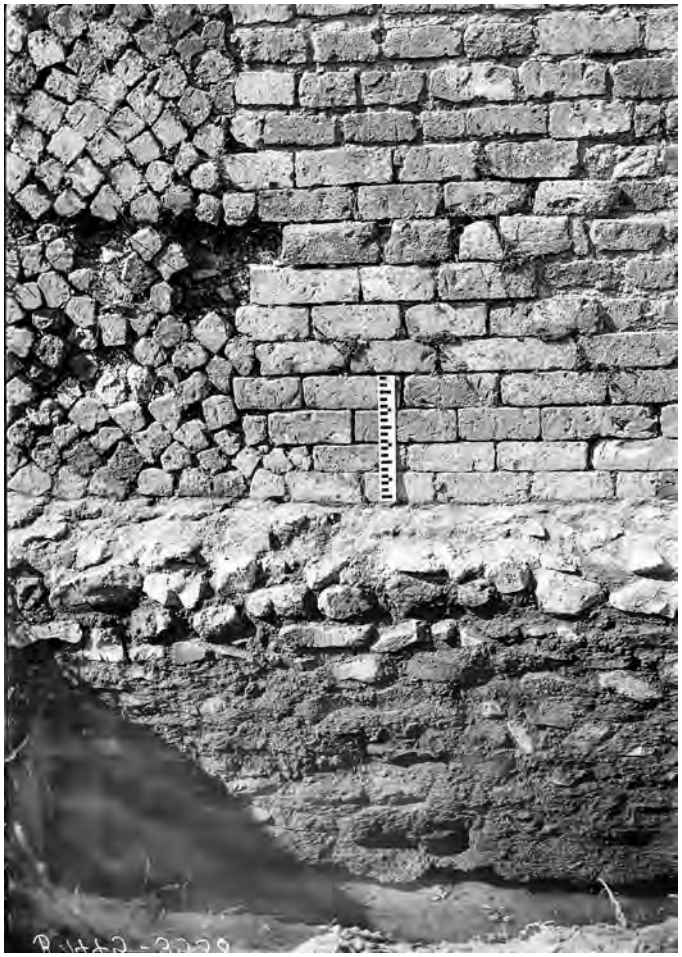


Figure 3. The late Republican city wall of the first century BCE. Photo. Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

decorative parts, such as architectural mouldings. This method of building with concrete masonry was used in various types of buildings. It was, for instance, employed in fortifications, as seen in the late Republican walls and towers that encircled the city for a distance of more than 2 km (**Fig. 3**). The new city wall was probably commissioned after pirates raided Ostia in 67 BCE. The remains of the wall have a reticulate facing of small square stones, so-called *opus quasi-reticulatum*. This new fortification line from the late Republic shows how significantly the settlement had expanded during the two and half centuries after the construction of the *castrum*.

In addition to the Republican city wall, concrete masonry was also used for temples. In *Regio* II, *Insula* VIII, next to the theatre, we find a significant example: a complex of four Republican temples built on a single podium, originally surrounded by a large portico (**Fig. 4**). According to a recent study, the temples were built in the early first century BCE, to replace an earlier wooden structure.[8] Even though the temple complex was rebuilt several times during the Imperial period, I will focus here on this early building phase of the early first century. The platform (33.50 by 11.55 m) and temple walls were constructed in *quasi-reticulatum* concrete, similar to the late Republican city wall. The elongated concrete podium was decorated with an elaborate base and crowning moulding of tufa stone. The original front of the podium probably consisted of a long, uninterrupted staircase of tufa blocks and, as such, gave the impression of a uniform stone construction. Four altars were located in front of the platform, approximately on the axis of the temples. Even though the temple walls are poorly preserved, they demonstrate a homogenous design of a uniform size. The remains of a base of tufa belonging to an *anta* (the decorative pillar-shaped end of a wall) in the easternmost temple confirm that the front façades were built from stone. The various elements of the podium and temples were decorated with wall plasters. Architectural terracottas featuring lion heads, gorgons and floral motifs were found in the central corridor on top of the platform, which suggests the upper areas of the four temples were richly decorated. The few architectural members of stone that have been found in the area cannot with certainty be attributed to this building phase. In one hypothetical reconstruction, it has been proposed that the two eastern temples had tufa façades of the Ionic order while the western temples had Doric-style façades of travertine (**Fig. 5**).[9] The proposed reconstruction, however, creates problems regarding the proportions of the buildings. On the one hand, the suggested architectural members appear too small to match the proportions of the

8 Cuyler 2015, 147-219.

9 Pensabene 2007, 87-99.

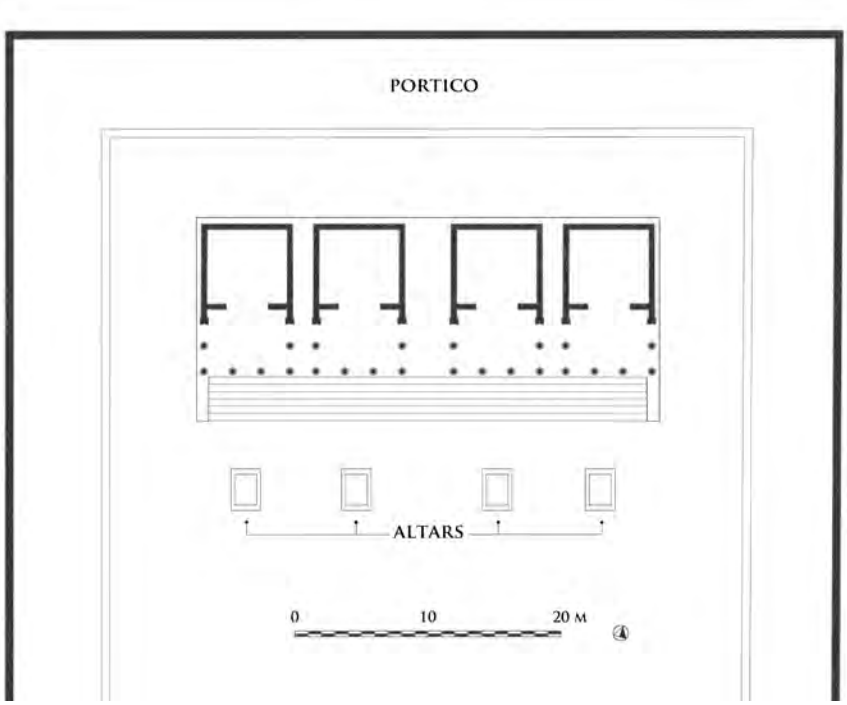


Figure 4. Plan of the early first-century BCE phase of the four temples. Plan: Jesper Blid.

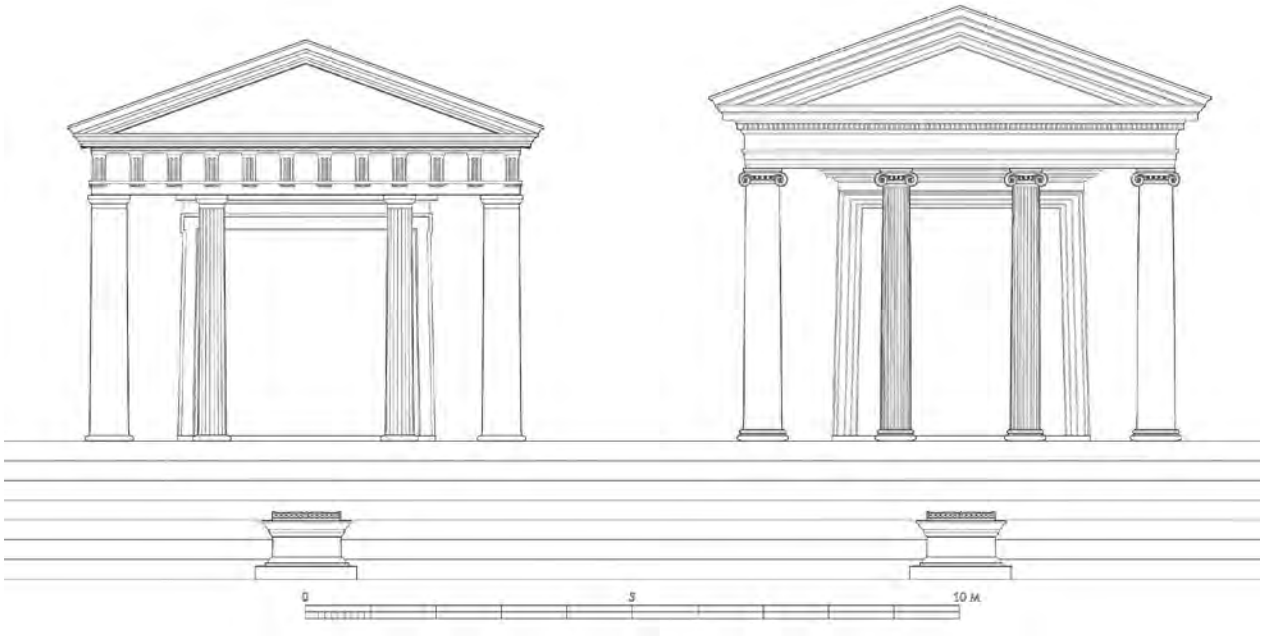


Figure 5. A hypothetical reconstruction of the two middle temples in the Doric and Ionic orders. Reconstruction: Jesper Blid.

anta, of which the base is still preserved in situ. On the other hand, according to Roman principles of design, each architectural order has its distinctive proportion of column, entablature and doorway. Such proportions commonly result in differences in the positions of columns between, for instance, the Ionic and Doric orders. The temple plans at Ostia, however, are identical, which challenges such a heterogeneous design. Moreover, the original decorative elements of tufa, still in situ in the easternmost temple and on the platform, do not necessarily justify an interpretation of travertine façades for some of the temples. It is more likely that the architect of what seems to be a uniform temple complex would have chosen to work with one architectural

order and a limited variety of building materials for the temple façades. In this case, the approximately contemporaneous Tempio Tetrastilo at Ostia, with a façade of the Corinthian order, could provide a parallel (**Fig. 6**).[10] The shape of the preserved anta base of the four temples comes close to the examples from the Tempio Tetrastilo, which suggests a similar column order (i.e. Corinthian).

During the first and second centuries CE, it became increasingly popular to conceal concrete masonry cores with a surface layer of baked bricks (*opus testaceum*) instead of stone. Baked brick could efficiently be mass-produced and provided great structural stability in combination with the concrete core. *Opus testaceum* allowed Roman builders to construct large buildings in a highly efficient way as time-consuming activities such as quarrying and dressing stone blocks were avoided.[11] The construction of walls became faster and highly regular, owing to the standardized sizes of the bricks. At Ostia, the multi-storeyed Casa di Diana is one of the buildings constructed in this way.

Another example is the Capitolium, a temple dedicated to the Roman gods Jupiter, Juno and Minerva (**Fig. 7**). The large temple was constructed at the northern side of the forum during the reign of Emperor Hadrian in c. 120 CE, perhaps under imperial patronage. It measured 35 by 15.5 m, was about 20 m in height, and was decorated on the front with a marble entablature supported by 10 marble columns. The Capitolium is an example of how architects of the Imperial period began to favour marble for façade decorations: the brick facing of the concrete walls has numerous holes for attaching decorative marble pilasters and revetment slabs. The marble used in Roman architecture was often polychrome, as in the threshold of the *cella*, which is cut from a single block (c. 6.2 by 1.4 m) of black, red and white marble: so-called "*Marmor Africanum*", from the ancient city of Teos in western Asia Minor.

Many different types of marble were transported by ship to the harbour of Ostia, often from distant Roman provinces such as Greece, Anatolia and North Africa. The demand for exclusive building materials such as marble constantly increased, and monumental architecture during the late Roman period required more columns than ever before. In the early fourth century, churches began to be built in Ostia. An example is the basilica in *Regio* V, which was perhaps donated by Emperor Constantine (**Fig. 8**). The church consisted of three aisles, measuring about 51 m in length by 23 m in width. The nave was flanked by no less than 28 columns, significantly more than the 10 columns in the porch of the Capitolium. A colonnaded courtyard directly to the west of the basilica, the so-called "atrium", required even more columns. This high demand for marble elements in the early churches was often met by taking columns from earlier buildings; such reused components are commonly referred to as *spolia*. Walls of churches in the late Roman period were normally built from brick-faced concrete and the interiors were covered with marble slabs up to the top level of the column capitals. Beyond this point, the walls and the vault of the apse were decorated with mosaics, which gained popularity from the fourth century onwards as a decorative wall facing. Often made of coloured glass, wall mosaics reflected light in a dramatic manner, thus providing an interior space with a rich polychromatic effect.

This brief survey shows that the architectural remains of ancient Ostia reveal some fundamental characteristics of Roman architecture. Most buildings contain strong load-bearing structures (foundations, walls and colonnades), and suitable building materials were carefully chosen. The primary structure was frequently constructed from ashlar blocks and later from concrete mortar. Marble was normally used for columns and, during the Imperial period, for revetment panels, but not for building blocks. The use of concrete mortar enabled a new, effective and utilitarian method of construction, well-suited for the challenges

10 Pensabene 2007, 72-78.

11 Adam 1994, 146-47.

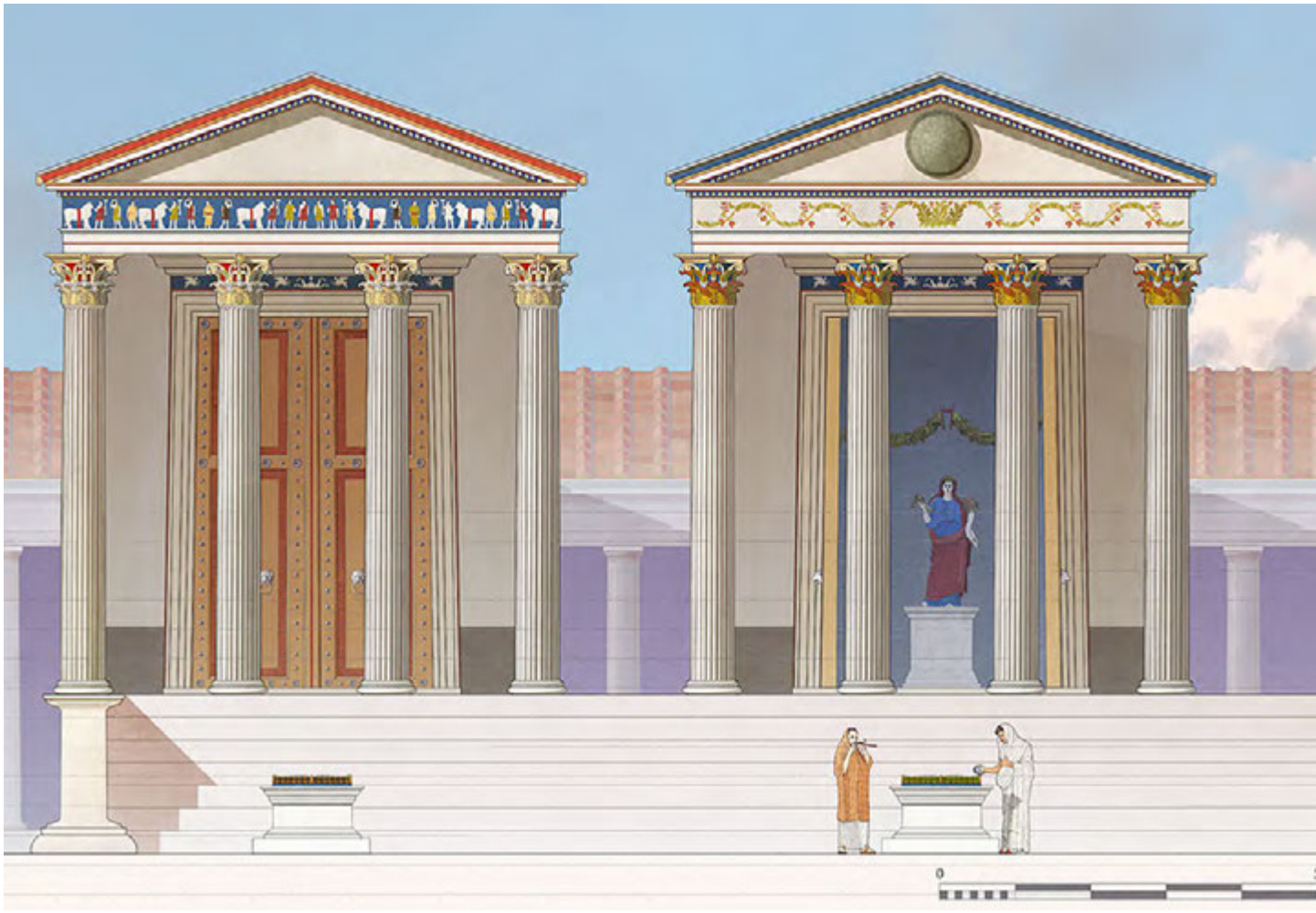




Figure 7. The second-century Capitolium in the forum. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

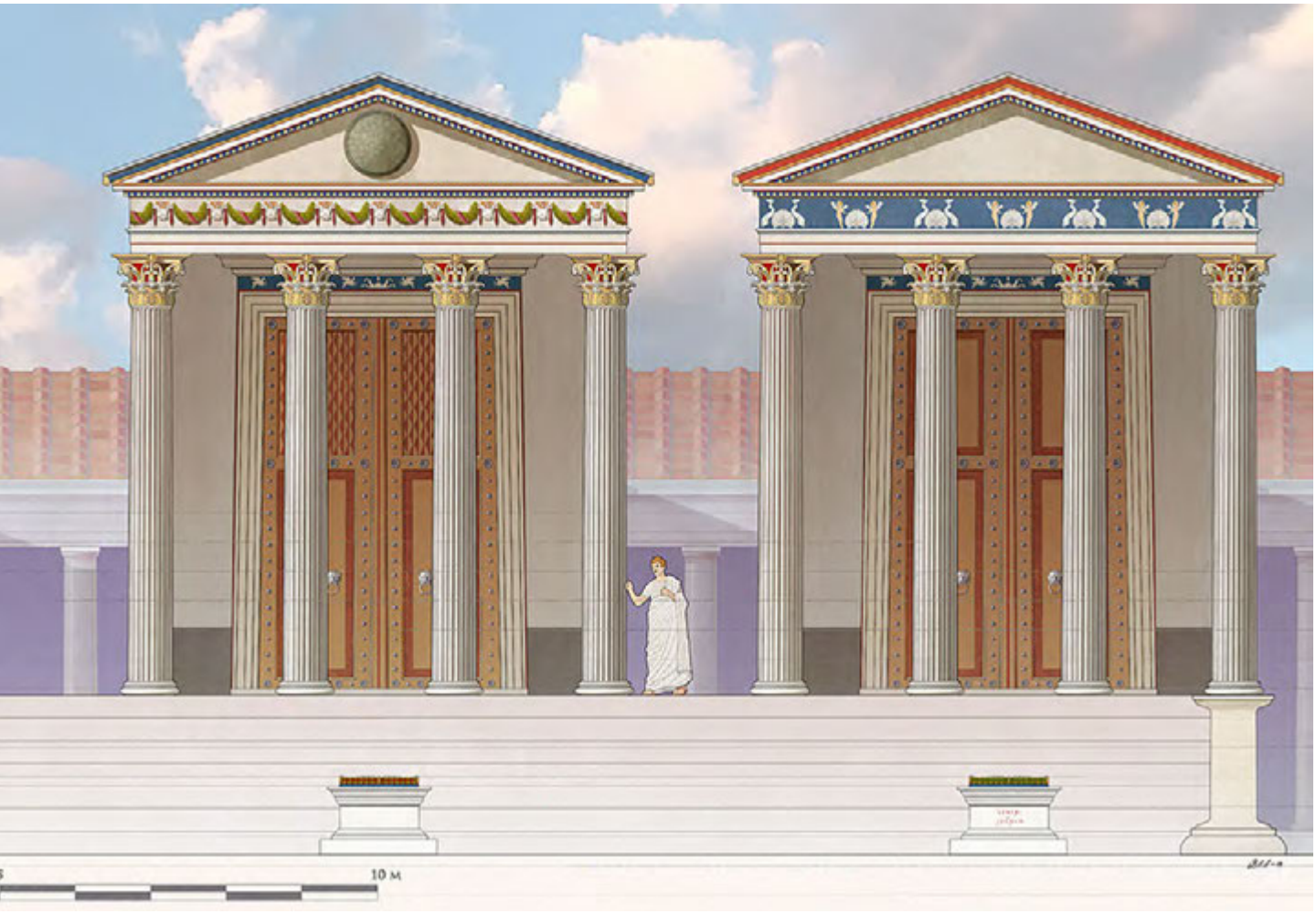


Figure 6. New proposed hypothetical reconstruction of the four Republican temples in the Corinthian order. Reconstruction: Jesper Blid.

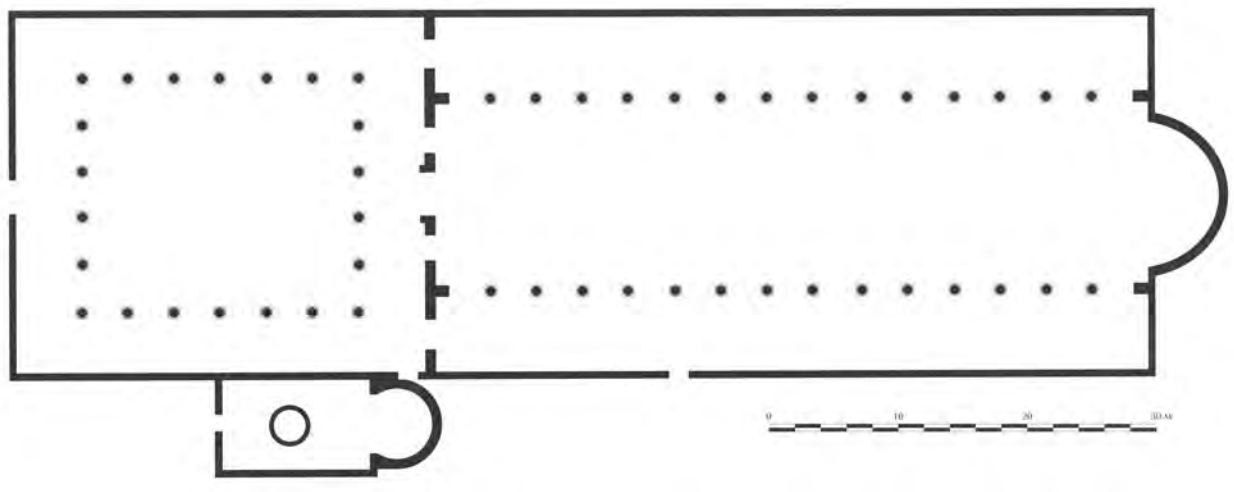


Figure 8. Plan of the Constantinian basilica of the early fourth century. Plan: Jesper Blid.

of building in dense urban areas. Tall, multi-storeyed buildings are frequently found throughout the city. Much attention was given to the attractiveness of the bearing walls: coarse mortar constructions were faced with decorative surfaces of stone and/or bricks, and roofs and walls were decorated with terracottas and wall plasters. Plaster in particular enjoyed continuous popularity as it could easily be painted with imitations of building materials or representations of other decorative scenes.

Luxuria privata – Domus in Late Antique Ostia

Birte Poulsen

Introduction

During the Imperial period, the domestic *cityscape* of Ostia is characterized by *insulae* (apartment blocks) containing multiple dwellings with the typical *medianum*.[1] These flats are found in multi-storey apartment buildings like the Casa di Diana (I.3-4), the so-called Garden Houses (III.9) and the Casette tipo (III.12 and 13).[2] From the 2nd century CE, Ostia was a densely populated city and such dwellings had room for more inhabitants than the *domus*, the traditional atrium house. However, from the 3rd century CE new domestic trends began to change the cityscape of central Ostia.[3] Humbler and smaller forms of residence were to some degree replaced by large and luxurious houses with a rich architecture and ornaments indicating that the harbour city had a wealthy elite during Late Antiquity.

The Late Antique *domus* in context

The majority of these Late Antique houses – about 20 – were very large buildings with many rooms, some apsidal, grouped around a central courtyard or a peristyle with a garden, sometimes developed from the basic form of an older *domus* or apartment block. Some houses had an upper storey and *tabernae* along their sides. Their size ranges from 208 m^2 (Domus del Pozzo V.3.3) to 1770 m^2 (Domus degli Augustali V.7.2).[4] More were built in the south-western part of the city.

All the houses were constructed in *opus latericium* and *opus vittatum*, but richly embellished with marble on floors and walls, with mosaics and wall paintings. In addition to these basic features we should add statues and furniture, of which only those in stone and marble have survived. Below, we will describe two examples of these wealthy dwellings: the Domus di Amore e Psiche (I.14.5) and the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria (V.2.8).[5]

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1 Hermansen 1970; Hermansen 1982, 17-53.

2 Packer 1971; Hermansen 1982, 17-53; Gering 2002. For location, see general plan of Ostia: Introduction, Map 1 & Map 2, pp. 20-23.

3 Boin 2013, 8; Danner 2015, 197-201; Danner 2017, 23-28.

4 Danner 2017, nos. 16 and 17: from 208 m^2 (Domus del Pozzo V.3.3) to 1770 m^2 (Domus degli Augustali V.7.2).

5 For the most recent analysis of the houses, see Pavolini 2011; Danner 2017, no. 3, 199-202 (Domus di Amore e Psiche); no. 15, 265-75 (Domus della Fortuna Annonaria); Pavolini 2018a (review of Danner 2017).

Domus di Amore e Psiche (I.14.5)

One richly embellished house is the Domus di Amore e Psiche (**Fig. 1**) situated near one of the oldest sanctuaries in Ostia, the Temple of Hercules. It owes its name to the discovery of a small statue group of Cupid and Psyche embracing (**Figs. 2-3**, **Cat. no. 25**).

The house itself is not particularly large – the almost square ground floor measures ca. 531 m^2 – but these shortcomings are compensated for by its luxurious embellishment. It has an interesting construction history that indicates how such houses were built into earlier existing structures, in this case presumably an apartment block, an *insula*, with *tabernae*. Thanks to an analysis of the building techniques we can now distinguish three phases from the 2nd century to the second quarter of the 4th century CE, when the house took on its final appearance.[6]

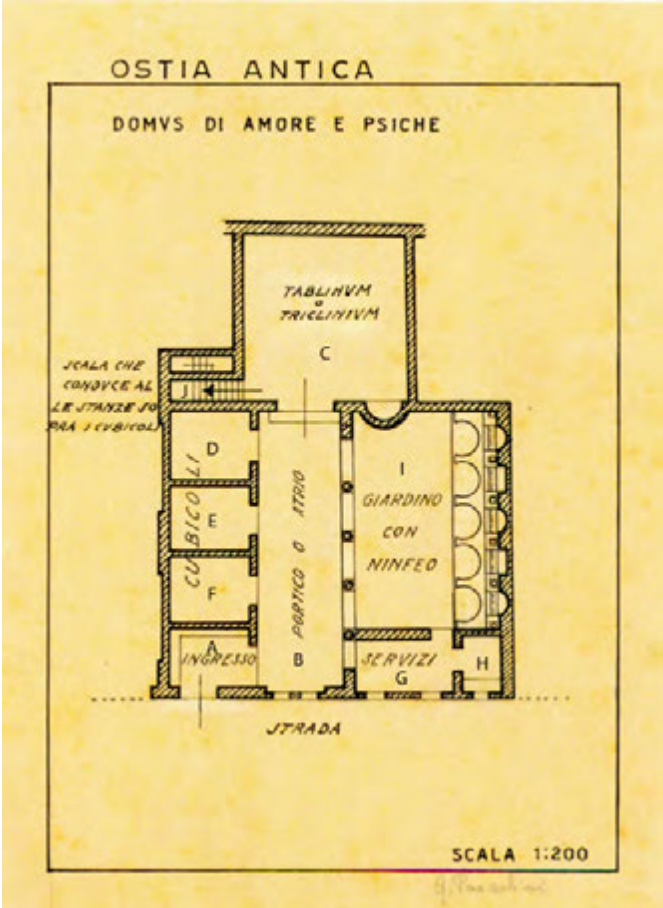


Figure 1. Plan of the Domus di Amore e Psiche. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

At least nine rooms or spaces can be identified, including a comparatively large garden with an impressive fountain; an internal staircase indicates that there was an upper storey in the western part of the house adding at least five further rooms to the residence. It is accessed through just one entrance from the street running alongside the house to the south. The small vestibule (A) had a coarse geometric polychrome mosaic and benches along two sides, perhaps for waiting visitors or clients. From here, the visitor enters a long corridor (B) that forms the central backbone of the house, giving access to the largest and most richly decorated room to the north (C). This corridor also leads to three smaller rooms of almost equal size towards the west (D-F), and flanks the garden with an impressive fountain to the east (I) (**Fig. 4**). Four columns in *cipollino* marble and granite with bases and capitals in white marble and standing on a low wall separate the corridor from the garden area to the east. In the south-east corner are two small rooms, of which one (H) is a latrine; the other has been interpreted as a kitchen (G). The ground floor is more or less level throughout the house, except in room C where it is raised ca. 40 cm above that of the others.

With the exception of the entrance (A) and the two small rooms (G-H), all the rooms are exquisitely decorated but the almost square room C clearly stands out for its size of ca. 7.5 × 7.5 m and raised floor level (**Fig. 5**). Immediately to the right of the door is a semi-circular niche. Remains of a lead pipe show that this niche was a fountain, originally faced with marble; the water was collected in a small basin at the bottom. To the left of the door was a staircase, the only one leading to an upper storey. This room has an *opus sectile*

6 Two phases: Packer 1967, 123-25, pl. 33, figs. 1-2; three phases: Heres 1982, 414-21, no. 56, fig. 75; Danner 2017, no. 3, 199-202.



Figure 2 (Cat. no. 25). Domus di Amore e Psiche. The statue group of Cupid and Psyche embracing. Museo Ostiense, inv. 180. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

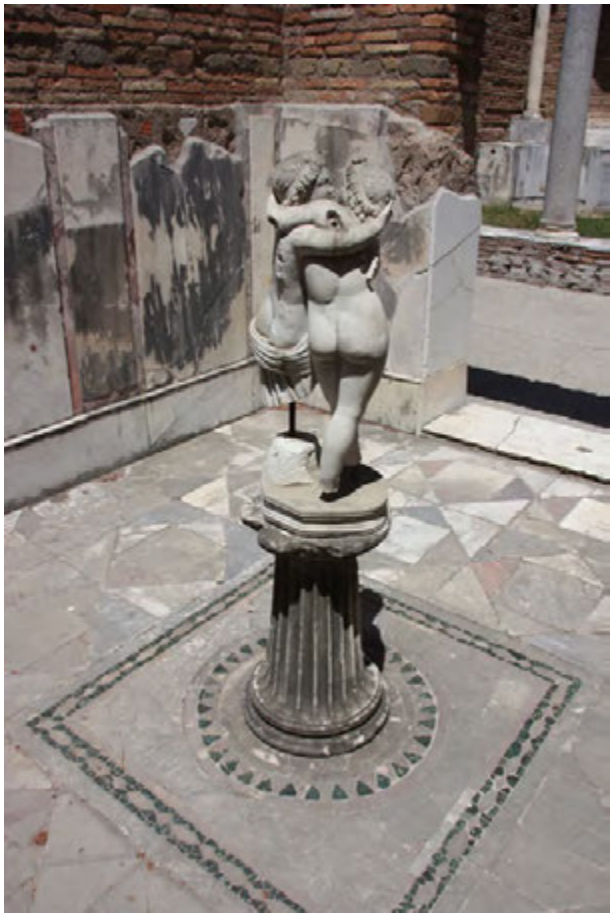


Figure 3. Domus di Amore e Psiche. A cast of the sculpture of Cupid and Psyche embracing in room E. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 4. Domus di Amore e Psiche: garden and fountain. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5. Domus di Amore e Psiche: room (C) with *opus sectile* floor. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

floor made of expensive marbles and stones from many different regions of the Mediterranean area.[7] Overall, the pattern consists of large circles containing flowers with four petals, interspersed with small circles. This is a typical example of what is termed *spolia* work since it is clearly made of small pieces of marble that were recut and reused for the floor. The basic pattern is interrupted by *emblemata*, or square panels, containing concentric circles in various types of marble, surrounded on four sides by lozenges placed in rectangles and squares at the corners. On their lower part, the walls are faced with white marble panels of alternating width, surrounded by borders of red marble. The upper part of the walls may have been covered with plaster.

Of the three rooms to the west of the corridor, only the central room (E) was decorated in a similar way, with *opus sectile* floors and marble panels on the walls. Room E has an *opus sectile* floor made of squares and triangles, with a slightly off-centre square emblem. The connecting corridor (B) has a mosaic floor of which only a small part of the outer borders survives (see **Fig. 4**, lower right corner).

However, the most extraordinary feature to greet the visitor is the open space with its impressive fountain and presumably a small garden in front of it. The back wall was punctuated by five alternating semi-circular and square niches, separated by Corinthian columns in white marble. Water ran over little steps in the niches and was collected in the basins in front. Below and in front of the tall niches are five semi-circular niches separated by pillars with an outlet for the water. All the niches were lined with white marble. Originally, there must have been a basin to collect the water in front of the two sets of niches.

A cast of the sculpture of Cupid and Psyche embracing now stands in room E. This is one of the few examples of sculpture still to be found in the house when it was excavated, but its original find spot was

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[7] Green serpentine from the Peloponnese, red porphyry and grey granite from Egypt, pavonazzetto, *marmor Phrygium*, from central Asia Minor, pinkish Portasanta, *marmor Chium* quarried on Chios, and yellow marble, giallo antico, *marmor numidicum* quarried in Chemtou in Tunisia.

unfortunately not noted (**Cat. no. 25**). The statue now stands on a column but its original placement is unknown. It has been dated to the 4th century CE, contemporary with the final phase of the house.[8]

Domus della Fortuna Annonaria (V.2.8)

Another impressive house, the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria, is situated to the south-west of the city centre (**Fig. 6**).[9] This area was already home to larger houses from the Republican period, but this mansion seems to have been developed from an apartment building with *tabernae*, dating to the Flavian period. However, it was not until the 3rd or 4th century that the house became a luxurious dwelling. The house, measuring ca. 18.7 × 41.5 m, or 752 m², had two storeys, and some of the *tabernae* towards the north (N, O, P) were closed towards the street and incorporated into the house itself. The discovery of a number of marble statues and the decoration with a marble revetment, mosaics and wall plaster makes it an ideal example for understanding the internal organization of these luxurious houses.

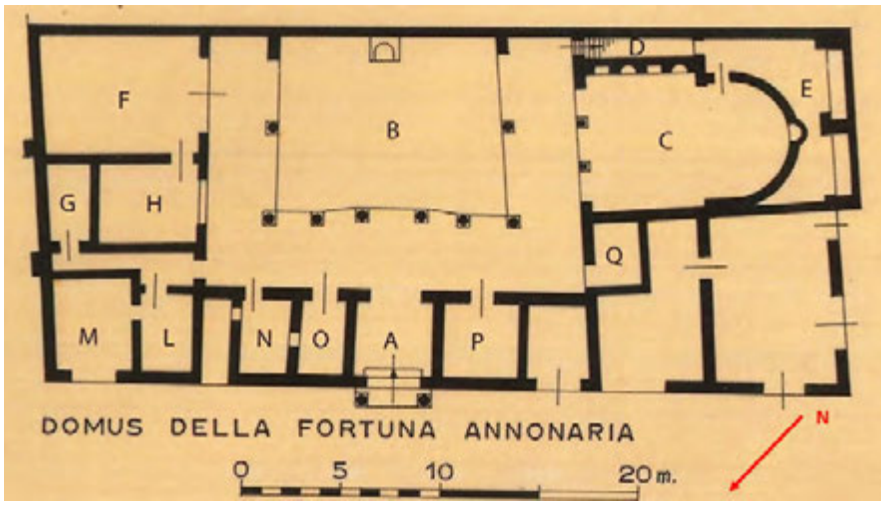


Figure 6. Plan of the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

Two marble columns with a pediment mark the main entrance from the street to the north; the vestibule (A) offered a direct view into the large courtyard with travertine columns – perhaps originally covered in stucco – on three sides, with a basin and well at the centre (B).[10] In the back wall was a semi-circular niche that originally contained a marble statue of either Ceres or Juno; a cast of a statue of Diana is now placed here (**Fig. 7**).

On the east side of the porticoed courtyard are two rooms, one larger (F) and one smaller (H). Room (F) had a wide opening towards the courtyard with a marble threshold. The floor consisted of polychrome square marble slabs, and the wall also had a marble revetment. In the south-west corner is a small bench.

The door leading from room H to the courtyard was closed during the 3rd century, but a broad window was left. In its place a small door opening was made into room (F). On this occasion, room (H) (5 × 4 m) was transformed into a heated room with *tubuli* along its northern wall as well as new plaster and a new floor, a black and white mosaic with mythological motifs such as a centaur, the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, Theseus, Ganymede, and Actaeon (**Fig. 8**). The furnace heating this room was in room (G), accessed through the *taberna* (M).

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8 Ostia Museum, inv. 180, height ca. 70 cm: Helbig 1972, 55, no. 3054; Pensabene 2007, 625, inv. 21, pl. 172.4-5. One further piece, a portrait of a boy, is described as having been found in the house, but the provenance is uncertain, Ostia Museum, inv. 44, Becatti 1949, 8 (late Severan); Helbig 1972, 110-111, no. 3132.

9 Boersma 1985, 138-60, 408-26, fig. 153; Danner 2017, no. 15, 264-75. For location, see general plan of Ostia: Introduction, Maps 1-2, pp. 20-23.

10 The well-head was decorated with a marble frieze with garlands and bucrania, Boersma 1985, 141, fig. 143.



Figure 7. Domus della Fortuna Annonaria: view of the courtyard towards room (C). To the left in a semi-circular niche in the back wall, a cast of a statue of Diana; in the centre of the photograph, the statue of Fortuna Annonaria that gave the house its modern name. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

On the left side of the peristyle, towards the west, lies the main room (C) of the house, measuring 7.06 × 10.23 m, given prominence by a monumental façade with two marble pillars supporting three brick arches. The room has an apse with a central semi-circular niche as well as a nymphaeum along its southern side. The floor of the apse is raised slightly above that in the remainder of the room and was embellished with *opus sectile*; the walls were revetted in marble panels separated by strips. The nymphaeum has two semi-circular and two rectangular niches with marble columns between them: In front of the niches is a low basin, and both niches and basin are lined with white marble (**Fig. 9**). The apse is 6 m wide and 4.1 m deep, and may have held a *stibadium*, a semi-circular dining couch, making the room a spectacular dining room decorated with statues and a nymphaeum.



Figure 8. Domus della Fortuna Annonaria: room (H) with a black-and-white mosaic. The motifs illustrated in the mosaics include, among others, the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, a centaur, Theseus and Sinis. Drawing: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

This house is also exceptional for the number of marble sculptures found during the excavation. Remains of at least 19 statues were exposed, and some of the statues can be attributed to specific places in the



Figure 9. Domus della Fortuna Annonaria: room (C), fountain. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

house.[11] Besides a statue of Juno or Ceres standing in the semi-circular niche in the back wall of the peristyle opposite the entrance, a marble statue was found on a base in the western part in front of the staircase (D) and the apsidal room (C). The base is partly made of reused materials including part of a travertine column. The statue represents a woman seated on a throne (**Fig. 10**).[12] She is clad in a long chiton and a himation is draped over her shoulders and around her hips. On her head is a turreted crown. In her left hand she holds a cornucopia and an oar; her right hand is missing. The statue has been dated to the 4th century CE. Given the attributes, this statue was identified as Fortuna Annonaria, the protectress of the grain supply. However, the turreted crown may also identify her as a personification of the city of Ostia. In any case, this statue gave the house its modern name.

A concentration of statues was also found in the richly embellished apsidal room (C), and these seem to have been a mixture of private portraits, goddesses and personifications.

The floors of the houses

Many luxurious houses have beautiful and elaborate *opus sectile* floors like those in the Domus di Amore e Psiche, often made with numerous smaller pieces of valuable types of stones.[13] However, it is also apparent

11 Danner (2017, 163-64, no. 15, 264-75) has studied the diaries to find the exact provenance of the various statues. For other sculptural collections from the Late Antique houses, see also Murer 2016; Danner 2017, 109-16.

12 Ostia Museum, white marble from Luni, h. 1.90 m, Danner 2017, 163, fig. 58.

13 A unique floor has also been preserved in the so-called Opus Sectile building (III.7.8), see below, the article of Karivieri, pp. 379-80.

that several of the rooms had mosaic floors. Such floors had the advantage of offering a space for figural representation where the owner could demonstrate his *paideia*, his education, by including subjects such as myths or inscriptions. A unique example is the Domus dei Dioscuri (III.9.1).[14]

This house is one of the largest – and one of the latest – to be built in Ostia. It was developed from two *medianum* apartments in the south-west corner of the so-called Garden Houses. It seems to have been rebuilt into a large house at the end of the 4th century CE. Its most remarkable feature is the mosaic floors, two of which are polychrome. The house takes its name from a mosaic (in room H) with a central panel depicting the standing Dioscuri with stars above their foreheads, naked except for boots and cloaks and holding spears and swords. The Dioscuri were important deities in Ostia as protectors of safety at sea – and thus of the vital grain supply.[15]



Figure 10. Domus della Fortuna Annonaria: statue of Fortuna Annonaria or the personification of Ostia. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The largest room (I) contains a unique mosaic floor with an impressive composition depicting the Triumph of Aphrodite (**Fig. 11**).[16] At the centre is Aphrodite Anadyomene seated on a cockle-shell carried by two tritons. Below her are two dolphins, and she is surrounded by various sea-creatures with Nereids on their backs. The tesserae are made of different types of marble in various shades of red, grey, and green. Other tesserae were made of bricks and coloured glass. The mosaic is surrounded by a border with a meander and to the west is a Latin inscription reading:

PLURA ⁕ FACIATIS ⁕ (ET) MELIORA ⁕ DEDICATIS
That you may do more and dedicate better things.

Such compositions with the Triumph of Aphrodite were extremely popular in the Roman provinces of North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean.[17] Furthermore, the motto in the inscription appears mainly

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14 Like many other scholars, I consider this building to be a *domus*, Becatti 1961, 114-23, 223 (plan); Subias Pascual 1993; Pavolini 2011, 1036-39, fig. 6. The house is not included in the recent study by Danner (2017, 32-33) who interprets it as a hotel, a *schola* for a collegium or a public Bath. One argument against interpreting this as a wealthy house is the lack of marble on the floors and walls, and of nymphaea, as well as the absence of evidence for sculptural embellishment. However, the same is true of some of the other 'wealthy' houses, and the floors are not simple mosaic floors but magnificent polychrome compositions that could easily compete with the *opus sectile* floors of other wealthy houses. For a good evaluation of the evidence, Subias Pascual 1993, 73-121, 183-88.

15 Given the presence of the depiction of the Dioscuri, it has been suggested that the owner of the large house was C. Ceionius Rufus Volusianus Lampadius, who was a city prefect in 365-366 CE.

16 Becatti 1961, no. 217, 119-22, pls. 149-53, 214-16, 223; Subias Pascual 1993; Ghedini 1995; Pellegrino 2017, 90-94.

17 Lassus 1965; Dunbabin 1978, 154-58; Ghedini 1995; Toso 1995.



Figure 11. Domus dei Dioscuri: mosaic with the Triumph of Aphrodite. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

in northern North Africa, in Baths and Baptisteria, and it has been proposed that the owner had villas in that area.[18] Another possibility is that the mosaicists came from this region.

The polychrome mosaics of the Domus dei Dioscuri contrast with the common black-and-white mosaics predominant on floors during the Imperial period. There is no obvious explanation for this development but polychrome mosaics were popular in the eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and Spain. The re-introduction of polychrome mosaics, which were also popular during the Late Republican period, may result from the influence of these provinces and the polychrome marbles so popular during Late Antiquity.

The buildings of Ostia contained numerous mosaic floors, but we know very little about the mosaicists responsible for these marvellous compositions. However, a small relief, presumably from a tomb, may offer a glimpse of such mosaicists at work (**Cat. no. 28**).

Furniture

The houses with their architecture, sculpture, and rich decorations may provide some idea of what luxurious dwellings looked like, but to this picture we should add all the furniture, textiles, metal objects, precious smaller artworks and other equipment forming part of daily life. Unfortunately, all these moveable objects are portable and perishable, and could be carried away by the owners when leaving their property. Only in

18 For parallels, Subias Pascual 1993, 103-06.

rare cases like the Vesuvian cities sealed during the eruption do we get a glimpse of the furnishings.[19]

Elsewhere, pieces of furniture have only survived when they were made of stone, such as the benches in the houses discussed above. Another type of furniture to have been preserved are the so-called *trapezophoroi*, or table supports, of which a rare bronze example with a female herm and inlaid decoration in silver has survived from Ostia (**Fig. 12**; **Cat. no. 26**).[20]



Figure 12. Table support, with a female herm and inlaid decoration in silver. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3949. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico and Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Another possibility is to look for depictions of furnishings in the visual arts, which also offer insights into materials that have perished such as textiles. A fragment of a wall-painting from Ostia (**Fig. 13**; **Cat. no. 27**) illustrates some important furnishings of a house, albeit earlier than those of Late Antiquity. It shows a scene of a dining room with a man on a couch, a cupboard standing at the end of it to the left, a candelabrum to the right, and a small table with three legs and a woman sitting in a chair in front of the couch. A man dressed in a white tunic with red *clavi* (bands) reclines on the couch and takes something from the table. The wall-painting also shows the mattress and textiles on the couch – elements that are never preserved.

Whereas this wall-painting depicts the typical manner of dining throughout the Republican and Imperial period, another type of dining couch became standard in Late Antique dwellings. This couch, the *stibadium*, is semi-circular and those participating in the dinner now reclined with their heads towards the table in the centre.[21] This type of dining couch became popular in the apsidal rooms used as *triclinia* during Late Antiquity, such as room (C) in the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria.

Displaying wealth and paideia

A feature common to wealthy houses are the open spaces with gardens and water gushing from grandiose marble-clad fountains. Besides the houses mentioned above, this is also true, for instance, of the Domus delle Colonne (IV.3.1) and the Domus delle Ninfeo (III.6.1-3) both dating to around 400 CE.[22] Houses like the Domus degli Augustali (V.7.2) and the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria demonstrate that some of these public spaces were also filled with marble statues.[23] The visitor's tour through the public spaces usually ended in a large richly embellished room, perhaps the dining room.

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19 For a short introduction, Deppmeyer 2011. Wooden furniture has principally been preserved in Herculaneum, Mols 1999.

20 For this group of furniture, see for instance Cohon 1984; Moss 1988; Montanari 2007.

21 For the development of *stibadia* and the apsidal dining halls, Dunbabin 2003, 169-74, 191-202; Malmberg 2003, 73-90.

22 Danner 2014; Danner 2017, no. 6, 213-17, and no. 10, 235-42; Bruno – Bianchi 2014; Pellegrino – Pompili 2017; Pavolini 2018.

23 Former *Sede degli Augustali*, Laird 2000; Pavolini 2012; Danner 2017, no. 17, 280-91. For the statues of the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria, see above.



Figure 13. Wall painting representing the furnishings of a dining room. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 10108. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The luxurious embellishment of the rooms with walls lined with plaster or marble, floors with valuable mosaics and *opus sectile* made of marbles from all over the Mediterranean as well as the sculpture and the furniture all reinforce the status of a wealthy owner. But who were the people who owned and lived in these houses? They clearly belonged to Ostia's influential economic elite, but since there are few inscriptions directly connected to the houses, we are rarely able to link the houses to a specific individual. Only in one case might we have the name of the owner(s), namely the Domus degli Augustali.[24] Among the sculptures found in the building was a statue of Aulus Livius Chryseros, who was also a priest of the Augustales.[25] The inscription can be dated to the 3rd century CE and he seems to have been one of the (famous) forefathers/ancestors of the final owners of the house.

Another method for identifying owners are the *fistulae*, the lead pipes, that usually bear an inscription indicating that the owner paid for the water supply directly to his house. Unfortunately, many of these pipes were melted down and reused for other purposes, and when they do survive they are usually not found *in situ*.[26] However, a number of names on these *fistulae* mention both women and men as owners of plots in Ostia – but none of the names can be related directly to any of the houses.

The wealthy elite of the Mediterranean in Late Antiquity shared numerous values that were reflected in the way they furnished their houses. Self-representation seems to have been essential. Wealth could be displayed with costly materials and *paideia* (education) in the motifs chosen for wall-paintings and mosaics. Inspiration for the houses may to a high degree have come from the large and similarly luxurious villas, as well as the magnificent private houses in Rome.

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24 Murer 2016, 186-90; Laird 2000.

25 Calza – De Chirico 1941, 216-17, fig. 1; Laird 2000, fig. 3; Danner 2017, 165, fig. 60.

26 For discussion of the *fistulae* from Ostia, Barbieri 1953; Geremia Nucci 1999; Geremia Nucci 1999-2000; Heinzelmann – Granino Cecere 2001.

Living in Apartment Blocks and *domus*, Lighting in Homes and Public Spaces

Arja Karivieri

Roman buildings were illuminated with natural light during the day. Light flooded the rooms either through glass windows opening onto the streets or into the courtyards of the houses. The courtyards played a key role in the comfort and social life of Ostia's residents. The courtyard often housed a garden, a house well, or a fountain,[1] and the courtyard played a key role in the social interaction of the residents. Guests were received in the dining rooms of the house, and already during the construction phase the location of the dining room in the private houses was carefully considered. Vitruvius in the first century BCE in his manual *De Architectura* recommended placing the dining halls that were used during the spring and autumn seasons facing east, and placing summer dining halls facing north to avoid the hot summer sun.[2] The main dining room of private houses often had a view of the fountain, the *nymphaeum*, and such a representative *nymphaeum* is visible *inter alia* in two late antique *domus*, in the House of Fortuna Annonaria and the House of Amor and Psyche at Ostia.

Mathilde Carrive has specifically studied housing in the second century CE in Ostia and the development of the plans, circulation axes, architectural structures and decoration, i.e., the evolution of spatial organisation and its socio-economic implications.[3] When the earlier design of private houses with an *atrium* and a peristyle courtyard surrounded by colonnades was abandoned and replaced with apartment blocks, people moved to more compact housing in the large apartments of Ostian *insulae* as a result of social change. It has been suggested that this new form of housing would also have been related to the lifestyle of the port city, where life outside the apartment, such as in the meeting places of the guilds and associations, in restaurants and baths, became increasingly important. However, this interpretation has proved to be too much a black-and-white juxtaposition of *domus* and *insula*, as Janet DeLaine has shown (see the article by DeLaine in this volume). DeLaine also uses the term "high status *insula* apartment", where the apartments in an apartment block may have had particularly lavish decoration with colourful wall paintings, floor mosaics or marble floors.[4]

However, the space available in cities determined the possibilities for room placement. Especially in the late antique private houses of Ostia, the reception hall was important, and it was connected to a representative courtyard lined with columns, entered from an extensive entrance hall.[5] According to the latest research, in Late Antiquity, it was especially in the southern parts of the city that private houses were built instead of *insulae,* possibly because of depopulation, abandonment of apartment blocks, and rising land and

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1 For Ostian wells and fountains, their location and character (private or public), see Ricciardi – Scrinari 1996, vol. I: 13-88 (wells), vol. II: 9-185 (fountains).

2 Vitr. 6, 4, 2. Ellis 1995, 66; Griffiths 2016, 67.

3 Carrive 2016.

4 Delaine 1999.

5 Ellis 1995, 66.

house prices. Thus, it became more affordable for members of the upper classes to buy and renovate houses and, from the mid-third century CE onwards, to use them as apartments or to rent them.[6] In Regio IV and V of Ostia, as well as in the western and southwestern parts of the city, new houses were built in the area of previous buildings from the fourth century to the beginning of the fifth century CE. According to Carlo Pavolini, the Domus of the Fortuna Annonaria dates back to the first building period and the Domus of Amor and Psyche to the second, the building period of the fourth and early fifth centuries.[7]

According to Marcel Danner and Pavolini, this phase of rebuilding came to an end in the mid-fifth century, and some of the houses were either partially or completely abandoned. Sometimes, large rooms in the houses were divided into smaller rooms by partition walls. The stairs leading to the upper floors were no longer repaired in all houses from the fourth century onwards, and this may indicate that the upper floors were abandoned and possibly also destroyed. This could be evidence of a population crisis in late antique Ostia.[8]

Lighting in homes and public spaces

A large proportion of Ostian dwellings, especially those of the lower social classes, were poorly lit. Ostian buildings and living quarters were illuminated in the evenings and at night mainly by oil lamps made of burnt clay (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 120**). All luminaires used olive oil as fuel. By the light of these terracotta lamps, various activities were conducted, documents were read, or notes were made (*lucubratio*),[9] and they illuminated the bedrooms when it was time to go to rest. In ancient sources, the first hour of the evening is connected with the expression *luminibus accensis* and *prima face*.[10] Artificial light was essential for the ac-



Figure 1. Terracotta lamp decorated with the image of an actor. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2793. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 2. The legs of the *candelabrum* feature goat's hooves and three panther's heads at the bends of the legs; above the round platform, a sharp spike on which the lamp sat. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4148. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

6 Danner 2017, 41-44; Pavolini 2018, 788.

7 Pavolini 2018, 788.

8 Danner 2017, 47, 77-81; Pavolini 2018, 788-89.

9 Nissin 2016, 50-51.

10 Apul. *met.* 2, 10, 5; Cens. 24, 6. Seidel 2009, 119.



Figure 3. This lamp stand retains its shaft and at the top, a vase-shaped decorative element that supports a circular disk designed to hold an oil lamp. The three legs of the *candelabrum* are decorated with elephant heads, their trunks resting on globes. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3953. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

tivities in the evenings, during the night and early in the morning before daylight emerged, especially during winter time with shorter daily hours when daylight could be utilized.[11]

More unusual are metal (bronze) oil lamps and lamp stands, *candelabra,* used in the reception areas, dining rooms and representation rooms of wealthier private houses. *Candelabra* are three-legged, and the feet were often decorated with lion paws,[12] horse hooves, goat's hooves (**Fig. 2**; **Cat. no. 30**), or even with an elephant's trunk, as in the lower part of the lamp stand on display in the exhibition (**Fig. 3**; **Cat. no. 31**). The lamp stands are up to 1.5 m high, and at the top of the stand there is either a bowl, a level or a sharp spike on which the lamp was placed to illuminate the colourful wall paintings or marble revetment of the room.

Portable bronze lanterns or torches were used when moving around the city at night.[13] Slaves who carried lighting devices were called *lanternarii* or *lampadarii,* and lamp carriers also had a special position in the imperial court.[14] Lighting devices enabled the inhabitants of Ostia to visit shops, bars and restaurants that were open in the evenings, and to participate in social gatherings in various guild houses or temple premises. Julien Schoevart points out in his detailed study and documentation of Ostian shops that oil lamps are the finds that are most often cited in the excavation reports of the shops from the early twentieth century onwards.[15] Plentiful lighting devices have therefore been found in the excavations of domestic settings, but also in public buildings, everywhere that people gathered. Furthermore, the daily supply of fuel had to be assured. Large amounts of olive oil were needed for oil lamps at homes, also for the use of lamps in religious rituals and processions, as well as for funerals and the visits to the family graves.

In the evenings, dinners were prepared in the kitchen areas of the houses by the light of lighting devices and various hospitality structures, taverns, inns and bars served food and drink[16] and offered accommodation for the travellers who came to the busy port city in the imperial period; all these structures utilized artificial light in the evenings and at night. In the larger private houses, dinner parties had a central role for the representation of the *paterfamilias* in Roman culture. This also meant that the preparations for a special dinner that continued for several hours required artificial lighting and various lighting devices both in the kitchen area and the economic facilities, and in the central dining room of the house.[17]

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11 Cf. Ov. *met.* 4, 199. For the Roman concept of time, cf. Laurence 1994, 122-32. On artificial lighting in antiquity, see especially the studies by Yvonne Seidel and David Gareth Griffiths; Seidel 2009 and Griffiths 2016.

12 See also Ellis 1995, 69.

13 Well preserved bronze lanterns have been found, for example, from Pompeii.

14 Seidel 2009, 249-54.

15 Schoevaert 2018, 75.

16 Cf. Griffiths 2016, 154-55.

17 David Gareth Griffiths suggests, on the basis of his study of lighting devices found in 10 households at Pompeii, that an average of 24.2 lighting devices per household may be proposed. Griffiths 2016, 152.

According to Yvonne Seidel, in Rome as well as other cities in Italy, the streets were lit by artificial light and the inhabitants were themselves responsible for organising it; although the literary evidence is missing, she sees it as a long tradition that private inhabitants placed lighting devices at the entrances of their houses during the night.[18] Seidel emphasizes, however, that the public care for illumination of the city centres seems to have become less usual in Late Antiquity, at least in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, according to the comments of Basil of Caesarea and Procopius.[19]

The illumination of the streets was important also for the security of the city during the night.[20] *Vigiles* in Ostia who had their barracks, the Caserma dei Vigili, adjacent to the Terme di Nettuno north of the Decumanus Maximus, had the task of protecting the inhabitants of Ostia from thieves and other criminals, as well as acting as firefighters. One of the *vigiles* was *exactus lanternarum*, the overseer of lamps and torches.[21] Another special task of the *vigiles* was to act as *sebaciarius*, also connected to a duty that included the preparation of torches for illumination at night.[22] As Heikki Solin states in his article elsewhere in this volume, a graffito (see **no. 5** in Solin's article) in the Shrine of Silvanus (I 3,2)[23] is written by the *sebarius* Calpurnius, a soldier who made night inspection rounds with tallow torches. The word *sebarius* derives from *sebum* (tallow) and seems to be an abbreviated form of the word *sebaciarius* that was used in Rome.

Since many inhabitants of Ostia visited the baths in the late afternoon and in the evening, there too artificial light was utilised in several rooms of the baths, where the temperature had to be controlled and natural light was restricted.[24] 27 lamps were found, for example, in the furnace area of the Terme di Nettuno.[25] Seidel has analysed the distribution of lighting devices in the Terme del Nuotatore at Ostia (V, X, 3). The baths were built in the late Flavian period and were partially abandoned already in the mid-third century CE. Seidel's analysis includes the finds from the entrance and service area of the baths, which show a concentration of lamp finds especially in corridors.[26] The finds from the Terme del Nuotatore include also terracotta lamps, found in rooms IV and XXV, which were at the same time portable miniature altars, incense burners, *thymiateria*:[27] the upper part of the rectangular *thymiaterion* consists of a bowl that could be used for offerings, and the lamp was attached to the side for the burning light, thus making it possible to make offerings in the evening in artificial light.

As Jerome Poblome has emphasized, in Diocletian's Price Edict of 301 CE a lot of 10 ceramic oil lamps cost 4 denarii: a price that shows that pottery and ceramic lamps were affordable for the inhabitants of the Roman Empire when projected against wage levels of the period, since, for example, the wage of free adult males was 125-250 denarii/year, and the value of skilled labour 50-60 denarii/day, plus a meal.[28]

In Late Antiquity, the use of glass lamps became more common first in the eastern Mediterranean: oil was placed on top of the water layer at the bottom of a glass goblet, and the wick of the lamp was placed

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18 Seidel 2009, 106-08.

19 Basil. *epist.* 74 (Letter to Martinianus): "closed gymnasia and lampless nights" (transl. R.J. Deferrari); Procop. *Anecdota* XXVI 7: "nor were the public lamps kept burning in the cities" (transl. H.B. Dewing). Seidel 2009, 120.

20 Seidel 2009, 107.

21 *CIL* XIV 4527d. Keegan 2017, 102, n. 28.

22 Seidel 2009, 162-64; Keegan 2017, 104, n. 35.

23 *CIL* XIV 4530.

24 Cf. Griffiths 2016, 157-60.

25 Schoevaert 2018, 112.

26 Seidel 2009, 128-29.

27 Seidel 2009, 128-29 and cat. no. 14, pp. 126-27.

28 Poblome 2013, 87-88.

on the surface of the oil with a thin metal support before lighting it.[29] In Ostia, evidence for late antique glass production, which can be dated to the fifth century CE, has been found in two locations, near the so-called Macellum and adjacent to the Foro della Statua Eroica.[30] The most recent study of glass finds from Ostia and Portus, by Barbara Lepri and Lucia Saguì, presents examples of glass vessels from the fifth and sixth centuries CE found at Ostia and Portus,[31] including wide-mouthed vessels with a cylindrical tapering body,[32] stemmed goblets,[33] as well as vessels with a hemispherical body and a narrow, hollow, slightly conical base, that were suspended from polykandela.[34] The glass beakers may have been used as lamps, since similar glass vessels have been found in several Early Byzantine churches. As Saguì and Lepri point out, glass lamps were plausibly first imported from the Near East, and when the production of ceramic lamps in Late Antiquity was connected with problems of getting sufficient amounts of oil for fuel, the technological innovation of glass lamps changed the history of illumination and created new possibilities for artificial lighting in architecture in the western Mediterranean.[35]

The use of bronze chandeliers with ring-shaped supports that could hold several glass beakers simultaneously in a metal ring became popular in Early Christian churches.[36] Glass chandeliers gave a brighter and more even light than the closed lamps, since the light spread both above and below the chandelier. Glass beakers were also used as lighting devices from the second half of the fifth century onwards, and the production of glass lamps continued for example in Rome at the monastery of Crypta Balbi until the eighth century CE.[37] A large number of glass lamps were found in the excavations of the Early Christian Basilica at Pianabella, located south of the city walls of Ostia: Mara Sternini identified in this material three-handled lamps, funnel-shaped lamps, and stemmed goblets that were used for the lighting of the basilica. These lamps make up the largest group of glass material at Pianabella: according to Sternini, 100 fragments out of 557 glass fragments from various vessels in total derive from lamps.[38] The three-handled lamps are dated from the fourth to the eighth centuries CE and even later.[39] The funnel-shaped lamps have a hemispherical or truncated-conical body with a high narrow, conical base that is hollow.[40] Sternini dates the funnel-shaped lamps that were usual in urban contexts from the fifth to the seventh centuries, and also cites an example that was found in the basilica of Portus.[41] Another novelty, which should be remembered in the lighting of the late antique period were candles made of beeswax, the use of which has continued to this day as a tradition, especially in churches and monasteries. These technological novelties changed the ways of using artificial light in the Early Mediaeval period.

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29 See Motsianos 2019, 198-200, for examples from the Eastern Mediterranean. See also Saguì – Lepri 2015, 235, fig. 10, 2.

30 Rottloff 2000; Lepri – Saguì 2017, 170; Saguì – Lepri 2015, 229, table 1, 231; Lepri – Saguì 2018.

31 Lepri – Saguì 2018, 402, fig. 6: examples of possible glass lamps (*kandela*) in the two lowermost rows.

32 Cf. Antonaras 2008, no. 6, 26-27, pl. 3/6, 5/6. Glass lamps were both free-standing and suspended lighting devices, used alone or in groups of several vessels burning together; Antonaras 2008, 27.

33 Cf. Antonaras 2008, no. 2i, 24, pl. 3/2.i, 4/2.i; stemmed goblets were used either as tableware or freestanding lamps, between the 5th and the 7th to 8th centuries CE; Antonaras 2008, 24.

34 Cf. Antonaras 2008, no. 5ii, 26, pl. 3/5.ii, 5/5.ii; a widespread form in the 6th and 7th centuries, often found together with stemmed goblets and probably a little later than these; Antonaras 2008, 24.

35 Saguì – Lepri 2015, 235-36, fig. 10.

36 Saguì – Lepri 2015, 235-36, fig. 10, 3.

37 Saguì – Lepri 2015, 235-37, fig. 10, 4-5.

38 Sternini 2017, 135, 141-42, 146-48, figs. 14.46-14.52, 15.53-15.57, 16.58-16.62, 17.63-17.68.

39 They belong to the types Uboldi I.1 (Is. 134) and Uboldi I.4. Sternini 2017, 141-43.

40 The examples from Pianabella belong to the type Uboldi IV.2. Sternini 2017, 143.

41 Sternini 2017, 143.

Research in Material Form: Italo Gismondi's Models

Claudia Cecamore

The models of buildings in Ostia were made as part of the huge task of preparing the *Mostra Augustea della Romanità*, *MAR* (Augustan Exhibition of Roman Civilization) to celebrate the bimillenary of the birth of Augustus in 1937.[1] The exhibition was the brainchild of Giulio Quirino Giglioli, who had already collaborated with Rodolfo Lanciani on the organization of the Mostra Internazionale di Archeologia (International Exhibition of Archaeology) in 1911. This first great exhibition, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the Kingdom of Italy, was the first to give concrete expression to the idea of making Roman history and its monuments the unifying and identity-creating factor underlying the very new Italian state.[2] The nationalist ideology already present in embryonic form in the 1911 exhibition project was reinterpreted in a strongly propagandistic form by the Fascist regime, which had taken power in 1922.[3] Precisely these propagandistic aspects of the MAR, with the need to offer "a clear and eloquent scholarly dissemination of the greatness and glories of the Roman world, accessible to all intelligence levels and to the average culture of any visitor"[4] forced the organizers to make choices that were revolutionary in the museography of the time. Their work was facilitated by the fact that the whole collection on display consisted exclusively of casts and models: a rigorous chronological sequence was abandoned in favour of complex topographical and thematic criteria that allowed constant parallels to be drawn with the contemporary world. Giglioli explained himself as follows in the presentation of the 1938 catalogue, on p. XIX: "All of the secular life of the Roman world is contemplated. The monuments are not arranged in accordance with the rigid rules of museums but, accompanied by texts, photomontages, geographical maps and diagrams, form sections that combine academic rigour with the liveliness of a modern exhibition: a project in which I and my archaeologist collaborators were often assisted by skilled artists. In this way, not only specialists, not only those enamoured of historical and archaeological studies, but all Italians will easily find in the Augustan Exhibition the documentation of the first glorious Empire of our people".[5] This reads like a manifesto of contemporary museography: multiple professions, multiple means of communication, multiple levels of communication.

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1 The Mostra Augustea della Romanità (Palazzo delle Esposizioni, 27 September 1937 - 4 November 1938) recovered the ideological legacy of Roman antiquity as propaganda for the Fascist regime, simultaneously encouraging the identification Augustus - Mussolini. The exhibition, though conceived to celebrate the bimillenary of Augustus, covered Roman history as a whole, seen as a consequence of the actions of Augustus. Marcello 2011; Giardina 2013. For a detailed reconstruction of the genesis and realization of the MAR, see Scriba 1995. Most recently on Giglioli, see *Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma* 2016.

2 On the protagonists of the Mostra Internazionale di Archeologia, see Barbanera 1998, 104-05; Palombi 2006, 179-98. On the Mostra Internazionale di Archeologia, see Mancioli 1983.

3 On the path from the 1911 exhibition to the Mostra Augustea, see Silverio 2014; Liberati Silverio 2016; on the ideological and cultural implications, see Palombi 2009. In general on the topic, see now Tortosa 2019.

4 *Preparativi per la Mostra Augustea della Romanita*. Giornale Luce B1131, 21/07/1937. http://www.archivioluce.com/archivio/

5 Giglioli 1938, XIX-XX. On the museological aspects of the MAR, see Marcello 2011; Prisco 2013.

The project for the Augustan Exhibition took shape in 1932,[6] whilst the excavation of Ostia had been systematically underway since 1909; it was at the Augustan conference organized as part of the Exhibition (23-29 September 1938) that Guido Calza relaunched Ostia's role in the project for the later monumental World Exposition, planned for 1942 in Rome. The words with which the Director of the Excavations argued in favour of the initiative clearly illustrate the importance taken on by the city in the ideology of the time: Ostia played a fundamental role because it was considered more "Roman" and "modern" than Pompeii, or even than Rome itself.[7] As a result, the pharaonic excavation project that gave the city its current appearance was thus launched with a view to 1942.

However, by 1937 the whole central part of the city, corresponding to the earlier *castrum*, and the strip north of the Decumanus towards the Tiber had already been brought to light (*Scavi di Ostia* I, fig. 17). It was thus in this area that Italo Gismondi, who had been following and documenting the excavations since 1910,[8] selected the buildings to be reproduced in the reconstruction models displayed at the Augustan Exhibition. For the first time, Ostia offered a perfectly contextualized palimpsest of all the architectural typologies of imperial Rome, which could thus be appreciated for the first time in their architectural reality: the large buildings connected to trade (*horrea*), together with the large apartment blocks with rental flats, had hitherto been known exclusively from the literary or artistic sources.

A large selection of reconstruction models of buildings and structures from Ostia that were present at the MAR are analyzed in this paper, to enable a better understanding of the research process of Italo Gismondi. Gismondi's research began with the recording and technical analysis of construction solutions, moved onto the hypothetical reconstruction of the building and then to the large-scale definition of the area's appearance.[9]

The execution of the models for the MAR[10] follows the exact same procedure: model MCR 3648 (**Fig. 1**) results from the technical studies on the layout of *horrea,*[11] on which the large reconstruction models of the Grandi Horrea (MCR 4106: **Fig. 2**) and the so-called Piccolo Mercato were later based (MCR 4105: **Fig. 3**).[12] It is interesting to note the correspondence between the "section model of rooms in the *horrea*"

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6 Scriba 1995, 55.

7 Calza 1938, 605: "...it is Ostia that perhaps more than Pompeii, Herculaneum, Rome itself illustrates to us the continuity of the Roman tradition in European life generally and Italian life particularly, placing before our eyes elements and motifs of urbanism, architecture, sculpture, painting, decorative art that we had believed to be Byzantine, or Romanesque, or Gothic or even 20th-century, and that instead turn out to have sprung from the very alive roots of Rome. [...] Ostia is a Mediterranean city of unmistakeable Roman and Italian character. It no longer has Greek or Hellenistic influences like Pompeii; nor is there yet in Ostia any contribution or contamination from the East as in the Roman colonies of Asia and Africa" ("... è Ostia che forse più di Pompei, di Ercolano, di Roma stessa ci fa constatare la continuità della tradizione romana nella vita europea in genere e italiana in ispecie, mettendoci sotto gli occhi elementi e motivi di urbanistica, di architettura, di plastica, di pittura, di arte decorativa che noi abbiamo creduto o bizantini o romanici o gotici o magari novecenteschi, e che si rivelano invece nati dalle radici estremamente vive di Roma. …
Ostia è una città mediterranea di inconfondibile carattere romano e italiano. Non ci sono più in essa influssi ellenici o ellenistici come a Pompei; ne c'è ancora in Ostia alcun apporto o contaminazione orientale come nelle colonie romane di Asia e di Africa").

8 Italo Gismondi was hired as a draughtsman at the Ufficio Scavi di Ostia in 1910. This was his first (never completely abandoned) post even before he became an architect. On Gismondi's career, see Attilia 2007.

9 This is the topic covered in his only article in the first volume of the Scavi di Ostia (Gismondi 1953). On the very few publications by Gismondi, who certainly preferred to express himself through drawings and models rather than with words, see Giuliani 2007.

10 The models are usually made of alabaster plaster, with some parts of wooden carpentry, such as the roof trusses and the doors. The model builders are known only in some cases; e.g. the model MCR 3648 was made by Eng. Aristide Leonori, while for most of the plastic models mentioned in the study, the model maker is not indicated.

11 MAR 1938, 605, note 4: "Section model of the rooms of <<*Horrea*>>. The reconstruction model was executed with elements drawn almost exclusively from the so-called "Piccolo Mercato" of Ostia, with the exception of some, taken from other *horrea*". ("Modello sezionato delle celle di <<*Horrea*>>. Il plastico ricostruttivo è stato eseguito con elementi presi quasi totalmente dal cosiddetto "Piccolo Mercato" di Ostia, salvo alcuni, tratti da altri *horrea*.") The model maker was engineer Aristide Leonori.

12 Recently, studies on *horrea* have increased significantly: especially on the Grandi Horrea, see most recently Boetto *et al*. 2016, 177-226; Bukowiecki *et al*. 2018, 231-67.

(MCR 3648) and the new reconstructions recently proposed by N. Monteix.[13] The model perfectly represents the raised floor, intended to protect the goods from damp (**Figs. 4 a-b**), the long ramps to minimize the effort needed to lift loads (**Figs. 5 a-b**), records the detail of the prolonged internal jambs of the doors to prevent the grain invading the area onto which the door opened.[14] The latter device was also connected to a system of slides and closing devices to facilitate the unloading of sacks (**Fig. 6**), not mentioned in the later bibliography. We might ask whether Gismondi's acute powers of observation led him to notice some trace of this solution, probably in the Piccolo Mercato, later obliterated by time.



Figure 1 (Cat. no. 37). The section model of rooms of horrea. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3648. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

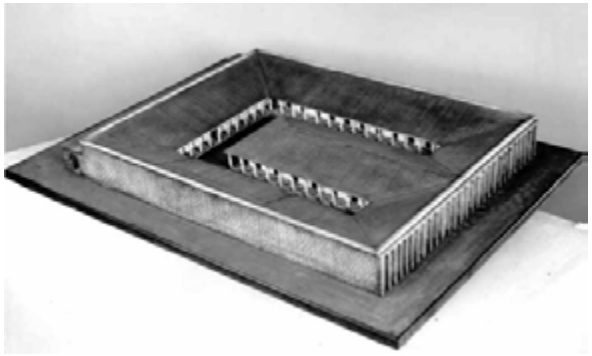


Figure 2. The large reconstruction model of the Grandi horrea, scale 1:100. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 4106. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

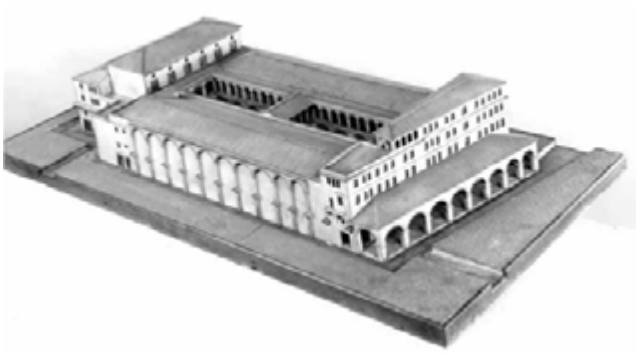


Figure 3. The large reconstruction model of the so-called Piccolo Mercato, scale 1:100. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 4105. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

13 Boetto *et al*. 2016, 195, fig. 6.

14 On the system for storing grain, see most recently, with preceding bibliography, Geraci – Marin 2016, 83-136; more focused on the situation in Ostia is Hermansen 1981, 227-35, which takes up (p. 229) the solution proposed by Gismondi.



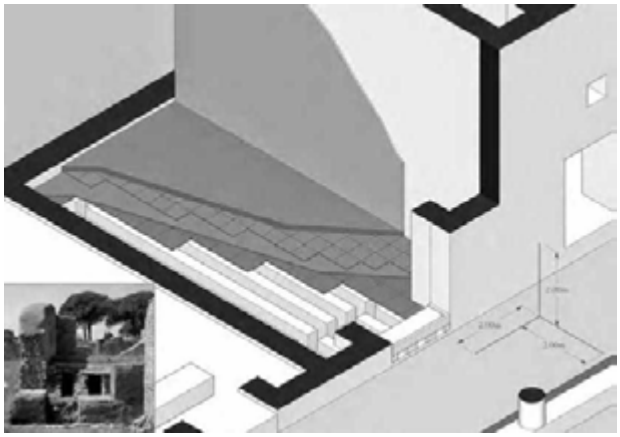


Figure 4b. A reconstruction of the raised floor in the Grandi horrea. Plan: Monteix 2016.

Figure 4a. The section model of horrea represents the raised floor, intended to protect the goods from damp. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3648. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.



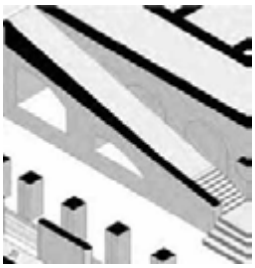


Figure 5b. A reconstruction of the long ramp in the Grandi horrea. Plan: Monteix 2016.

Figure 5a. The section model of horrea, detail: the long ramp. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3648. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

The reconstruction model of the Grandi Horrea (MCR 4106), by contrast, presents significant differences from the 3D models proposed in the most recent publications of the monument: the roofing system reconstructed by Gismondi is based on a wooden structure with small horizontal beams (**Fig. 7**) whilst



Figure 6. The section model of horrea, detail: the slide in one of the rooms. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3648. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

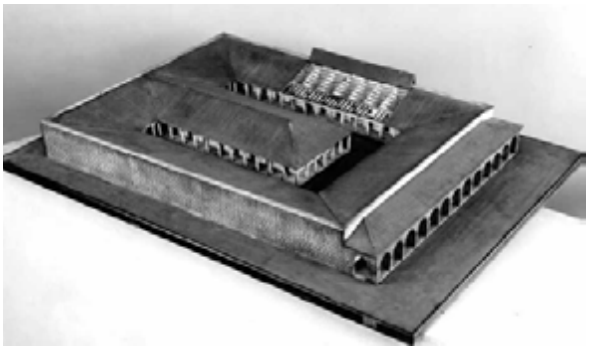


Figure 7. The large reconstruction model of the Grandi horrea: the roofing system. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 4106. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

the most recent reconstruction theories suggest a series of barrel vaults.[15] The roof presented in the model is undoubtedly a *lectio difficilior*, given that in model MCR 3648 Gismondi proposes the more usual roof with a sequence of barrel vaults. Once again, Gismondi may have had a concrete reason for this proposal, given that it was also emphasised by an unprecedented inspection system for the model, allowing part of the roof to be opened by folding it out (**Fig. 7**).[16]

Model MCR 1587 reproduces the public latrine on Via della Forica (**Figs. 8, 9**; **Cat. no. 39**), built within the last two shops in the Caseggiato dei Triclini by demolishing the wall separating the two rooms;[17] though Gismondi must have tackled the problem of how



Figure 8. The reconstruction model of the public latrine on Via della Forica, façade. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 1587. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 9. The reconstruction model of the public latrine on Via della Forica, interior. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 1587. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

15 Boetto *et al*. 2016, 195, fig. 5.

16 The analysis of these important details can currently be undertaken only using archive images of the model: the two models MCR 4105 and MCR 4106, in storage at the Museo della Via Ostiense at Porta S. Paolo, are not currently available for inspection.

17 Koloski – Ostrow 2015, 20.

the two barrel vaults were connected after the removal of the wall, the model does not clarify the architectural solutions but seems to have a mainly didactic purpose, aimed at illustrating the functioning of ancient toilets, still of great interest to those visiting Ostia. The nineteen seats, the drainage channels, the small basin placed against the pillar on the facade and, above all, the two revolving doors are thus rendered in great detail.

Of particular interest is model MCR 2126 which in the catalogue of the Augustan Exhibition is described as a "Large apartment block in Ostia" ("Grande casa di appartamenti ad Ostia").[18] The model, on a scale of 1:50 (**Fig. 10**; **Cat. no. 38**), represents the south part of the two blocks north-east of the *Capitolium*, from left to right, I, V (portico est di Pio IX, parte sud, loggia) – I, IV 2 (Casa di Giove e Ganimede) – I, IV 1 (Botteghe), and is a three-dimensional rendering of a series of reconstruction drawings by Lawrence and Gismondi on display in the Augustan Exhibition alongside the model.[19] Once again, the reconstruction model is the outcome of precise and detailed observations of the archaeological remains and perceptive considerations on the management and distribution of spaces in residential buildings. In fact, at the time the interest in rental apartment complexes went beyond purely academic aspects: the archaeological verification of living situations recurrent in the sources, to which the excavators gave the name of *insula*,[20] attracted particular attention, but the ideological intent conferred on the discovery aimed to ascribe to Roman architecture the origins of the modern concept of home.[21] The publications and reconstruction drawings (and thus also the models) of



Figure 10. The reconstruction model of the two blocks north-east of the Capitolium, representing also part of the Insula di Giove e Ganimede. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 2126. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

18 Room XL, 7 (MAR 1938, 556, note 7).

19 Calza 1923, 14-15, fig. 13-16 bis; Gismondi 1923, 53, fig. 26.

20 On the various meanings of the term *insula* in antiquity see the brief overview, with bibliography, in Cecamore 2017, 232; on types of residential architecture in Ostia DeLaine 2012.

21 The titles of the texts in which Calza presents this new architectural typology are telling: *La preminenza dell'insula nell'edilizia romana* (Calza 1916) e *Le origine latine dell'abitazione moderna* (Calza 1923; Gismondi 1923).

buildings in Ostia had a significant impact on Italian architecture, in part given the place of publication: not an archaeological journal (like the essay of 1916), but the official publication of the National Federation of Architects. Ostia's residential architecture was thus proposed by the regime as an effective architectural model which was certainly taken on board, at least in part, in contemporary or slightly later projects.[22]

The large model of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni had a different genesis (MCR 3670).[23] Here the interest was not architectural, but documentary. The model built was not a reconstruction, but shows the state of the monument after excavation (**Fig. 11**). The floor mosaics of the individual rooms in the portico, designating the commercial delegations represented, are thus perfectly visible. For greater clarity, the names of the delegations and their cities of origin are repeated on the pavement of the square, next to the *taberna* to which they refer. The model, on a scale of 1:50, on display in room LII of the Augustan Exhibition, was intended to document and highlight the importance of Ostia's trade network, obviously linked to Rome's grain tax supply, but the *collegia* and *corpora* mentioned in the mosaic inscriptions[24] also represented a perfect legitimation of the Fascist corporations established with the Labour Charter of 1927, which replaced the trade unions and proposed a corporative rationale antithetical to the class struggle of the socialists.[25] The connection between ancient *collegia* and Fascist corporations is expressly made by Giglioli in the catalogue of the Augustan Exhibition of Roman Civilization, in the introduction to section LII- Industry and Craftworking: "Collected in this section are documents illustrating the work and production of Roman artisans. It is an illustration of their Guilds, to which we could rightly compare the modern Corporations... Workers belonging to the same category were gathered in professional corporations (*collegia*), which kept traditions alive and protected the interests of their members".[26]

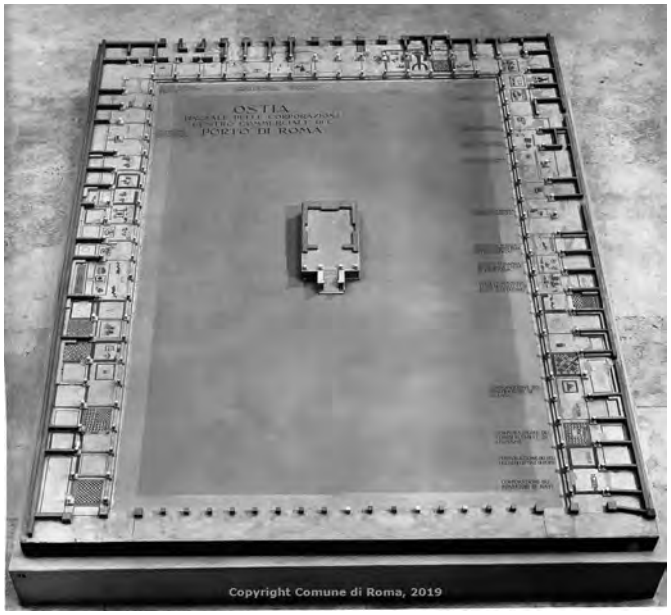


Figure 11. The model of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3670. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

As we have said, the purpose of Gismondi's research was to reconstruct the landscape, a peculiarity whose high point was achieved in the massive model of ancient Rome in the Museo della Civiltà Romana finished only in the 1960s (**Fig. 12**),[27] but which had already

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22 The outcome of this operation of "derivation" from Ostian architecture were first perceptively noted in Kockel 1994-1995 and again in Kockel 2001 and Kockel 2005 (*contra* Muntoni 1993), then at length in Marcucci 2007. For a summary of the whole issue and further proposals, see Del Monaco 2016.

23 On the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, see Terpstra 2013: 100-12; Terpstra 2014, 119-30.

24 On *collegia* and corporations, see now Dondin Payre – Tran 2012.

25 The Labour Charter of 1927, art. VI stated that "Corporations constitute the unitary organization of productive powers and integrally represent their interests. By virtue of this integral representation, since the interests of production are national interests, corporations are recognized by law as organs of the State". ("Le Corporazioni costituiscono l'organizzazione unitaria delle forze della produzione e ne rappresentano integralmente gli interessi. In virtù di questa integrale rappresentanza, essendo gli interessi della produzione interessi nazionali, le corporazioni sono dalla legge riconosciute come organi di stato").

26 MAR 1938, 643.

27 The model of Rome displayed at the Augustan Exhibition still presented some substantial gaps and focused on the central area of the city, MAR 1938, Plates CXXVIII-CXXIX. At the inauguration of the Museo della Civiltà Romana the model had reached its



been fully expressed in the large model showing the whole of the Roman coastal strip, from the port of Claudius and Trajan to the southern suburbs of Ostia, displayed in the Augustan Exhibition in a large diorama that offered an overview of the territory up to the Apennine foothills (**Fig. 13**). Unfortunately, there is little photographic documentation of the model in the Augustan Exhibition, and this essentially shows only the port of Trajan. It is thus impossible to determine how Gismondi rendered the parts of the city that had not yet been excavated. However, it is certain that the model was reworked when it was subdivided into two separate sectors, Portus and Ostia, for display in the Museo della Via Ostiense.[28]

Figure 12. Gismondi's model of ancient Rome. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana.



Figure 13. The model of the Roman coastal strip, from the port of Trajan to Ostia. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

full size, but certainly underwent significant reworkings after this: the theatre of Balbus is correctly positioned in the location identified by Gatti only in 1960 (Gatti 1979, 237-313). On the long task of creating the model, see Giuliani 2007, 261-65.

28 On events surrounding the model after the Augustan Exhibition, see Pellegrino 2007, 275-76. The two models MCR 4107 and MCR 4111 were loaned by the Municipality of Rome to the Museo della via Ostiense, where they were displayed in the two towers of the Porta S. Paolo (Floriani Squarciapino 1946, 17, 40; Serra 2007, 28). They were dismantled in 2017 and moved to the storerooms of the archaeological sites of *Portus* and of Ostia Antica respectively. The two models have now returned to the Museo della Civiltà Romana.

INFRASTRUCTURE, ROADS

Streets, Gates, and Traffic in Ancient Ostia[1]

Ray Laurence

The shape of the Streets: Continuity and change

Ostia grew from a small fortress just 194 m by 125.7 m founded in the fourth century BCE. This settlement was established on the banks of Tiber,[2] and was inserted into an existing landscape of routes or roads. Three of its gates aligned to the road pattern.[3] The *Castrum* was located to cut the road from the city of Lavinium to the mouth of the Tiber.[4] A feature that shapes the street pattern in the later city. The street from Rome, the *Via Ostiensis* led to the eastern gate of the Castrum. Thus, Ostia was located as a place or new settlement with respect to the city of Rome, the Tiber and the city of Lavinium.

The expansion from this settlement occurred during the Republic to include a 1st century BCE walls to the south of the Tiber – c. 1,756 m in length.[5] The walls of the Castrum were not demolished but re-purposed for the creation of new buildings in the later city, and the Castrum with just four gates continued to shape the street grid of the city. The eastern and western gates of the Castrum were incorporated into the Decumanus Maximus of the much larger later city. However, these gates were just 3.15 m in width and, in consequence. A Roman cart tended to be as much as c. 1.96 m in width, thus the narrowing at the gate prevented two-way traffic.[6] Even with the second century raising of the level of the city's streets and *insulae* – the eastern and western walls of the Castrum continued to shape the use of space and to confine the number of routes through the city.

Interestingly, the gates in the later Republican walls were narrower than those of the Castrum, being just 2.5 m in width, and would have prevented two-way traffic from entering the city. In contrast, other parts of the city were characterised by streets as wide as 9 m. A similar level of variation in the widths of streets has also been identified from the Severan Marble Plan of Rome.[7] What is clear though is that drivers on the wide Via Ostiensis, with a width of at least 4.5 m,[8] would arrive at the gate and experience traffic congestion.

The western gateway of the Castrum was aligned at the junction of three roads, corresponding to the junction of Via della Foce and the Decumanus Maximus. Whilst the southern gateway was aligned

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1 The author wishes to acknowledge his considerable debt to Hanna Stöger, whose knowledge of urban analysis was unparalleled, and whose kindness and generosity to colleagues and students will be sadly missed following her death in 2018.

2 Salomon *et al.* 2018, 278 demonstrate that the position of the river shifted to a more northerly position between the 4th and 2nd centuries BCE.

3 Stöger 2011, 204.

4 DeLaine 2008, 100-01.

5 Pavolini 1996, 10.

6 Poehler 2017, 110-11.

7 Macaulay-Lewis 2011, 267-68.

8 Quilici 1990, 42.

to the road from the south with the Castrum causing this road (the later Cardo Maximus) to be diverted at the southern gateway – the later junction of the Cardo Maximus with Via del Tempio Rotondo led to the southern gateway. The alignment of these streets is fully conserved in the archaeological remains of the city today and is formed by the Via dei Molini and Semita dei Cippi. The Castrum effectively shaped the streets of the centre of Ostia for hundreds of years. These streets remained some of the most accessible and would have been associated with the highest levels of traffic.[9]



Figure 1. Map showing the street pattern in the area of the Castrum (green colour) and the city of Ostia that grew around the fortress. Map after Wikimedia Commons.

Recent work by the German Archaeological Institute involving a geophysical survey of the unexcavated areas of Ostia both within the Republican walls and outside them. This work produced a new plan of the streets of the city that showed the southern walls of the city were punctured by the extension of streets and the expansion of the urban area of the city. The results of this work have been analysed by Hanna Stöger.[10] She considered the integration of some 476 street-units across the city. The work re-writes a number of assumptions about the movement of goods into Ostia.

Firstly, the Cardo Maximus was not one of the most integrated streets within the city plan. Equally, Semita dei Cippi – blocked in late antiquity, was similarly not one of the most important streets for the movement of goods from the agricultural lands to the south of Ostia. Instead, a routeway leading to a point to the east of the centre of the city, the Via del Sabazeo with its intersection with the Decumanus just to the east of the theatre was likely to have been the major route into the city for the supply of food and other goods. It is the eastern part of the city that is the most integrated in terms of its street network. Thus, although the Forum appears to be the centre of the city on a plan, the centre lies to the east of the original Castrum.[11] This points to the disruption of movement around the forum caused by the presence of the remnants of the walls of the original Castrum.

Geophysical survey to the north of the Tiber has located a new part of the city that contained large store buildings and a defensive perimeter wall.[12] Effectively, this work has defined the Tiber as a major routeway through the city of Ostia and, although, we may contemplate the interaction undertaken in the streets of the city; the river itself was a major traffic routeway. The chronology of the development of the city remains unclear, but it seems that this area was developed later than the first century BCE and the fortifications to the north of the Tiber should not be associated with the construction of walls of the rest of Ostia between 63-58 BCE.[13] The expansion of the city to the north of the Tiber created what may be described as a riverine city.[14]

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9 Stöger 2011, 214.

10 Stöger 2011, 213-17.

11 Stöger 2011, 218-19.

12 Keay – Parcak – Strutt 2014; Salomon *et al.* 2018, 280. See also Keay's article on the Isola Sacra in this volume.

13 Germoni *et al.* 2018; *CIL* XIV 4707; Zevi 2004a, 25-28 connects the inscription to Cic. *fam.* 1, 9, 15; Salomon *et al.* 2018, 280-81.

14 Adler – Guerci 2018 for discussion and definition of riverine cities.



Figure 2. The Via Ostiensis leads to the Porta Romana, the eastern gate of Ostia. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 3. Along the Via di Diana can be found the Casa di Diana and the best-known inn of Ostia, the Thermopolium of the Via di Diana. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

There is a sense in which the new urban forms of second century CE Ostia were squeezed into the existing street grid, including the street-width restrictions associated with the gates of the former Castrum. However, some streets display all the magnificence of the new streets of Rome that were constructed after the Great Fire in 64 CE.[15] The Cardo Maximus leading from the Forum to the Tiber is a case in point. This colonnaded street is some 8.9 m in width and creates a clear division between the street for vehicles in the sun/rain/wind and the pavements in the shade/shelter of a roofed space for pedestrians. It is in this area of urban expansion in response to the shift northwards of the Tiber channel that we can locate some of the largest second century CE building projects, the Portico di Pio IX covered an area of 4,700 m^2.[16] The contrast between these streetscapes and those that were accommodated within the existing grid, or were built on a smaller scale, created a texture to the urban form. In many ways, this new urban form was that of the city of Rome rebuilt after the Great Fire (64 CE), described by Tacitus[17] as being formed of wide streets with colonnades and open areas – much what can be found in second century Ostia today.[18]

15 Tac. *ann.* 15, 43. Ellis 2018, 207-11.

16 Salomon *et al.* 2018; DeLaine 2002, 71.

17 Tac. *ann.* 15, 43.

18 Ellis 2018, 207-11.

Paving the streets of Ostia

When we visit Ostia today, we walk on the surface of streets paved in the second century CE. These, as well as the roads leading to Ostia from Rome and Lavinium, are some 3.5 m above the original road surfaces.[19] The final surface, that we see today, was constructed from stone quarried from lava associated with the volcanoes of the Alban Hills had to be imported to Ostia, the nearest possible source lies in the Vallerano plateau some 20 km inland.[20] The excavation of sections of the Via Ostiensis from Rome show that prior to the first century CE, the road was not paved with large blocks of stone.

The human effort involved in the paving of streets needs some definition. Calculations of the volume of stone for the paving of the streets of Pompeii, a city of 66 hectares compared to the 69 hectares of Ostia,[21] demonstrate the scale of this task: 243,582 square metres composed of 28,100 tonnes.[22] Using these numbers as proxy data for the paving of the streets of Ostia and calculations made by Janet DeLaine for quarrying and transportation,[23] we arrive at a scale for the human effort involved: c. 360,000 man days and c. 585,000 cart journeys over a distance of 20 km.

The paving of the streets need not have been done in one phase. In the first century BCE, P. Lucilius Gamala paved a street section from arch to arch[24] that has proven difficult to locate within the site today.[25] Similar actions can be found in other cities in Italy, such as Puteoli, where a section of street might be paved from the forum to the edge of the city.[26] At some point, probably in the first century CE, this piecemeal paving of streets was extended to all streets across the city.[27] These surfaces made of lava were both impermeable and durable, utilising the hardest stone available.[28] Interestingly, the road from Ostia to Portus, seen today at Isola Sacra, was paved across half the width of the road.[29] This implies there need not have been the availability of lava stone to complete a fully paved road surface for two carts to pass simultaneously, and that this situation was maintained throughout the life of the road. Alternatively, traffic to Portus from Ostia could have used the canal running parallel to the road.[30]

Travel to Rome

Ostia was a city connected to Rome both by river and by land on the Via Ostiensis. The journey time by land would have been in the region of half-a-day.[31] This transport infrastructure, though, was far from stable. Travel upstream on the Tiber depended on haulage of barges by oxen – a particularly slow form of transport over a far greater distance due to the meanders in the river, which could take three days.[32] The possibility of travel

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19 Stöger 2011, 208-09; compare Kaiser 2011.

20 Worthing *et al*. 2017 and Worthing – Laurence – Bosworth 2018.

21 DeLaine 2015, 421 for area of Ostia, not including its extension to the north of the Tiber.

22 Poehler 2017, 77.

23 DeLaine 1997, 111 and 128.

24 *CIL* XIV 375.

25 Stöger 2011, 222; Zevi 2004b, 55-56 suggests the arches of the western and eastern gates of the *castrum.*

26 *CIL* X 1698.

27 Poehler – Crowther 2018 for a comparative study of the piecemeal paving of Pompeii.

28 Plin. *nat.* 36, 167. Laurence 1999, 67-73; Black – Browning – Laurence 2009.

29 Baldassarre 1987; Calza 1940.

30 Salomon *et al.* 2016.

31 Plin. *epist.* 2, 17.

32 Pavolini 1996, 104-05.



Figure 4. The lava paving of an Ostian street. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

by river could also be interrupted by the river being in torrent during parts of the months October to May.[33] The land route along the Via Ostiensis of half a day may have been preferred. The route was well established with milestones by c. the third century,[34] but the course of the road may have been subject to flooding due to its proximity to the Tiber. However, recent research on the movement of the Tiber channel have demonstrated that the Via Ostiensis may have been eroded or obliterated, where the modern entrance to the site is located outside the Porta Romana.[35] The dating of this erosion has not been established. However, if we look to the east of Ostia, the Via Ostiensis runs across a lagoon.[36] This body of water needed to be managed in antiquity, as much as it does today in its drained format. In 2014, Ostia Antica closed in February due to flooding, subsequent research discovered that the maintenance of water control measures associated with the management of paleo-lagoon via a series of canals had failed.[37] Variation in rainfall could dramatically alter the communications pattern not just by river, but also on the Via Ostiensis itself.[38] The ancient approach was to raise the level of the road, as can be seen in the creation of a viaduct some 300 m in length at Guardapasso and, also, across the lagoon or salt marsh leading to the Porta Romana at Ostia.[39]

Movement and urbanism at Ostia

The excavated remains at Ostia and knowledge derived from geo-physics reveals a city that grew organically and this phenomenon shaped the form of the city we see today. As a result, the forum cannot be defined as the centre of the city – a temptation when we look at the plan of the excavated remains – movement was centred on the Tiber and it was the Tiber that was the major destination for goods, with the section of the river to the east of the forum creating a concentration of traffic in that part of the city. This was also the part of the city to which travellers from Rome arrived at. Thus, we can see that there is a texture to Ostia and a differentiation of the part of the city to the west of the forum associated with a lower intensity of traffic, compared to the denser patterns of movement suggested for the eastern part of the city. There is a sense in which Ostia is defined as a place that is between other places (Lavinium, Rome, and beyond) with the result that its urban form responded to people and goods passing through it.

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33 Aldrete 2007, 66-71.

34 *CIL* VI 31585 at Ficana, 11th milestone, Fest. 298, 8L. Brandt 2002.

35 Salomon *et al.* 2017.

36 Pannuzi 2018.

37 Mastorillo *et al.* 2016.

38 Di Salvo *et al.* 2017 for a map of contemporary expectations of flooding on the Via Ostiensis.

39 Pellegrino 1996; Quilici 1996.

Bathing in Ancient Ostia

Marja-Leena Hänninen

Bathing was probably the most important form of recreation for both rich and poor in ancient Rome. People primarily took care of their personal hygiene in public baths and statues of the deities of health Aesculapius and Hygieia found in the Ostian baths also illustrate how essential baths were considered to health.[1]

Baths had several other functions in the ancient world and, in particular, were hugely important to social life. The baths may have even held greater significance for social life than for health. Friends shared the latest news, and business negotiations might take place here. Larger baths had spaces for physical exercise (gymnasium, *palaestra*) (**Fig. 2**), and food and drink could be bought.[2] Furthermore, mosaics, marbles and statues offered aesthetic pleasure to bathing guests – to the extent that the most conservative Romans thought that the luxury of the baths might corrupt the morals of bathers.[3]

There were always various spaces for bathing in a Roman bath. On entering the bath, the guest first changed clothes in a changing room (*apodyterium*). The wealthiest guests had their own servants and slaves to serve and assist them,[4] for example, by guarding the clothes and valuables of their master or mistress, and helping them to wash and dress.

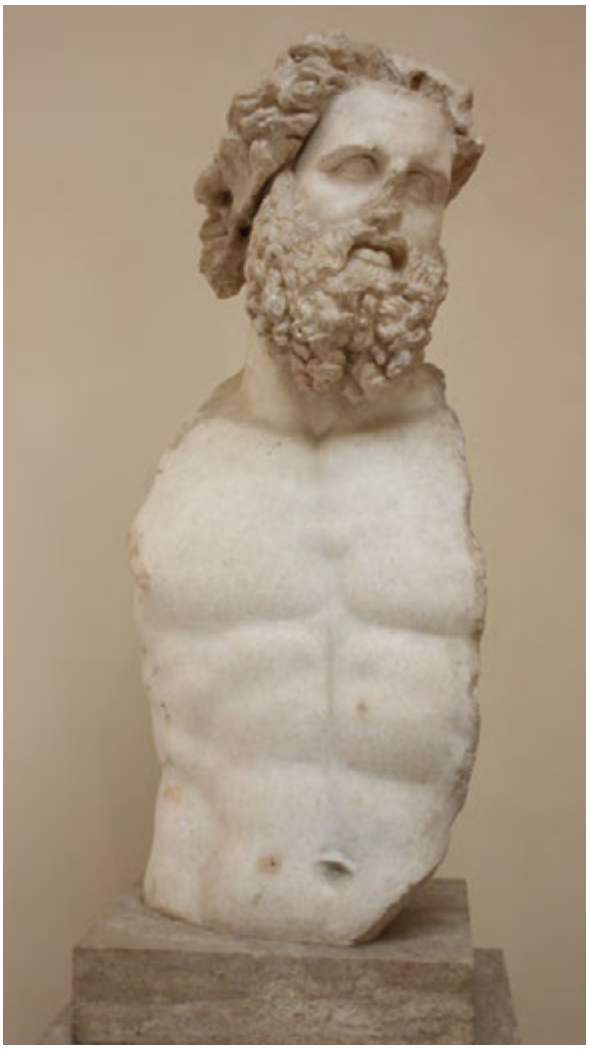


Figure 1 (Cat. no. 145). Asclepius, the god of medicine and health. Museo Ostiense, inv. 114. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Before actually bathing, people could exercise at bath complexes, which had specific areas for physical training (*palaestra*). Sports seem to have become an essential part of the bathing routine in the late first

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1 Meiggs 1973, 404. On views about the health-giving effects of baths in Antiquity, see Fagan 1999, 85-103.

2 Meiggs 1973, 404; Smith 2007, 106; Whitmore 2013, 8-9, 16-17.

3 Fagan 1999, 176-79. On the views of ancient authors concerning the luxury of the baths, see, e.g., Plin. *nat*. 33, 153.

4 See, e.g., Mart. 7, 35 and 11, 75.

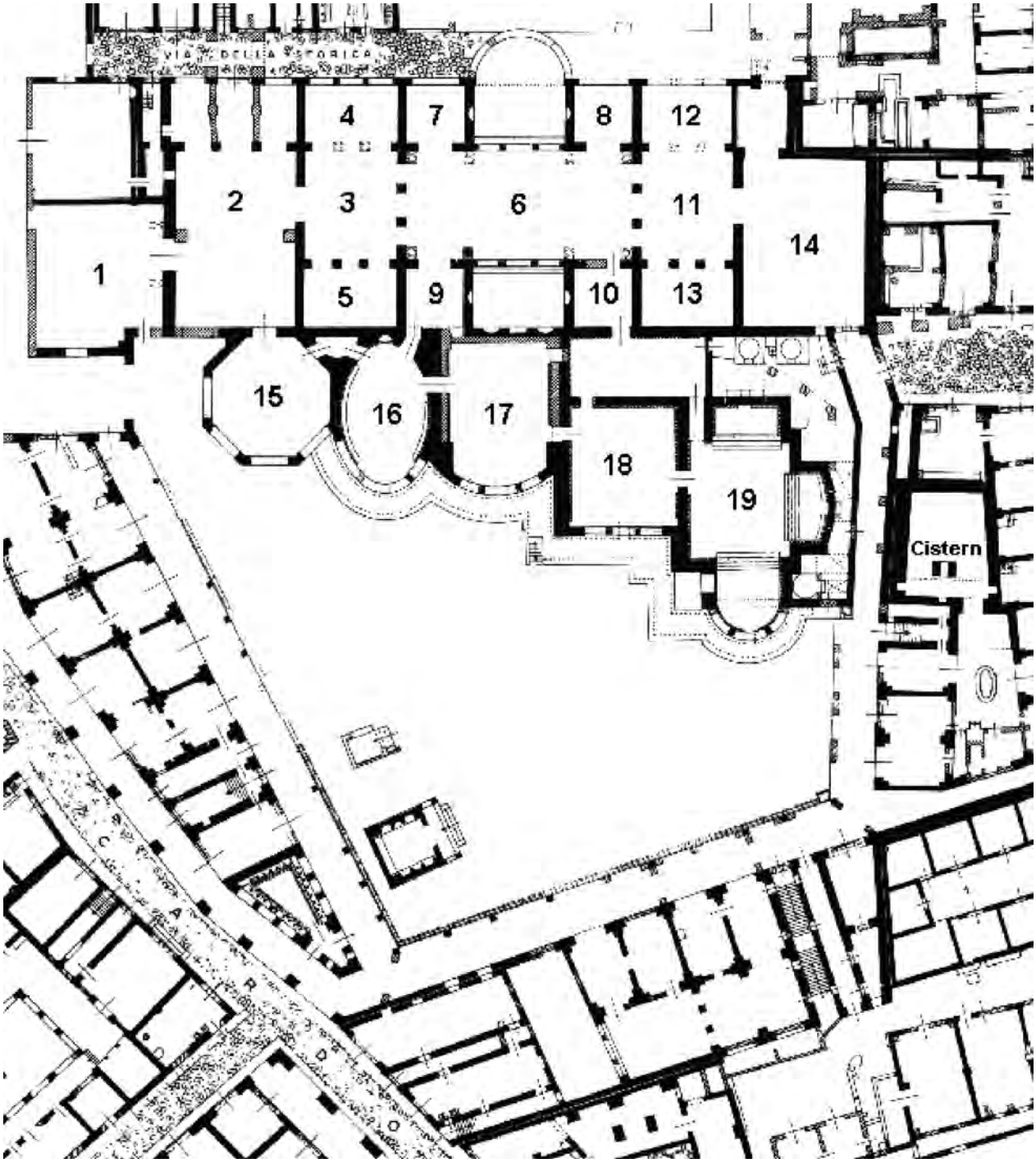


Figure 2. Terme del Foro. Rooms 2 and 14 were vestibules, rooms 4, 5, 12 and 13 changing-rooms (*apodyteria*), room 6 the cold bath, *frigidarium*, with water basins, room 15 with its large windows was used for sun-bathing (*heliocaminus*), room 16 was a steam room (*sudatorium*), rooms 17 and 18 warm rooms (*tepidaria*), and room 19 *caldarium*, the hot bath. Room 1 was an additional vestibule from the end of the 4th century CE. Plan: http://www.ostia-antica.org/regio1/12/12-6.htm, after the plan of I. Gismondi – O. Visca, in *Scavi di Ostia* I. Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

century CE.[5] For example, customers might warm up by playing ball games, running, boxing, and wrestling, or training their muscles by lifting weights, just as in the gyms of the modern world. After training, customers could engage the services of a masseur to treat their muscles. Attitudes towards women's physical exercise were apparently ambivalent, and the Roman satirical poet and moralist Juvenal mocked a socialite who

5 Newby 2005, 46.

trained with dumbbells – apparently this form of exercise was not considered appropriate for women.[6] The athletic dimension of bathing culture is reflected in the many black and white floor mosaics in Ostia's bath facilities, such as the Terme di Porta Marina, Terme del Nettuno and Terme del Nuotatore.[7] Athletes practising various sports are depicted, for example, in the northwestern corner of the *frigidarium* in the Terme di Porta Marina (**Fig. 6a-b**).

After exercising, bath guests were recommended to move to the warm room (*tepidarium*) and from there to the hot room (*caldarium*) (**Fig. 2**), each equipped with immersion pools. Male bathers cleansed their skin with a curved instrument called a strigil, which was used particularly by athletes to remove dirt and oil from their body (figure on p. 218). The last stop during a visit to the baths was the cold room (*frigidarium*) (**Fig. 3**). This was considered the optimal order for health, but the clients of the baths probably moved between the various rooms as they wished.[8] There were swimming-pools (*piscinae, natatio*) in the baths, but these were usually not very deep and were not suitable for actual swimming.[9] The hypocaust technique used to heat the baths involved raising the floor above the ground on pillars made of tiles, allowing hot air from a furnace to circulate through the hollow space between the ground and the floor (**Fig. 4**). The *tepidarium* and *caldarium* could also be heated by double walls, by enabling the circulation of the hot air beneath the floor to the upper parts of the rooms (**Fig. 5**).[10] Numerous traces of hypocaust heating systems can still be seen in the archaeological area of Ostia.



Figure 3. *Frigidarium* in the Terme del Foro. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

6 Yegül 1992, 33; Juv. 6, 421-22.

7 Newby 2005, 48.

8 Yegül 1992, 38-39; Whitmore 2013, 18.

9 Yegül 1992, 37-38.

10 Yegül 1992, 356-65.



Figure 4. Entrance to a furnace beneath the raised floor in the Terme del Foro. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5. Terme del Foro. A row of the tile flues enabling hot air to circulate to the upper parts of the room can be seen behind the bench. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

The ancient sources do not provide an unambiguous answer as to whether customers bathed naked or wearing very light clothing in public baths. The poet Martial, for example, suggests that women wore some kind of loincloth when bathing, and that shy women used bathing spaces frequented only by other women.[11] Being nude or partially dressed could be seen as an indication of dubious morals. Authors of the imperial period, such as Martial, repeatedly suggest that baths offered opportunities for erotic experiences, including illicit and homoerotic ones.[12] On the other hand, Quintilian thought it paranoid and excessive to suspect a wife of adultery if she bathed at the same time as men.[13]

In the imperial period, the Romans essentially bathed every day, usually in the afternoon. The baths were not intended only for the upper classes, since the entrance-fees were very low. Wealthy and aristocratic individuals might have brought a large retinue with them to the baths. It is uncertain if slaves merely served their masters and mistresses or if they, too, were permitted to enjoy the services of the baths as customers. There is evidence that some slaves, at least, were allowed to bathe in large city bath complexes alongside free men.[14] We have no certain information on the entrance fees to the Ostian baths, or if entry was free. The earliest known baths had separate sections for men and women, but in Ostia there is no evidence for this.

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11 Mart. 3, 87 and 3, 72.

12 See, e. g., Mart. 1, 23; 3, 72; 7, 35; 9, 33; 11, 47; 11, 63; 11, 75. See also Apul. *met*. 8, 29-30; Petron. 92.

13 Quint. *inst*. 5, 9, 14.

14 Yegül 1992, 33-34, 45; Fagan 1999, 189-206.

It is possible that men and women bathed at different times of day, but mixed bathing seems to have been common in the imperial period. Some emperors, such as Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, are said to have prohibited men and women from bathing at the same time and in the same space.[15]

There were different types of baths in Ostia. Large bathing facilities financed by the public authorities are usually known as *thermae.* In addition to these facilities, there were smaller neighbourhood baths and private baths for a more exclusive clientele; these are often referred to as *balnea*, but the ancient terminology is not entirely clear.[16] Large public baths were built in both Rome and Ostia during the imperial period. The construction of an aqueduct significantly advanced this process. Ostia obtained its own aqueduct in the early imperial period; before this water was drawn from wells and cisterns.[17] Baths were built in Ostia from the first century CE to the beginning of the sixth century CE, and are found in almost all areas of the city, both in the centre and more peripheral districts. The majority of the known baths in Ostia can be dated to the second century CE, also the most prosperous period in the colony's history.[18] Two of the particularly large baths, the Terme del Nettuno and Terme di Porta Marina, were probably sponsored by the emperors Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, and monumental inscriptions testify to their construction. In addition to these facilities, more than twenty baths of varying size served the inhabitants. We do not know, however, who sponsored their construction, since their names have not been preserved in inscriptions.[19]

The surviving epigraphic evidence suggests that the earliest baths in Ostia date to the late Republican or early imperial period. However, the earliest actual remains of baths that still survive today belong to the Julio-Claudian period. Only a mosaic floor with symbols of Roman provinces can still be seen of Ostia's first public bath, built during the reign of the emperor Claudius (see figure on p. 81). Indeed, it only became possible to build large baths when Ostia's aqueduct was constructed in the early imperial period. Earlier baths were probably small and drew their water from wells. The largest baths in Ostia were constructed during the massive building boom that began in the Flavian period and continued until the Severan period.[20] Baths continued to be built in Ostia even in Late Antiquity, and they were still being repaired and restored in the fourth and fifth centuries; for example, the Porta Marina baths were completely renovated in 375-378 CE by Proculus Gratianus who acted as *praefectus annonae* during the reign of the emperors Valens Gratianus and Valentinianus.[21]

The baths located southeast of Porta Marina, near the ancient seashore, Terme di Porta Marina, are thought to be the earliest of Ostia's large baths. They were probably built under the emperor Trajan (98-117 CE), and may have been funded by the emperor,[22] whose involvement in their construction is also reflected in a gallery of imperial portraits. A bust of Marciana, Trajan's sister, was found in the area of the baths, thus explaining why the name Terme della Marciana is also used.[23] In one ancient inscription, the baths are called *thermae maritimae*, or maritime baths.[24] Athletes practising various sports, such as wrestling, boxing and

15 Whitmore 2013, 29-35; for Ostia, see Meiggs 1973, 406.

16 Yegül 1992, 43; Poccardi 2001, 161-64.

17 Meiggs 1973, 44.

18 Poccardi 2001, 161, 168-71.

19 Meiggs 1973, 407; Poccardi 2001, 161.

20 Meiggs 1973, 406; Pavolini 2006, 60-61.

21 *CIL* XIV 137; Yegül 1992, 322.

22 Valeri 2001, 308-09; Pavolini 2006, 180.

23 Meiggs 1973, 408-09; Valeri 2001, 313-18.

24 Pellegrino 2012, 109.

discus throwing, are depicted in a mosaic from the northwestern area of the *frigidarium* (**Fig. 6a-b**).[25] One athlete is holding dumbbells, and sportsmen carrying an oil can and strigils are also depicted. The imagery refers to sporting contests, with a trumpeter announcing the start of the competition. One of the boxers looks like a winner, whilst the other seems to be protesting the judge's decision. The mosaic might also allude to the Greek gymnasium. It was located in a space that may have served as the changing room of the baths, near its *palaestra*. These baths in the suburban area of Ostia were used for a long time and were restored as late as the sixth century.[26]



Figure 6a-b. Mosaic in the *frigidarium* of the Terme di Porta Marina depicting athletes. Photos: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico and Arja Karivieri.

The Terme di Nettuno, probably the most familiar Ostian bathing establishment to modern visitors, were inaugurated in 139 CE. They were built north of the Decumanus in an area characterized by the considerable uniformity of its architecture. The brick stamps from the baths date to the last years of the emperor Hadrian's reign, but the building was probably not completed until that of Antoninus Pius (138-161 CE).[27] Hadrian had promised two million sesterces for the building project and Antoninus Pius granted the funding needed to complete the marble decoration of the bath. On the basis of the brick stamps, construction work was still ongoing during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.[28] A statue depicting the emperor Hadrian's wife Sabina as the goddess Ceres also alludes to the role of the imperial family in the construction project. The present-day name of the baths comes from the large black and white mosaic (**Fig. 7**) with images of the sea god Neptune in a carriage pulled by sea horses and surrounded by various marine creatures, monsters and Nereids.[29]

The Baths of Neptune are square in shape, with each side being 67 metres long. The entrance from the Via dei Vigili leads into a vestibule onto which locker rooms probably opened. The *frigidarium* was situated on the northern side of the bath complex, with pools at each end. The larger pool was decorated with granite

25 Pavolini 2006, 180-81.

26 Newby 2005, 51-53; Pellegrino 2012, 109.

27 Meiggs 1973, 409; Pavolini 2006, 58.

28 Meiggs 1973, 409.

29 Pavolini 2006, 59-60.



Figure 7. Mosaic in the Terme di Nettuno. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

columns, whose Corinthian capitals were made of Greek marble.[30] There were niches in the walls for statues and a service passage ran along the west side, from which the bath attendants fed the furnaces with firewood. From the *frigidarium*, the ancient bath guest moved through rooms heated with the hypocaust technique to the *caldarium*, which had three small pools with hot water. In the middle of the building was an open-air training ground, the *palaestra*, where people could exercise before bathing. In the southeastern corner of the baths, customers could take foot baths. The *palaestra* was flanked by a colonnade on three sides. Rooms of unknown function were situated on the eastern and southern sides. One of these is larger than the others and has a floor paved with marble; the statue of Sabina was found here. The baths were also equipped with appropriate washrooms, but the latrine was located in an inconspicuous corner. The baths of Neptune were extremely spacious and luxuriously decorated, with other fine statues alongside the aforementioned Sabina, such as a head of a girl, a bearded male head, and a figure of a youth with fruit and a cornucopia. The mosaics were splendid and a large amount of marble was used in the decorations. Even the latrine was beautifully decorated. The paintings adorning the building in antiquity have almost totally vanished, but the baths of Neptune were the most luxurious hitherto seen in Ostia.[31]

The third large imperial baths of Ostia, Terme del Foro, were situated near the Forum, east of its southern end, and were even more extensive than the Baths of Neptune. The brick stamps suggest that these baths were built just before the death of Antoninus Pius; they were renovated several times, with the last being in the 380s (**Fig. 8**). Antoninus Pius funded these new large baths in Ostia together with a Roman

30 Meiggs 1973, 410; Pavolini 2006, 60.

31 Meiggs 1973, 410-11.



Figure 8. Statue base in the Forum: according to the inscription, the *praefectus annonae urbis Romae,* Ragonius Vincentius Celsus, responsible for grain imports to the city of Rome, and the citizens provided the funding. The same text was plausibly placed above the new entrance of the Terme del Foro, built in the late 4th century CE, suggesting that the prefect financed the restoration of the baths. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 9. Terme del Foro. The view from the *palaestra* to the *tepidarium* 18: two rows of holes can be seen in the columns, used to fasten the wooden window-frames of the large windows opening towards the south. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

magistrate Gavius Maximus, who served him for 20 years as praetorian prefect.[32] The northern part was regularly shaped to form a symmetrical rectangle, whereas the southern spaces had various shapes. The octagonal room at the west end of the baths seems to have had large windows opening southwards, enabling bathers to enjoy the sunlight.[33] This kind of room may have offered the opportunity to both take baths and obtain a suntan. The philosopher Seneca describes baths with large windows like the Forum baths in Ostia (**Fig. 9**) as he complains that his contemporaries yearn for luxury.[34]

Ostia's large bathing establishments, the *thermae*, were monumental buildings, while the smaller baths, or *balnea*, were usually built in the middle of a district between other structures. They did not have a *palaestra* or garden. The Baths of Buticosus, built during the reign of Trajan, were decorated with frescoes with garden motifs, perhaps intended to create the illusion of a real garden.[35] Other essential elements of baths, such as pools for hot and cold baths as well as a steam bath, were available for guests even in these

32 Meiggs 1973, 411-15; Pavolini 2006, 107-09.

33 Meiggs 1973, 413-14.

34 Sen. *epist*. 86, 8.

35 Pavolini 2006, 123-24.

smaller baths. Private houses, however, seldom had their own baths in imperial period Ostia, when the urban landscape was dominated by large blocks of brick houses. One notable exception is the so-called Terme dei Sette sapienti (**Fig. 10**) between two large blocks of flats, the Caseggiato del Serapide and Caseggiato degli Aurighi. It is possible that these baths were primarily meant for the residents of these two large *insulae*.[36] Their name (Baths of the Seven Sages) comes from a fresco accompanied by texts in one of the rooms, depicting the seven illustrious sages of ancient Greece. The frescoes were painted in the earlier structures of the building, and the room was probably originally a bar.[37]



Figure 10. Terme dei Sette Sapienti. The bath of Venus is depicted in the wall painting on the western wall of the *frigidarium* above the marble-clad water basin for cold baths. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

The Ostian *collegia*, associations representing various branches of business and professional occupations, may have funded and maintained some baths. Near the eastern city gate, the Porta Romana, there was a bathing establishment called the Terme dei Cisiarii, the baths of the teamsters, named after the mosaics found in the baths. There is no explicit written evidence for who built and owned the baths, but the location and the mosaics depicting teamsters suggest that this trade guild owned the baths.[38] Unfortunately, there are no sources on the ownership of baths or the related business in Ostia (see above). Large baths were usually maintained by public funding, and smaller private baths made an income from entrance fees. Various kinds of businesses may have been connected with the baths. Some of those in Ostia were flanked by rows of shops on the street side or may have had a bar in one corner.

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36 Meiggs 1973, 417-18; Mar 1990, 41-46.

37 Meiggs 1973, 429-30; Pavolini 2006, 140.

38 Meiggs 1973, 419; Pavolini 2006, 55-56.

Baths were located in practically all parts of the urban area of Ostia. The inhabitants of the town could choose if they wished to bathe near their home, or farther away in baths of a higher standard, or simply on their daily routes. The sheer abundance of bathing establishments in Ostia shows that bathing was an essential part of the everyday life of its inhabitants during the imperial period. The long period of crisis of the Roman Empire in the third century is reflected even in the archaeological evidence of Ostia, but this temporary decline did not mean an end to bathing culture. Ostia's baths were rebuilt and renovated in the fourth century, as testified by several inscriptions, and some new baths were even built in Late Antiquity. Usually these were fairly small and constructed using recycled materials.[39] Nonetheless, at a time when the means and the willingness to fund other public services were lacking, baths continued to be maintained.

39 Meiggs 1973, 93-94.

ADMINISTRATION

The Administration of Ostia

Fausto Zevi

It is well known that Ostia was a colony of Roman citizens (*civium Romanorum*) and even, according to tradition, the first colony established by Rome as early as the regal period. However, the earliest evidence on the city's administration dates only as far back as the late Republican period. The highest religious authority in the colony, the *pontifex Volcani et aedium sacrarum*, was helped by four assistants, two *praetores* and two *aediles* (known as the *sacris Volcani faciundis*), and 19th-century scholars assumed that these posts adopted the names of the city's most ancient magistracies. Indeed, during the 1980s, a tripod base was found on raised ground at Dragoncello in the territory of Ostia. Dating to the late second century BCE, it bears the name of two *pr*(*aetores*), clearly the individuals who dedicated the object to a deity of uncertain identity: it thus reflects the statutes of Ostia before the Social War. This is when the Latin and Italic peoples obtained Roman citizenship with the passing of the *lex Iulia municipalis*, and the administration of the various towns, including colonies, was essentially brought into line with standardized models, with a limited range of potential local variants.

Our knowledge of this "constitution" (which we can assume was established by Rome with a specific *lex coloniae*, perhaps on the initiative of Sulla) relies, as well as on comparisons with other better known colonial statutes, on an abundance of epigraphic documentation that does not, however, date back further than the period of Caesar and the triumvirate. The most important epigraphic document is the *Fasti* of Ostia, which we could consider the official account of events recorded by the city authorities. An authoritative research tradition attributes oversight of this document to the *pontifex Volcani*, who we will discuss below, but in fact there is no evidence of this and it is preferable to think that, as elsewhere, it was compiled by the municipal magistrates. There is also no reason to suppose that the *Fasti* were displayed in the temple of Vulcan rather than in the colony's Forum, as they were elsewhere. Similar documents are known in many other Italian cities, especially in Lazio and in Campania, but also in other regions of central and southern Italy and, with the *Fasti* of Tauromenium, in Sicily as well.

However, the *Fasti* of Ostia, though fragmentary, stand out from the rest not just for their better state of conservation but above all because they may cover as many as three centuries.[1] The *Fasti* were updated yearly by the civic authorities with an eye to the major events affecting the state whilst simultaneously recording local history (**Fig. 1**; **Cat. no. 41**): the last datable fragments belong to 175 CE and as we have said their start, like other similar documents, almost certainly coincided with the Social War (*a bello Marsico*, as the heading of other known *fasti* recites). At Ostia, the oldest surviving fragment dates to the period of Caesar (49-44 BCE) and records the names of the consuls of Rome (and, when they were appointed, the *consules suffecti*), followed by the year's most important events and then, at the end, the local magistrates (the *duoviri* or *duumviri*, also written as *IIviri*, like in the *Fasti*), thus connecting the city's history to the

1 Bargagli – Grosso 1997.

succession of the highest magistrates of the Roman state, eponyms of the year (which was thus recorded using their names). The *duoviri* delivered justice[2] and in general administered the city in accordance with the instructions provided by the local senate, that is to say the assembly of decurions over which they presided; only in the event of unexpected danger could they take the place of the central authorities (for example to defend the city from enemy raids). They were assisted by a pair of minor magistrates, the *aediles*, in charge, as in Rome, of maintaining public order (they could impose fines on those who disobeyed regulations), keeping up roads, holding spectacles (*ludi*), overseeing the city's food supply, the markets and the accuracy of weights and measures; these young magistrates thus played an important role in the management of day to day affairs and the organization of the city's social life. Normally, attaining the office of *duumvir* presupposed having already held that of aedile, in accordance with a *cursus honorum* that is repeated in almost all the cities of Italy; at Ostia, we do not know precisely at what age people could hold either office, nor the minimum time interval between the two.

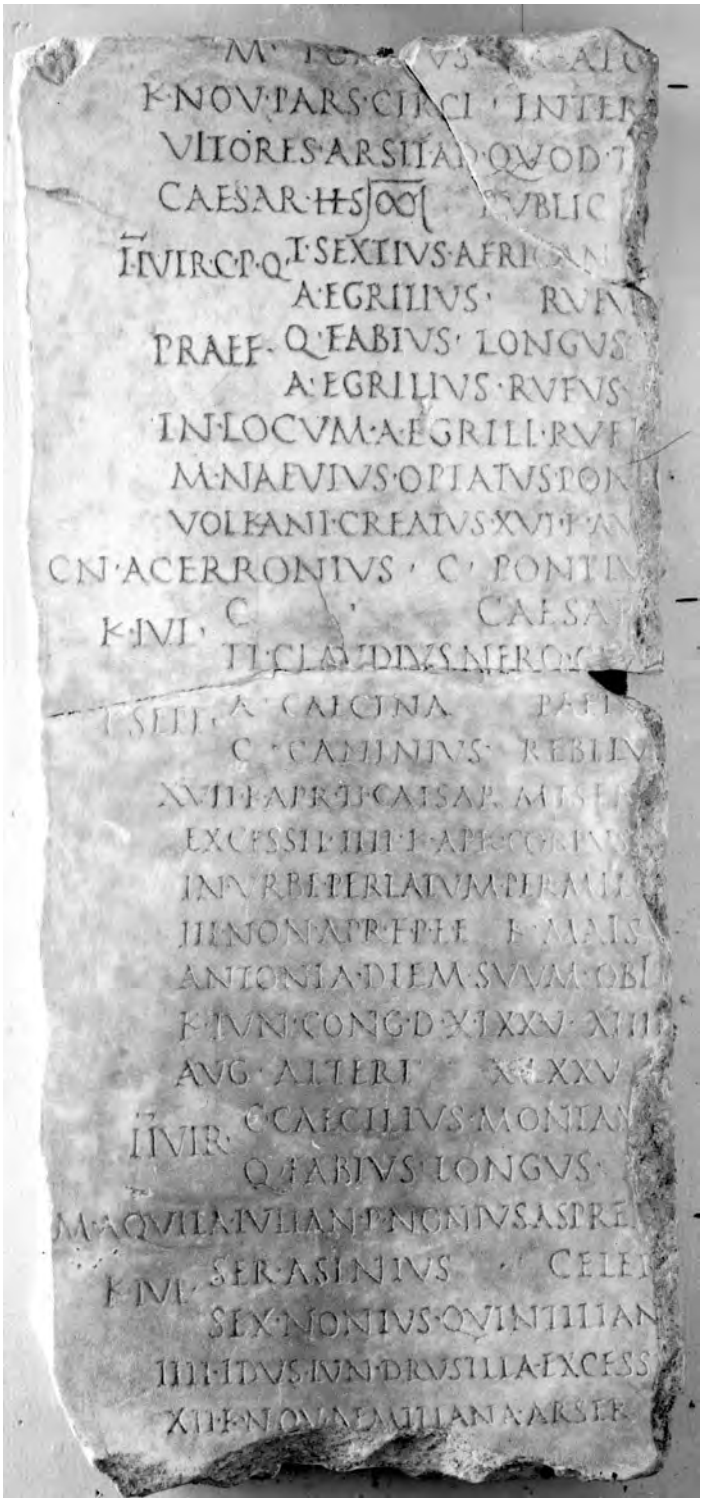


Figure 1. Section of the *Fasti Ostienses*. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The colonies had no independent office comparable to the censorship in Rome; instead, the *duoviri* themselves took on the duties and powers of the censorship every 5 years with the title of *censor* or, from the Augustan period onwards, of *duoviri quinquennales* with censorship powers (*duoviri censoria potestate quinquennales*). They were thus in charge of updating the lists of citizens according to their rank, filling up the local senate with new decurions and undertaking a census of the lands owned by the colony, rentals, contracts and tenders. As the high point in the career of a local magistrate, this post was normally held by someone who had already served as an ordinary *duumvir*. Holding office more than once, and the number of duumvirates

[2] In contrast to what happens in the majority of other cities, the *IIviri* of Ostia do not add to their title the specification *i(ure) d(icundo)*, though there is no reason to doubt that, as elsewhere, they were judicial magistrates.

held (never more than three in the imperial period; until the early Augustan period some exceptional *cursus* were possible, like that of Cartilius Poplicola, who is discussed below), was one of the highest honours for a man from Ostia, as this was a mark of his enduring popularity among the citizenry and the *ordo decurionum*. *Poplicola*'s epitaph stressed that this very telling *cognomen* had been conferred on him by all the people of Ostia (*ab universieis*) in recognition of his well-deserved popularity.[3]

During the empire, important exponents of the senatorial class, members of the imperial family and even some emperors also occasionally held *quinquennalitas*. This used to be considered a purely honorary title, accepted by the sovereign to demonstrate an interest in and benevolence towards the city. However, though this measure was certainly honorary, it also had legal implications, as the censorship or *quinquennalitas* conferred power over the city's properties and more generally the right to intervene in the urban fabric of the city, necessary if the emperor wished to sponsor or execute an important public project. Indeed, it is no coincidence that Trajan and Hadrian (the latter on two occasions) are among the *quinquennales* of Ostia; these were the two emperors whose building projects substantially transformed the urban and monumental aspect of the city and of the *Portus Augusti* that depended upon it. In these cases, the illustrious individual honoured with this office, being unable to undertake the routine tasks of the *duumviri* in person, was represented by a prefect (*praefectus*), also listed in the city's *Fasti*: he was obviously chosen, with the incumbent's agreement, from among the most prominent exponents of the local elite. In some cases, both *IIviri* were replaced by prefects, clearly because a high-ranking individual had been appointed as the emperor's colleague and was thus also unable to perform the everyday tasks of the magistrate.

Russell Meiggs believed that *quinquennalitas* was not part of the early colonial statutes of the city but was a later modification, perhaps of the early Augustan period.[4] However, we have one inscription giving evidence of the censorship at Ostia from at least the period of Caesar and the triumvirate. Certainly, the civil wars must have led, at least in the most important cities, to the incorporation into the local ruling class of supporters of the victor; from this point of view the censorship, with its powers of incorporation and choice *(lectio*), was a powerful political instrument. On the outbreak of the war between Caesar and Pompey, the Ostian *Fasti* record a year when no magistrates were appointed (*interregnum*) followed by a rapid succession in the post of *duumvir* of individuals close to Caesar (especially the *Vitellii*); at the same time, some important families from Ostia (*Acilii, Sextii*) were elevated to the Roman senate. Octavian's successful struggles against his rivals, from the assassins of Caesar to Sextus Pompey and above all Mark Antony, must also have led to reprisals against their supporters. At Ostia, Agrippa certainly held a firm grip on power in the city (which he not coincidentally later equipped with a theatre – the only example in Italy of a theatre built by a member of the imperial family). Close control over the port of Ostia and the river was fundamental, not just to ensure Rome's food supply but also as a naval base during the war against Sextus Pompey. At Ostia, the extraordinary protagonist of these events (and almost, we might say, Agrippa's local representative) was C. Cartilius Poplicola, whose career must have unfolded between about 40 and 15 BCE. He held the *duumvirate* as many as eight times with three censorships, as we learn from the epitaph on the marble front of the mausoleum erected in his honour by the people of Ostia at public expense (**Figs. 2-3**). Its sculpted frieze also depicts military events connected with Poplicola, perhaps at a time of danger for the city, under threat from the raids of Pompey's son. But above all I believe that it was Poplicola's three censorships that gave shape, with his loyal followers, to the new ruling class that later governed the city under Augustus and his succes-

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3 Cf. the interpretation of Herbert Bloch and the comments of Russell Meiggs; Meiggs 1973, 475-78.

4 Meiggs 1973, 175.



Figures 2-3. The grave monument of C. Cartilius Poplicola. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

sors. The large marble temple later built in the Forum of Ostia, dedicated to Roma and Augustus, perhaps while the emperor was still alive, was certainly something more than a simple act of homage.

The office of the city magistrates had a small staff of collaborators remunerated by the colony (*apparitores*), described in an inscription as *decuria curiatia*, and who included the two lictors who accompanied each of the two serving *duumviri*, as the magistrate's personal bodyguards but also, at least originally, in charge of carrying out the corporal punishments that they had the power to inflict. The fasces that they carried, without the axe, indicated that the *iurisdictio* of the *duumviri* did not include major crimes and punishments, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Roman praetor. The *decuria* also included the *scribae cerarii et librarii*, secretaries and archivists who were presumably, as in other cities, paid the highest salaries; the former in particular also enjoyed undoubted social prestige. There followed the *viatores* (public messengers) and *praecones*, heralds and public criers. Many of these employees were freedmen of the city who, together with the public slaves, made up the *familia publica* which in imperial Ostia must have made up an association with its own religious cults (there is a register of Ostia's *familia publica* listing as many as 81 individuals, though not all necessarily served at the same time). Whilst the dedications to the *Genius* of the decurions are clearly indicative of their status in the service of the *ordo decurionum*, the dedications to Bellona and the renovation of the goddess's small temple, annexed to the *campus* of the *Magna Mater*, testify to a specific religious affiliation connected to the great goddess who protected Rome, the *Magna Mater.* Both cults ap-

pear to be linked to the history of the aristocratic family of the Claudii, which, as is known, later ascended to the imperial throne with the successors of Augustus; at Rome it was Appius Claudius Caecus, the famous censor, who reorganized the *familia publica*, perhaps already linked to the "Claudian" cult of Bellona.

Whilst the magistrates were the executive branch, so to speak, the government of the city was entrusted to the *ordo decurionum*, a sort of local offshoot of the Roman senate that in some cities (but not Ostia), as the inscriptions show, kept its original name of *senatus.* There were meant to be 100 *decuriones*, but the evidence from inscriptions shows that the actual number could be slightly higher (one Ostian inscription counts 110). A minimum income was certainly required for admission into the *ordo*, and there must have been regulations specifying the obligation, if not to live in the city then at least to own a house there. People were co-opted into the decurionate, and the process was governed by a decurional decree: *decurionum decreto decurio adlectus* is a common epigraphic formula. At Ostia, as elsewhere, entry into the *ordo* of the decurions (like the conferral of magistracies) certainly entailed the payment of an entry fee (*summa honoraria*), generally used to hold spectacles or for some sort of public work (whose dedicatory inscription would then record the name of the magistrate); it was a special honour if the decurions decreed that co-option into the *ordo* was to be free of charge. The burden imposed by this obligatory payment became increasingly heavy, to the point that holding public offices, and even access to the *ordo* itself, previously much coveted, became an onus that people tried to avoid. This explains why, in the Severan period, social groups that had previously been excluded (such as the Jews) were allowed to access the Decurionate.

The rise of the freedman class, a virtually universal phenomenon during the imperial period, was particularly notable in a city with a strong commercial vocation like Ostia. Freedmen were prohibited from holding public offices (at most they could be accorded, as an honorary position, the insignia of the decurionate, the *ornamenta decurionalia*) but among those who had the necessary assets the ambition was to ensure for their own son, now freeborn, an adequate social position with entry to the decurionate even in childhood (naturally reciprocated by the father with appropriate acts of euergetism), thus accelerating the replacement of the old late Republican and Augustan elite.

Before going on to briefly discuss the colony's priesthoods, we should mention some specific offices or tasks, falling outside the normal *cursus honorum* and individually assigned by the *ordo* to tackle particular situations. Among these, a special mention should be made of the quaestorship, which in Rome and in other colonies was an annual post that formed a normal part of the local public career. However, at Ostia it seems to have been activated on an occasional basis, clearly at times of economic-financial crisis, since the quaestor, as the *quaestor aerarii*, was a sort of guardian of the public treasury who also controlled spending. Aside from an isolated piece of evidence of the Augustan-Tiberian period, testimonies multiply above all from the Antonine period, proof of the precarious state of the local public finances. By this time the office was no longer held exclusively by members of Ostia's old families, but often also by provincials (especially Africans) who frequented the harbour city of Rome for trading purposes and were sometimes included in the city's public life with titles that reveal their popularity, clearly enhanced by their euergetic generosity. The fact that the post of quaestor was sometimes held repeatedly (up to five times), and its conferral even on individuals who had already held the duumvirate, demonstrates its importance in the city administration. A special role must have been played by the *quaestor alimentorum*, also known in various other Italian cities; this post has been linked to the system of grain distributions introduced by Trajan and his successors.

We also have evidence of special posts attributed *ad personam* on the grounds of prestige and/or competence; an example is that of *curator pecuniae publicae exigendae et adtribuendae* (almost anticipating the tasks of the *quaestor*) held already in the mid-first century BCE by the most famous person in Ostia at the

time, P. Lucilius Gamala. The latter is mentioned by Cicero and was a major figure in numerous public construction projects recorded in a famous inscription and the first known member of a large local family that continued to play a prominent role in Ostia's social life until at least the late Antonine period. A descendant of the second century CE, who imitated his ancestor's behaviour, was later appointed *tabularum et librorum curator primus*, the superintendent of archives and accounts. More self-explanatory is the difficult task of the *curator operum publicorum et aquarum* known from the second century onwards and usually exercised after the duumvirate.

The career of a magistrate also entailed the contemporaneous exercise of priesthoods, which will not be discussed here with the exception of a necessary mention of the priest of Vulcan, referenced above, who also had jurisdiction over the other temples (*pontifex Volcani et aedium sacrarum*). This post has no exact equivalent in the ordinances of Rome and it has been assumed to have originated in the colony from the transfer to the public sphere of a cult that was originally aristocratic and tribal, perhaps that of the tribe to which Ostia belongs, the *Voturia*. The post of *pontifex* was held for life, as we know from the *Fasti* which record the death of the priests and the appointment of their successors; held by the most prominent citizens, including those of the senatorial class, the priesthood of Vulcan was the highest possible honour for an Ostian man. The *pontifex* was assisted, as we have said, by the two *praetores* and the two *aediles sacris Volcani faciundis*: each was also designated specifically as *primus* or *secundus*, indicating an order and perhaps a hierarchy. Unexpectedly, we find a mention of a *praetor tertius* in an inscription of the Antonine period, perhaps as a consequence of some exceptional event. They were appointed yearly by the *ordo*, and an inscription covering several slabs (which may have been displayed, unlike the *Fasti*, at the temple of Vulcan) preserves their annual registers at least until the late third century (the latest fragment to survive dates to 276 CE). The last known *pontifex Volcani* is of the period of the Tetrarchs, a time of intense religious revivalism, demonstrating the long survival (or resuscitation) of the priesthood; the updating of the priestly *Fasti* may be of this period. When their age is specified, they are young or very young, a sort of altar boys who must have assisted the *pontifex* in the ceremonies and played a role in processions and public festivals; we can assume that already in the first but particularly in the second century and after the conferral of this title must have been a clear indication of a very young man's future admission into the city's ruling elite.

Towards the outside, the formal representation of the colony nonetheless remained the prerogative of the city's most important magistrates, the *duoviri*; an inscription of the early Augustan period must have appeared on the base of a statue erected at public expense to a Gamala, four times *duumvir* and *tribunus militum, quod is causam coloniae publicam egit in senatu*, who had publicly pleaded (evidently successfully) the colony's case in the Roman senate during some unknown controversy. But in the middle imperial period it was the *patroni* who represented the interests of the city; these were prominent citizens or figures connected to the city, belonging to the upper classes, senatorians or equestrians, to whom the community turned to support the needs and requests of the colony with respect to the central power.

Prominent Families of Ostia

Olli Salomies

In presenting this overview of some of the most distinguished families of Ostia, I shall start with a few remarks on how to define "prominent" in dealing with families attested in Roman cities outside the capital, where special conditions obtained.

The upper class in a Roman city consisted normally of persons representing the following layers, starting from the lowest layer:

– Families whose members belonged to the city council (the *ordo decurionum*), whose members, normally around one hundred men, were called decurions (*decuriones*). In addition to just being a members of the council, ambitious and successful decurions also held magistracies which in Ostia in the first three centuries CE included the two annual *aediles* (the junior magistracy) and the two annual *duoviri*, replaced every five years with a duovirate with censorial authority consisting of two *duoviri censoria potestate quinquennales* and conferring special distinction; the highest distinction was, however, attained by those men who in addition to holding "secular" offices managed to get themselves elected to the priesthood of Vulcan (Ostia's patron deity) which was held for life by one person at a time. These local priests were known as *pontifices Volcani*.

– Families whose members were Roman knights (*equites Romani*), i.e. who belonged to the equestrian order (*ordo equester*), the second Roman order; most of these men, both in Ostia and elsewhere, simply had the rank of knight, but a minority chose to advance in their lives and to apply for posts requiring membership in the equestrian order either in the civil administration or in the army e.g. as procurators or prefects (of auxiliary units, etc.). In 1996, I identified forty-one Ostians of equestrian rank.[1]

– Families whose members belonged to the senatorial order; within this category, those families whose members reached the consulship surpassed in esteem families represented only by senators of lower rank, and among those who reached the consulship the "suffect" consuls (whose term as consuls began only in midyear) were less highly regarded than the two "ordinary" consuls of each year, whose term began on January 1 and after whom the whole year was named. After the consulship, many senators continued with their careers by holding "consular" posts e.g. as governors of large and prestigious provinces such as "Africa" (about modern Tunisia) or Syria. In 1996, I identified eleven persons or families of senatorial rank who originated, or at least may have originated from Ostia.[2]

Families prominent in their home towns can thus be identified by the existence in our sources of members belonging to the above categories, but there is also another clue to the standing of a family, namely the presence and numbers of freedmen and their descendants in the same towns, for well-to-do families manu-

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1 Salomies 1996, 115-17. For a knight known from an inscription published after 1996 note A. Fabius Fabianus, son of Aulus, *eques Romanus*, who died at the age of 22 (*AE* 2001, 668).

2 Salomies 1996, 70-76, to be used with Caldelli 2014, 585-97, also with a list of eleven, but excluding (585f.) the Plotii and adding the Republican Terpolii (592).

mitted large numbers of slaves who as freedmen took over the family name (e.g., *Egrilius* or *Sextius*) of their patrons and who thus can identified as being freedmen of a certain family on the basis of these names. For instance, the prominence of the family of the Egrilii is demonstrated not only by the many high positions held by members of the family, but also by the very large numbers of Egrilii of lower status found in Ostia, clearly freedmen or descendants of freedmen of the family.

Ostian notables of the imperial period are known almost exclusively from inscriptions, for after the Augustan age only two Ostians, Q. Egrilius Plarianus, consul in 144 CE, and C. Fabius Agrippinus, governor of Syria in 219 CE, are mentioned in literary sources; Plarianus appears in a letter of the contemporary author Cornelius Fronto addressed to Plarianus himself, in which he is praised as an eloquent, serious and wise man, whereas Agrippinus is mentioned by the historian Cassius Dio.[3] As for Ostian inscriptions, the inscriptions mentioning Ostian notables are, as elsewhere, often inscriptions on bases that once carried statues, now lost, of the same notables, but in Ostia there is also another epigraphical source of great importance, namely the Ostian chronicle, covering as preserved the years 49 BCE – 175 CE and known as the *Fasti Ostienses*; this chronicle, of which several important fragments still exist, mentions important events in Ostia and elsewhere, but also enumerates the Roman consuls and the Ostian *duoviri* for each year, thus offering us important information on the holders of the highest Ostian office.[4]

As Ostia was an important city, there were many Ostians and Ostian families who could be described as "prominent";[5] in this article I will concentrate on four Ostian families of especial interest. The most important Ostian family is without any doubt, especially if seen in the Ostian context, the family of the **Egrilii**.[6] As mentioned above, very many (more than one hundred) persons with the family name *Egrilius* and obviously freedmen and -women (or their descendants) of the local elite Egrilii are mentioned in the inscriptions of Ostia, this already indicating the prominence and wealth of the family. More importantly, members of the family, who in the earlier period are often called A(ulus) Egrilius Rufus, but who later often have the *cognomen* (third name) *Plarianus* as the result of the marriage of one Egrilius to a Plaria, also appear frequently in the lists of Ostian magistrates from the time of Augustus until the time of Hadrian: in the *Fasti Ostienses*, Egrilii are attested in high Ostian offices in 6, 15, 16, 17, 34, 36, 66, 106 and 126 CE. But there are also Egrilii known from other sources; the earliest member of the family who reached equestrian rank seems to have been A. Egrilius Rufus known from an inscription published in the 1950s,[7] according to which this man held, in addition to several Ostian offices to be dated to the seventies and eighties CE, a military tribunate in the Fifth legion called *Alaudae* stationed in Germany, a position requiring equestrian status. It was surely this Egrilius who was married to Plaria Vera, priestess of the "deified Augusta",[8] as the result of which the Egrilii started to use the *cognomen Plarianus*. The couple had at least two sons, both of whom attained senatorial rank; the elder, A. Egrilius Plarianus, became suffect consul in 128 CE, while the younger, known from many Ostian inscriptions and known to have held local offices, including the prestigious priesthood of Vulcan from 105 CE onwards, had to content himself with senatorial offices just below the consular level, no doubt around 130 CE. The name of this younger son, M. Acilius Priscus Egrilius Plarianus, a combination

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3 Fronto, *ad amicos* 1, 4; Cassius Dio, see n. 20.

4 See the editions of Vidman 1982 and Bargagli – Grosso 1997. See also Zevi's article in this volume.

5 For an overview see Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Zevi 2000.

6 See Meiggs 1973, 502-07; Salomies 1996, 72; Cébeillac-Gervasoni 2001, 158-59; Navarro Santana 2012; Caldelli 2014, 587-89.

7 *AE* 1955, 168.

8 *CIL* XIV 399.

which must be interpreted as meaning that this man was an Egrilius adopted by an Acilius, illustrates both Roman nomenclature in general and marriage alliances within the Ostian local nobility, for the adoptive father was surely M. Acilius Priscus, a prominent person who in the later first century held several Ostian offices including the priesthood of Vulcan, but also several equestrian military charges.[9] The senatorial fortunes of this family faded away with Q. Egrilius Plarianus, the only senatorial Ostian mentioned in a literary source (cf. above), suffect consul in 144 CE and 15 years later in 159 CE proconsul of Africa, a very high distinction; he is known to have his son with him as legate in the proconsulate of Africa, but this is the last we hear of Ostian Egrilii of senatorial rank.

Whereas the Egrilii, although attaining senatorial rank, seem to have kept a presence in general and a role in local politics in Ostia, things are quite different with another distinguished Ostian family, the **Sextii**,[10] for members of this family are not known to have held local Ostian offices later than in 36 CE (see below), and low-class Sextii, reflecting manumissions of slaves by members of the senatorial family, do not appear very often in Ostian inscriptions. This may well mean that the activities of the family had started to gravitate towards the capital. Seeing that the Sextii were the only Ostian family which could boast of members who attained "ordinary" consulships (see above) and of marriage alliances with members of ancient patrician families, that would not be too remarkable. The first known member of this family of some prominence was T. Sextius, governor of Africa in the late forties BCE; this governorship was celebrated in the family by the introduction of the *cognomen Africanus*, held by several members of the family. Another *cognomen* used by the Sextii was *Lateranus* which must have been chosen in order to imply descendance, of doubtful credibility, of the Ostian Sextii from L. Sextius Lateranus, the first Roman consul of plebeian status who had held the consulate in a very distant past in 366 BCE. The next known Sextius is T. Sextius Africanus, a senator who only held minor magistracies, but who, in 36 CE, held the Ostian censorial duovirate. His sister Sextia moved in higher circles, for she is known to have been married to two men who belonged to the highest aristocracy, consisting of descendants of Republican patricians, first to a Cornelius Sulla, descendant of the dictator Sulla, and after his death to Aemilius Scaurus, consul in 21 CE. The social rise of the family may be reflected by the fact that a son of Africanus, *duovir* in 36 CE, also called T. Sextius Africanus, reached the (suffect) consulate under Nero, in 59 CE, starting a series of consular Sextii who from the consul of 94 CE onwards all held not just "suffect", but "ordinary" consulships in 94, 112, 154 and 197 CE. The high status of family is illustrated by the fact that the consul of 112 CE, T. Sextius Africanus, had as his consular colleague none other than the emperor Trajan himself, and the consul of 154, called T. Sextius Lateranus, the future emperor Lucius Verus, the imperial colleague of Marcus Aurelius. Since 2005 it is known that the consul of 112 CE also had a second family name, *Cornelius*,[11] which probably means that his father (surely identical with the consul of 94 CE) had married a Cornelia; because of the prominence of the family is seems virtually certain that this lady was member of the noble Cornelii, descendants of Republican patricians.

Another family whose name is not found often among members of Ostian lower classes, and which therefore may have been based outside central Ostia, but which was able to produce members with an exceptional role in Ostian life (although not a seat in the Roman senate), are the **Lucilii Gamalae**, representants of which family are attested between the late Republican or the early Augustan period and the middle of the second century CE.[12] A Lucilius Gamala known from an inscription of the early imperial period published

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9 *AE* 1955, 169. A daughter of this man, Egrilia Plaria, is known from the inscription *AE* 1969/70, 87b.

10 See Salomies 1996, 74-75; Caldelli 2014, 591-92.

11 *AE* 2005, 1737.

12 See Meiggs 493-502; Cébeillac-Gervasoni 2001, 154-55; Manzini 2014.

in 1959[13] is said in the inscription to have been a military tribune (and thus a knight), to have held the duovirate four times and to have "pleaded the cause of the colony [i.e., Ostia] in the Roman senate", and there are also other prominent Lucilii. However, they are all surpassed by the two Lucilii Gamalae who are known from two famous inscriptions, both small but wordy and apparently originating from a private funerary monument of the Gamalae in Portus.[14] The later one can be approximately dated, as it includes a mention of the emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161 CE) as already deceased; the date of the inscription, now lost, of the earlier Gamala has been a matter of controversy on account of a number of details mentioned in the text but especially because the mention of a "naval war" (*bellum navale*) to the costs of which this particular Gamala is said to have contributed; this "war" has been identified with various naval engagements from the sixties BCE to the early Augustan period. However, it seems preferable to interpret "naval war" here as a show, a mock naval battle arranged in the harbour of Ostia, and the inscription can in my view not be earlier than, say, the twenties BCE.[15] In any case, both inscriptions have a peculiar structure for which there are no parallels elsewhere in the Roman world and mention unsually large numbers of benefactions; according to the inscription of the earlier Gamala, the man had, in addition to holding various offices, for instance built or restored several temples (among them those of Ceres, Fortuna, Venus and Vulcan), had paved a street and had offered public meals to his fellow Ostians, for which benefactions he had been honoured with both a gilded and a bronze statue and a public funeral. The younger Gamala who lived in the second century CE also held a number of offices and offered various benefactions to his fellow citizens, these including the restoration of several buildings, for instance the temples of Castor and Pollux and Venus, a dockyard and baths recently built by the emperor Pius but destroyed in a fire, for which benefactions he was honoured with a bronze statue (the inscription, which may have mentioned further honours, breaks off after this passage).

An eminent Ostian family rising into prominence only from around 100 CE onwards is that of the **Fabii Agrippae** and **Agrippini**.[16] The earliest member of this family, whose name is well represented among the Ostian lower classes, is C. Fabius Agrippa who held several local offices in the early second century; the inscription in which he is mentioned,[17] which is either honorific or sepulchral, is notable inasmuch it mentions his ancestors up to his great-greatgrandfather, a certain C. Grattius, who must have been active not later than the the time of Augustus. According to the same inscription, his grandfather and father, both called Fabius Longus, were both *primipilares*, i.e. senior centurions in the Roman army. Although this is not mentioned in the inscription which is fragmentary in the end, Agrippa may already have been a member of the equestrian order, for that would help to explain that C. Fabius Agrippinus, surely his son, was already a member of the senatorial order. This Agrippinus is known from a fragmentary inscription in his honour,[18] published partly in the 1950s and partly only in 2007 and found in a building which may well have been the residence of the Fabii (cf. below). This inscription enumerates Agrippinus' senatorial career, which included a quaestorship in the province of Cyprus, up to his praetorship in c. 140 CE. But from other sources we learn that Agrippinus then became governor of the province of Thrace, covering what are now parts of modern Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, and then, in 148, (suffect) consul. Whereas further, consular offices are not attested for this man, another C. Fabius Agrippinus, who seems to have been the consul's grandson

13 *AE* 1959, 254.

14 *CIL* XIV 375 (about Augustan) and 376 (2nd century after 161 CE).

15 Salomies 2003.

16 See Salomies 1996, 73; Zevi 2014; Caldelli 2014, 589-91; Bocherens 2018.

17 *CIL* XIV 349.

18 *AE* 2007, 303.



Figure 1. The honorary statue of the *duovir* Gaius Cartilius Poplicola in the Temple of Hercules. Poplicola was one of the most prominent citizens of Ostia in the first century BCE. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

or great-grandson,[19] is known to have been the commander of the First legion, called *Minervia* and stationed in Bonn, in 211 CE and later, after having held a suffect consulate in c. 215, the governor of the prestigious province of Syria until 219 CE, when he was murdered by order of the then emperor Heliogabalus.[20] This may explain the absence of further senators from this family and the fact that what seems to have been its Ostian residence, a building now known as the "*Schola* of Trajan", was in about this period converted into the offices either of an Ostian guild[21] or of the corn supply authorities.[22]

19 Thus Bocherens 2018, 290.

20 Cass. Dio 80, 3, 4.

21 Thus Bocherens – Zevi 2007, 269.

22 Thus Bocherens 2018.

The Population of Ostia: Composition and Working Activities, an Analysis of Inscriptions

Antonio Licordari

Ostia's epigraphic legacy consists of about 9600 documents (not counting brick stamps, lead pipes and rough marble blocks, whose study presents distinct problems and whose impact on onomastics is lesser and different): a large enough quantity to make Ostia the second most important city for epigraphy after Rome and before Aquileia, which has only about 4000 texts.

The vast majority of the inscriptions are in Latin, with only 2.5% in Greek. However, despite this low percentage, the Greek epigraphic legacy is fairly substantial in absolute terms (240 inscriptions, a quarter of which are unpublished).

An initial consideration is statistical in nature: if we accept the hypothesis that Ostia's population numbered 40,000/50,000 inhabitants and that of Rome 800,000/1,000,000, Ostia would be 1/20th the size of Rome, whilst for the inscriptions we have a ratio of 1:7. Ostia has thus provided us with three times as many inscriptions as Rome in proportion to its population.

A series of favourable circumstances also allows us to determine the area of provenance of the Ostian materials with a fair degree of precision, in other words going beyond a mere indication of the city and in many cases even allowing us to specify in which building the discovery was made. However, it is sufficient here to distinguish between at least the following areas: Ostia (74.4% of the documents, with a clear preponderance of regions I and II), Via Laurentina (3.9%), Pianabella (5.4%), Basilica di Sant'Ippolito (3%), Isola Sacra (5.5%), Portus (7.6%).

The richness of the epigraphic legacy results in a corresponding wealth of names: we have been able to count just over 15,000.[1] Returning to the hypothesis of a population of around 40,000 people and calculating average life span as around forty years, we can say that in the first three centuries of the empire roughly 300,000/350,000 individuals passed through Ostia. We know of 1/25 of them, in other words a sample of 4%. Obviously, this is not a probability sample, to use a statistical term: it was not selected with adequate sampling techniques and its accuracy is thus somewhat debatable. However, considering that at present electoral exit polls are based on samples of a thousand individuals, or one in ten thousand, we can say that to some extent the size of the sample makes up for this statistical shortcoming.

A preliminary division by sex gives us 11,050 males and 3600 females. However, 3300 male names come from the guild registers, where the female component consists of just 14 individuals.

We know the age at death of only 948 inhabitants, making it easy to calculate an average age of 19.5. This is a distressing figure, barely higher than the 16.6 calculated by Kajanto for Isola Sacra alone,[2] and we must

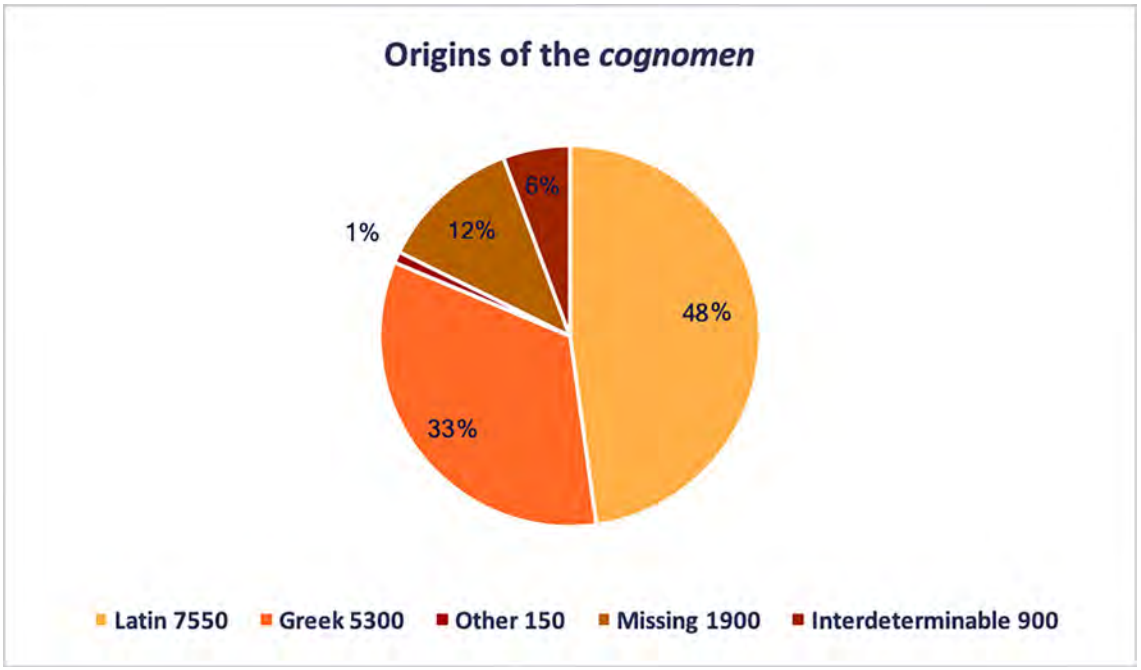
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1 As a general rule I have chosen to round all figures to the nearest fifty.

2 Kajanto 1968, 4.

therefore ask ourselves if this is because age was indicated more frequently for children for affective reasons and the greater ease of remembering their date of birth, or whether there are other reasons. In any case, this method of calculation turns out to be less than satisfactory, as also shown by another consideration: we know of over 3000 names thanks to the registers of professional associations. Their members had to be adults, let us say between thirty and forty. Though methodologically unsound, including these values in the calculations would by itself raise the average age to at least 31/32.

The first working tool available for a study of the ethnic composition of the population is the *cognomen*, which can very approximately be taken as an indicator of its possessor's origins. Of the aforementioned 15,000 names, about 13,000 certainly had a *cognomen* (for the others it is impossible to establish with certainty whether they lacked one or whether it was lost, which is far more probable). This means that we have 7550 individuals with an etymologically Latin *cognomen*, 5300 with a Greek *cognomen* and 150 from other linguistic areas.[3]

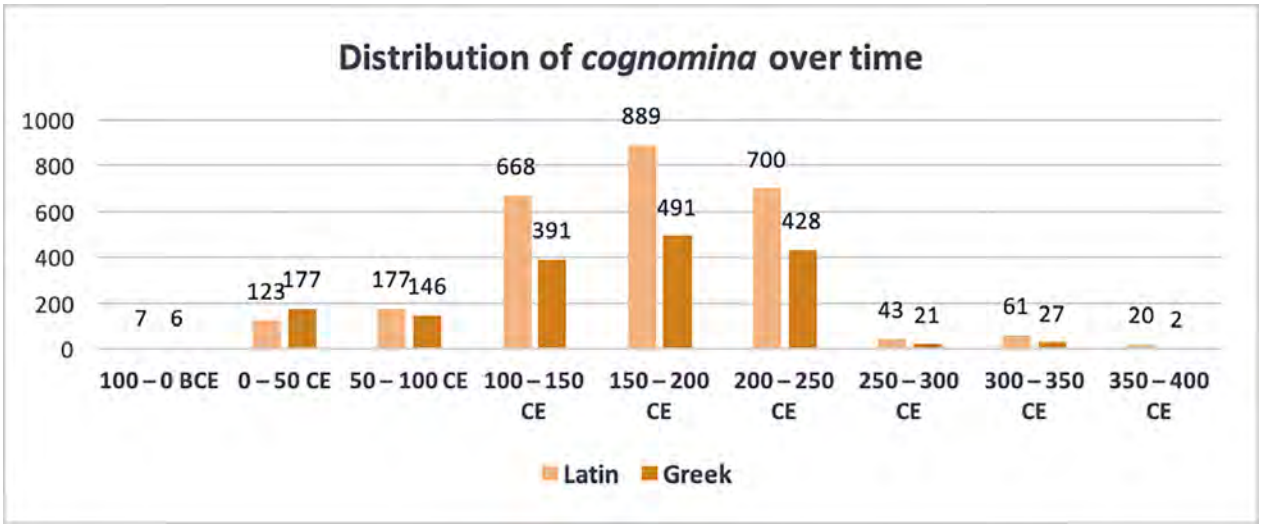


The Latin/Greek ratio is 58.8% to 41.2% and remains constant at both Ostia and Portus. Not counting Rome, the Greek presence is among the highest in the ancient world. It is easy to link this closely to the fact that these are two port settlements that were naturally open to commercial exchanges.

However, we also know that the etymological origin of the *cognomen* coincides only in part with ethnic origin: while a Greek *cognomen* can be associated with an origin from the eastern part of the empire, the same is not true for Latin *cognomina*, which may conceal different provenances. There is little reason to retain this simple Latin/Greek opposition since more recent research tools make more refined analyses possible. About a third of the names under discussion here can be dated with a good degree of precision, thanks both to elements within the inscription and the connection with the monument to which it belonged, and the presence of specific naming formulas and so forth. This shows that the pattern is less straightforward

[3] These *cognomina* certainly include some doubtful names, erroneous readings etc., that further reduce their number. For this reason, and given their very low proportion of the total, which gives them a merely residual importance, they are of little use for statistical purposes.

than it initially seemed. Whilst in the late Republican period and the first century of the imperial period (1st century BCE to 1st century CE) the Greek element appears slightly dominant, in the following centuries Latin becomes clearly prevalent. To follow the teachings of Heikki Solin[4] we should remember that after the end of the intense period of trade in eastern slaves, the practice of giving Greek names to slaves persisted, regardless of their ethnic origin, especially among the more educated and wealthy classes. This phenomenon is known both at Rome and at Ostia. In conclusion, however, in this cosmopolitan city Latin names are less numerous than we might expect.



The epigraphic data should thus be cross-referenced with other information; doing so shows that one of the largest ethnic groups must have been that from North Africa (provinces of Africa, Numidia, Mauretania). We can reach this conclusion based not just on the onomastic evidence (specific *gentilicia* and suffixes of the *cognomen*), but also information of other types: religious (the presence of cults typical of that area) and commercial (in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni North African *stationes* such as Carthage, Syllectum, Sabratha (**Fig. 1**), Gummi prevail).[5]

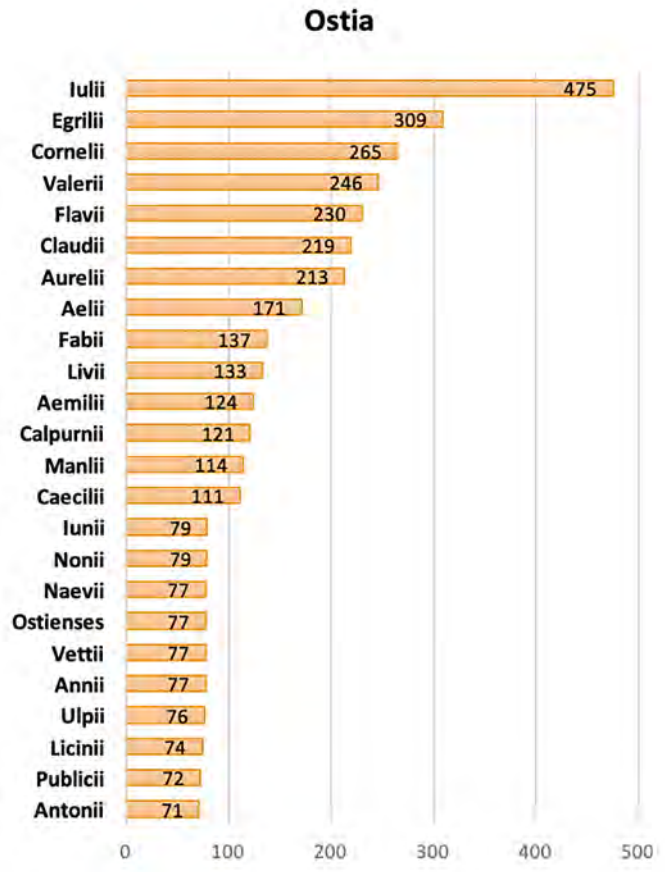
Another way of improving our understanding of Ostia's population is to pay greater attention to the *gentilicium* which, given its transmissibility, allows us to investigate not just single individuals but also family groups extended to include all the freedmen of the *gens*.

We have thus created two tables showing the situation at Ostia and Portus: at Ostia there is a marked presence of *gentes* of local origin or Republican tradition; at Portus, a settlement that developed starting from the 1st century AD, the seven most common names are *gentilicia* typical of the imperial house, indicating a population of more modest social status with numerous individuals of slave or freedman origin.

We should also add that almost 800 *gentilicia* are documented at Ostia, of which about 300 with just a single attestation. At Portus there are just over 300 *gentilicia*, of which roughly half are attested once; however, the significance of these numbers is relative. Some inscriptions may report a single name several times. Many *gentilicia* are exclusive to Ostia and have hitherto not been found elsewhere; they include *Mesulenus*, *Murredius*, *Nerulanus, Nungulanius*.

4 Solin 1971.

5 Cébeillac-Gervasoni 1996, 557-67.


Ostia
Iulii 475
Egrilii 309
Cornelii 265
Valerii 246
Flavii 230
Claudii 219
Aurelii 213
Aelii 171
Fabii 137
Livii 133
Aemilii 124
Calpurnii 121
Manlii 114
Caecilii 111
Iunii 79
Nonii 79
Naevii 77
Ostienses 77
Vettii 77
Annii 77
Ulpii 76
Licinii 74
Publicii 72
Antonii 71
0 100 200 300 400 500

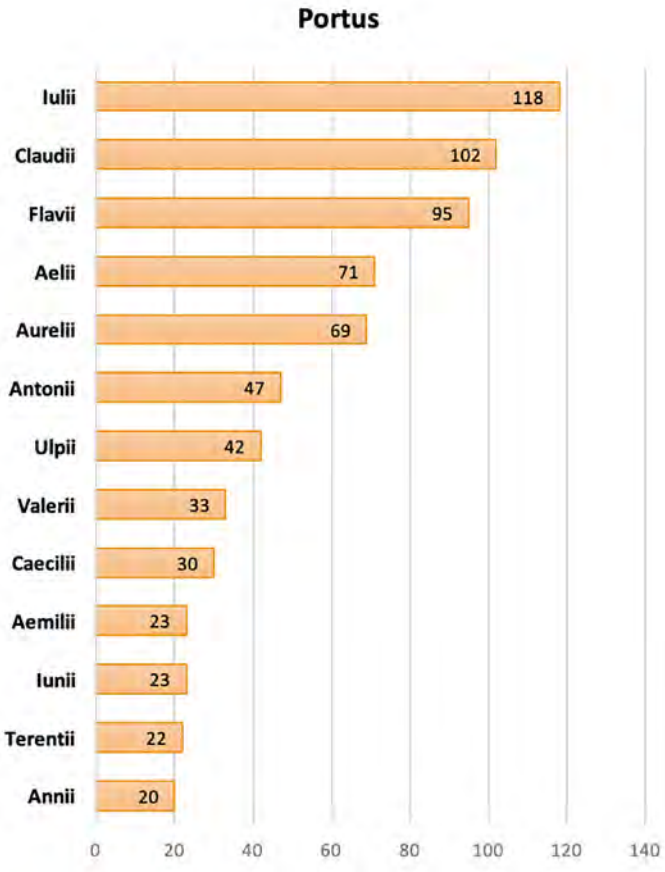

Portus
Iulii 118
Claudii 102
Flavii 95
Aelii 71
Aurelii 69
Antonii 47
Ulpii 42
Valerii 33
Caecilii 30
Aemilii 23
Iunii 23
Terentii 22
Annii 20
0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140



Figure 1. The *statio* of Sabratha with the name of the city and a representation of an elephant. Piazzale delle Corporazioni, *statio* no. 14. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Fairly frequent are the *gentilicia* ending in *-enus*, considered typical of the Picene area (*Atilenus, Aufidenus, Cassienus, Catienus, Domitienus, Galvenus, Labienus, Lorenus, Mesulenus, Pontulenus, Sariolenus, Statulenus, Tettienus*), confirming the already intense commercial relations with the Adriatic Sea.

The *gentilicia* derived from the name of a professional association such as *Pistorius*, *Rusticelius*, *Vinarius* indicate a connection with this sphere; their scarcity can be explained by the fact that they indicated all too clearly the humble origins of these people. By contrast, *gentilicia* such as *Publicius* or *Ostiensis* indicating an original status as slaves in the service of the city are widespread.

The overall impression is that we are dealing with an extremely varied population and this is confirmed by an examination of the guild registers which alone provide over half of the *gentilicia* with a single attestation (160 out of 300).

The world of work revolved around the professional associations, though we have a substantial number of attestations for traditional jobs performed on an individual basis. As concerns the associations, it is well known that the Roman ruling class long remained suspicious of them, probably because they involved meetings of members who usually belonged to the lower classes of the population, often perceived as a potential threat to law and order and as an instrument of political struggles outside the institutional context. For this reason, during the Republican period and up to the early empire, the associations were subjected to rigorous prohibitions and severe restrictions. A limited tolerance was granted only to a very few professional associations established in remote antiquity whose role was recognized as being of public utility (*centonari*, *fabri*, *dendrophori*, habitually charged with putting out fires; but at Ostia this task was performed by the *vexillationes* of the *vigiles*). A further obstacle to the establishment of a professional

association was the permission of the Senate, the granting of which was expressed by the formula *quibus ex S(enatus) c(onsulto) coire licet*.

The situation changed first under Claudius and later under Trajan, the two port-building emperors, who were immediately faced with the problem of ensuring the regularity of supplies.

At this time, the imperial administration saw the professional associations as an institution with positive potential that might help to run the *annona*, in part because the organization into guilds (in other words members joined in groups bound by mutual responsibility) provided greater legal guarantees that contracts would be respected and duties fulfilled. The associations thus helped to ensure the smooth running of the system, guaranteeing the constant arrival and distribution of the foodstuffs destined for Rome. We know of around forty such associations, operational at Ostia and Portus and, most frequently, active in the sector of maritime trade and commerce (loading and unloading of goods from larger ships, ship repair and supply of on-board equipment, recovery of the cargo from wrecks), and in connecting the two banks of the Tiber. The latter task involved as many as four associations with private docks (*traiectus Luculli*, *traiectus Rusticeli*), one of which – given its name (*traiectus marmorariorum*) – specialized in the transport of marbles. Their full inclusion in the public administrative system is confirmed by the numerous dedications set up in honour of the emperor or of high functionaries, especially the *praefectus annonae*, not counting the close relations with influential figures of the senatorial class, whose support was ensured by the conferral of patronage.

Between a quarter and a fifth of the known names are provided by the guild registers. The professional associations periodically drew up lists of members. About 175 of these registers, more or less substantial and, now, more or less fragmentary, are attested, distributed between the 1st and 3rd century. Alone they provide 2900 names at Ostia (the largest has 328 names, *CIL* XIV 247) and 450 at Portus (as many as 354 from a single inscription, *CIL* XIV 256). They are drawn up in accordance with a standardized scheme: at the top the consular date, in the following lines the title of the association, followed by the names of members arranged in columns. In the first column on the left are the names of the patrons, in the second and/or third the principal functionaries (*quinquennalicii*, *quinquennales*, *honorati*), in the other columns the *plebs* (**Fig. 2**), or ordinary members. Since we have several registers of different periods for some associations, we can trace their internal development and see that these documents recorded members in order of seniority. The subsequent register, drawn up perhaps about fifteen years later, eliminated the deceased members, moved those who remained up and added the new members at the bottom.

The presence of large empty spaces in the lower part of the register and the involvement of different hands in the inscribing suggest that some associations preferred to leave the lists open so they could be continually updated. It is thus not certain that the list of members, as we read it, corresponded to the actual membership of the association on the consular date given at the top of the document. Those registers that can be dated with certainty, around twenty in total, cover the period between 135 and 262, whilst the number of members ranges from about twenty for the smallest associations to over 300 for the largest.

The lists of members included freeborn men, but also former slaves. Professional associations do not seem to have been environments that encouraged significant social integration, as only in rare instances do they record the presence of *peregrini*, in other words freeborn men without Roman citizenship: 12 in total, 9 of which in Ostia (in two different registers) and 3 at Portus (one register). However, it is worth noting that one of the inscriptions from Ostia was found in the temple almost certainly home to the guild of the *fabri navales* (ship-builders), a building probably dating to the time of Commodus that stands on the right-hand side of the Decumanus Maximus (coming from Rome) after the Forum and Via della Foce. The other

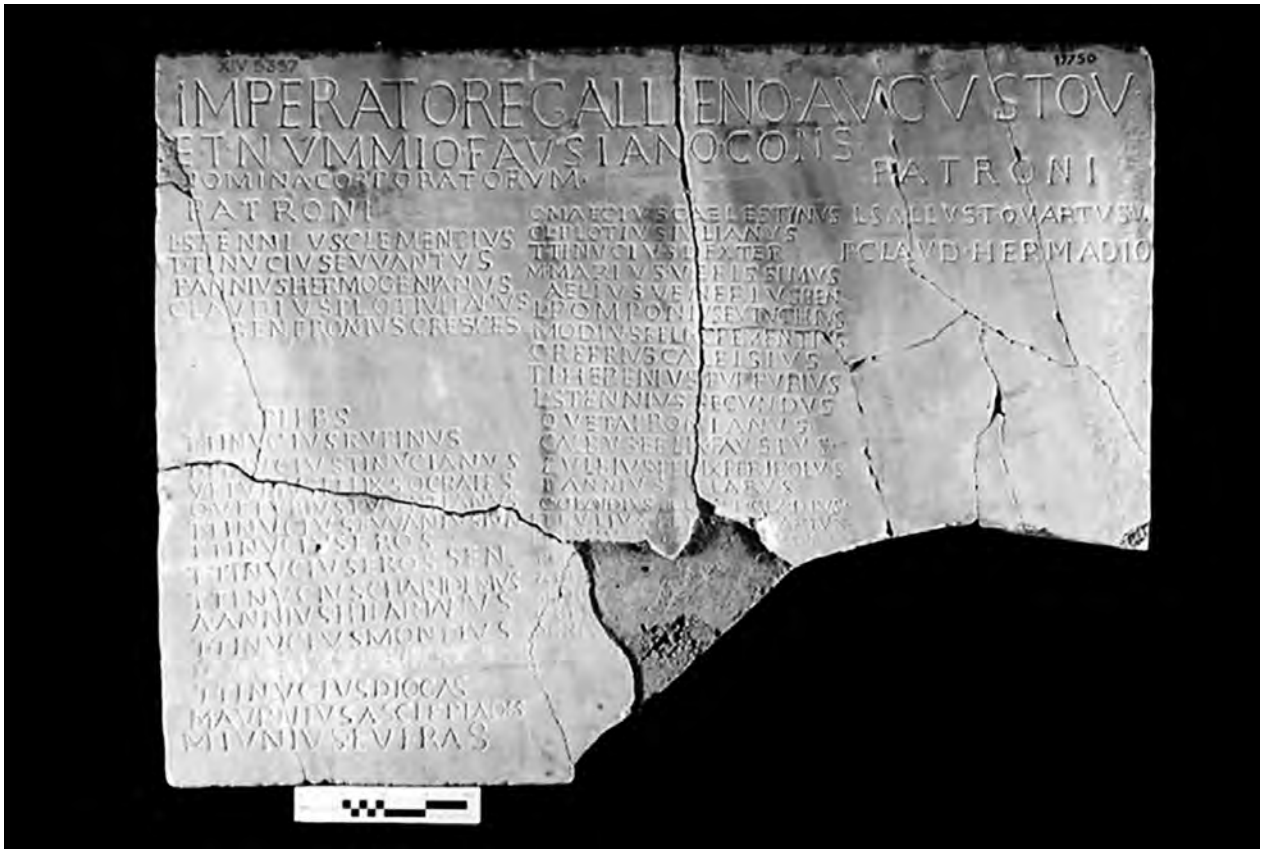


Figure 2. *CIL* XIV, 5357. A list of the members of a *collegium*: at the top the consular date, 262 CE, the consulate of Emperor Gallienus and Nummius Fausianus. Below are the names of the consuls in the first column on the left and in the column on the right are the names of the patrons, *patroni*. In the lowermost column on the left are the names of the members, *plebs*. Ostia Lapidario, inv. 19750. Photo: Antonio Licordari.

inscription is similar in the arrangement of the names, distributed over the faces of a parallelepiped block, something not found in the registers of any other association.

Membership of an association was not a mere formality; the insistence with which the offices held are listed, the care taken to periodically draw up and publish the lists of members shows that, during the imperial period or at least that part of it that we traditionally use as the basis for our research (1st–3rd century), the participation of members was sincere and active, with a clear sense of identity and belonging to the association.

The Local and the Global: the Use of Formulae in the Epitaphs at Ostia

Lynne Bennett and Ray Laurence

Ostia's epigraphic 'signature'

To understand the inscriptions found in one city, we need to establish its epigraphic 'signature' so that we can compare its 'signature' with that of other cities. In order to establish an epigraphic signature, we need to identify features of an inscription which are found and repeated in hundreds of other inscriptions. The current study is based on an analysis of frequently used formulae in epitaphs according to a number of variables set out below.[1] The epitaphs from Ostia containing the most frequently used formulae are an ideal collection for establishing an epigraphic signature.[2] Examples of these formulae can be found in one of the inscriptions in the exhibition.[3]

Establishing an epigraphic signature for Ostia is particularly useful when we are thinking about the effects of mobility and migration on funerary commemoration in a city. There is a vast amount of evidence that there was an ethnically diverse and mobile population in Ostia.[4] Epigraphic evidence of all types attests to a cosmopolitan trading community within the city; which was prosperous and consisted of communities from around the Roman World connected by a shared culture and sustained contact with communities overseas.[5] The inscriptions in the mosaics within the *stationes* of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni are a particularly rich source of evidence for this, indicating merchants from cities throughout North Africa, from Gaul and from Sardinia. But does this influence how people were commemorated on tombstones?

In order to establish the epigraphic signature of Ostia, we will assess a number of variables. These are frequency of:

- individual formulae;
- numbers of formulae per epitaph;
- combinations of formulae in the same epitaph;
- use of abbreviations in formulae; and
- overall length of the epitaph.

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1 This article is based on research conducted for Lynne Bennett's unpublished PhD thesis *Global patterns of commemoration in Roman epitaphs: a quantitative spatial analysis of the most common formulae* (University of Kent, 2020).

2 There are a large number of surviving epitaphs and in terms of the current study the number of inscriptions in the city (n=1966) is second only to Rome. Once we have determined the epigraphic signature of Ostia, we will be able to compare it with other cities, particularly those with which it has close connections.

3 The inscription on the cinerary urn dedicated to Larcius Felix by his wife includes two common formulae: *Dis Manibus* and *bene merenti*. This epitaph, on a cinerary urn was set up by Attia Tryphosa to her husband Caius Larcius Felix. Translated it reads: To the Spirits of the Dead. Attia Tryphosa made this for her well deserving husband Caius Larcius Felix. The two formulae included here are frequent in epitaphs across Rome and Italy. For more information on the epitaph and its context, see Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Mimmo – Bruno 2018.

4 For use of skeletal material to establish origin, see Prowse *et al*. 2007 and Bruun 2010. For studies of onomastics and mobility, see Salomies 2002. For a discussion of mobility and migration more generally, see Woolf 2016.

5 Van der Ploeg 2017.

Table 1 provides a list of the formulae used in Ostian epitaphs including frequencies of use and how these compare with use of the formula across the full dataset. This highlights a number of differences. Some formulae are more popular at Ostia than they are across the database of 104,007 Latin epitaphs. For instance, the most frequently used formula is *Dis Manibus* (to the spirits of the dead) and this is used in 70% of inscriptions at Ostia, but in only 41% globally. *In fronte…in agro,* (in frontage … in depth …) referring to the dimensions of a burial plot, is found in 13% of epitaphs at Ostia but in only 5% of epitaphs globally. In comparison, *vixit annos/annis* (lived x years), referring to length of life, is used in over half of all inscriptions in the database but in only just over a third of inscriptions at Ostia; and *Dis Manibus Sacrum* (sacred to the spirits of the dead) is only found in 2% of inscriptions in Ostia whereas it is used in 18% globally. Other formulae rarely used in Ostia are: *Hic situs est* (here lies); *Sit tibi terra levis* (may the earth lie lightly on you); *plus minus* (more or less); and *ossa tibi bene quiescant* (may your bones rest well). The latter is never found at Ostia or Portus and only in fourteen epitaphs in Rome.

These results are indicative of geographic variation in use of funerary formulae across the Roman world particularly for those formulae which show frequent use in the database, but which are rare in Ostia.[6] The majority of epitaphs in Ostia and Campania include a restricted number of formulae (see **Fig. 2**). Epitaphs in other parts of the Roman world, however, frequently use formulae such as *Dis Manibus Sacrum* and *Hic situs est* which are rare in Ostia and most other cities in Campania.

Table 1

Formula	**Abbreviation**	**Translation**	**Ostia**	**% at Ostia n=1966**	**Total**	**% of total n=104,007**
Dis Manibus	DM	To the spirits of the dead	1367	70%	42,140	41%
Vixit Annos	VA	Lived x Years	713	36%	54,963	53%
Bene Merenti	BM	Well deserving	508	26%	20,125	19%
In Fronte … In Agro…	IN AG.....IN FR	In frontage … in depth …	257	13%	5,499	5%
Libertis Libertabusque Posterisque Eorum	LLPQE	For the freedmen and freedwomen and their descendants	200	10%	2,380	2%
Dis Manibus Sacrum	DMS	Sacred to the spirits of the dead	44	2%	18,588	18%
Hoc Monumentum Heredem Non Sequetur	HMHNS	This tomb does not pass to the heir	28	1%	943	1%
Hic Situs (Sita) Est	HSE	Here lies	11	1%	20,125	19%
Plus minus	PM	More or less (relating to age)	8	0%	1,805	2%
Sit Tibi Terra Levis	STTL	May the earth lie lightly on you	6	0%	4,059	4%
Ossa Tibi Bene Quiescant	OTBQ	May your bones rest well	0	0%	1053	1%

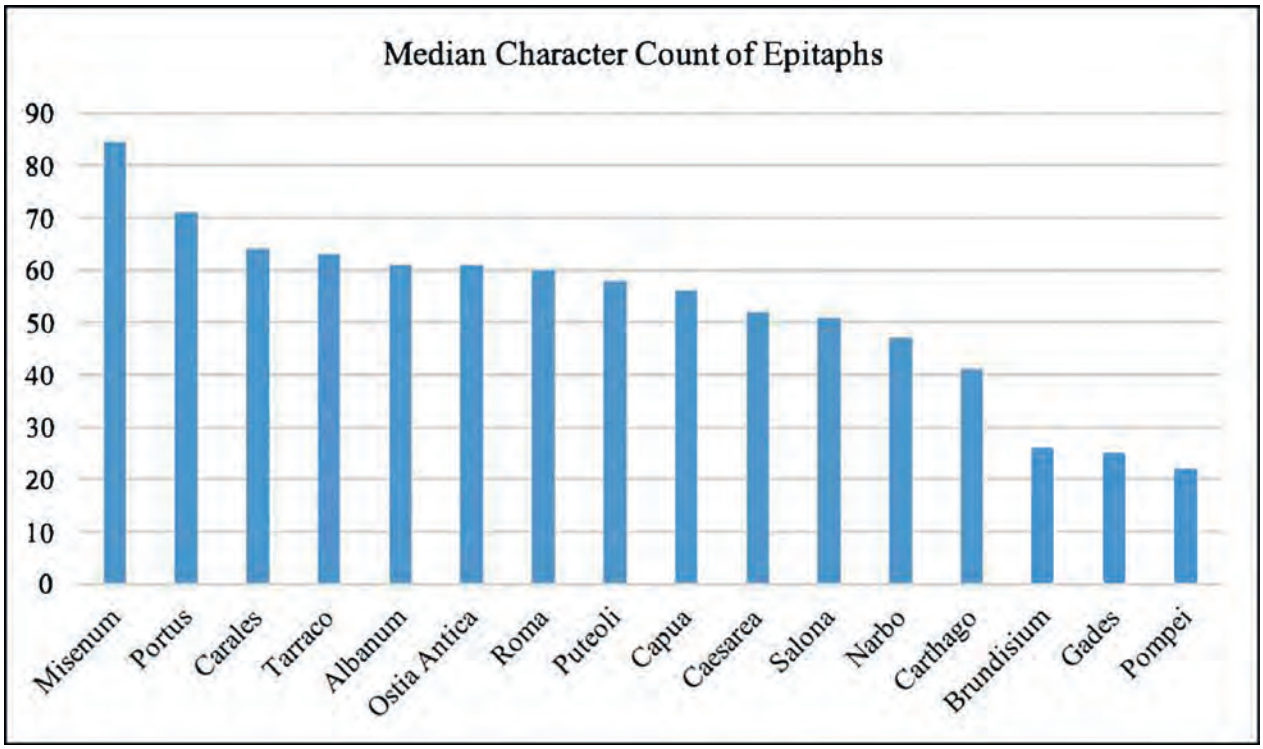
Another variable to consider, alongside that of the words, is the length of the inscribed text (see **Fig. 1**).[7] Ostia and Rome have a similar median at around 60 characters whereas Portus has a higher median character count (71). Cities in Latium are +/-5 characters of this except for Pompeii which only has 22 characters and

6 For a discussion of regionalism in epigraphic formulae, see Carroll 2006, 133-34.

7 This can be measured using character count although this will vary according to the message of the epitaph, the number of names listed within the epitaph and the use of abbreviations. For this analysis, median length for a city was chosen over the average to avoid problems associated with very long and very short inscriptions distorting the data.

Misenum which has a much higher median at 85. Cities such as Tarraco and Carales are within this +/-5 window and Caesarea is just outside. However, Carthage, Brundisium and Gades have a much lower median, suggestive of shorter inscriptions.

Figure 1



Ostia compared to Other Cities in Italy and the Western Mediterranean

Figures 2 and **3** set the use of formulae in Ostia in the context of other cities in Latium and Campania and other port cities in the Mediterranean. **Figure 2** indicates that most cities in the region of Rome are using the same formulae in their epitaphs although the proportions often vary. Ostia has a profile very similar to that of Portus and Rome. The exception to this is Capua which indicates a higher use of DMS and HSE in its epitaphs. **Figure 3** however, illustrates a very different pattern. Although some port cities, such as Tarraco (Hispania Citerior) and Salona (Dalmatia), demonstrate a pattern similar to Ostia and Portus; cities in North Africa and Baetica are very different. Misenum (Campania) and Barcino (Hispania Citerior) use similar formulae to Ostia in their epitaphs, but differences can be seen in their use of VA and, in the case of Barcino and Tarraco, a slight increase in the use of HSE. The port cities which indicate a very different epigraphic profile to Ostia are: Caesarea (Mauretania Caesariensis), Brundisium (Apulia et Calabria), Carthage (Africa Proconsularis) and Gades (Baetica). All these cities show a much higher use of HSE and, in the case of Gades and Caesarea, a higher use of the formula STTL and a preference for using DMS over DM. Interestingly, Narbo uses the formula IFIA in much higher proportions than either Ostia, Portus, or Rome indicating a strong preference for measuring out the plot size of a tomb or monument.

Figure 2

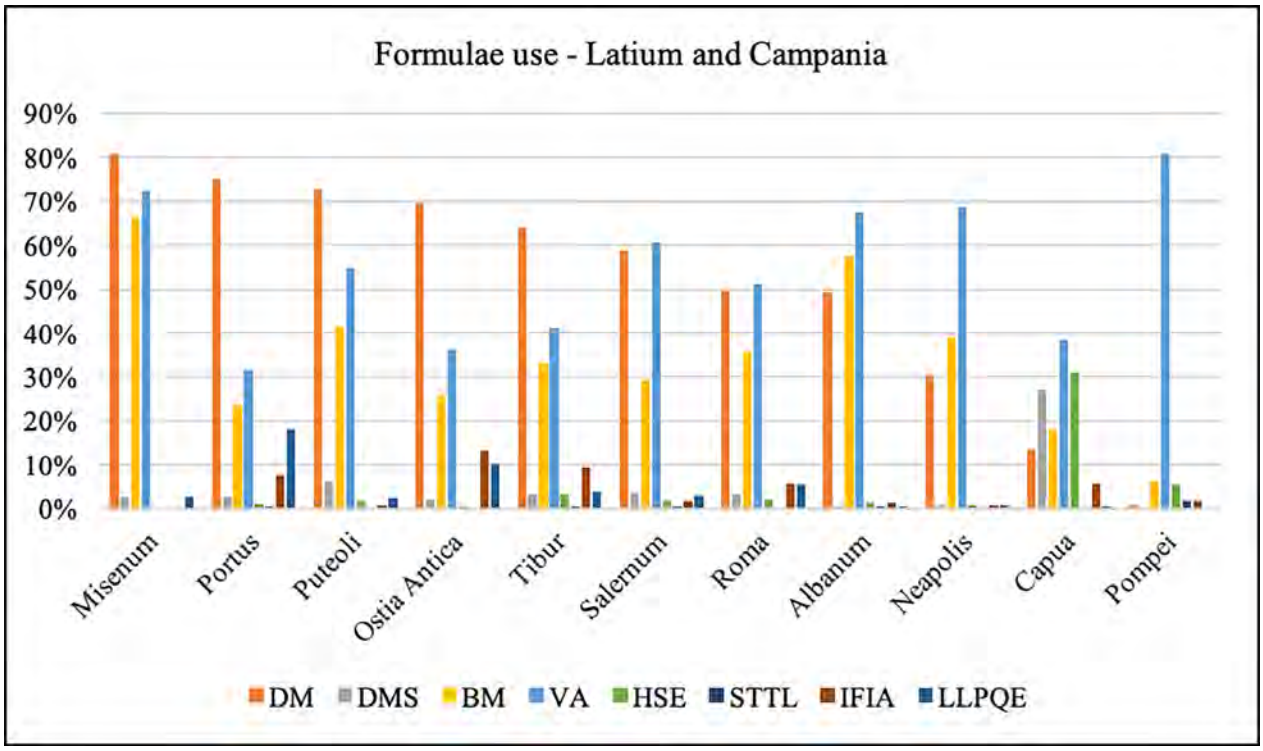
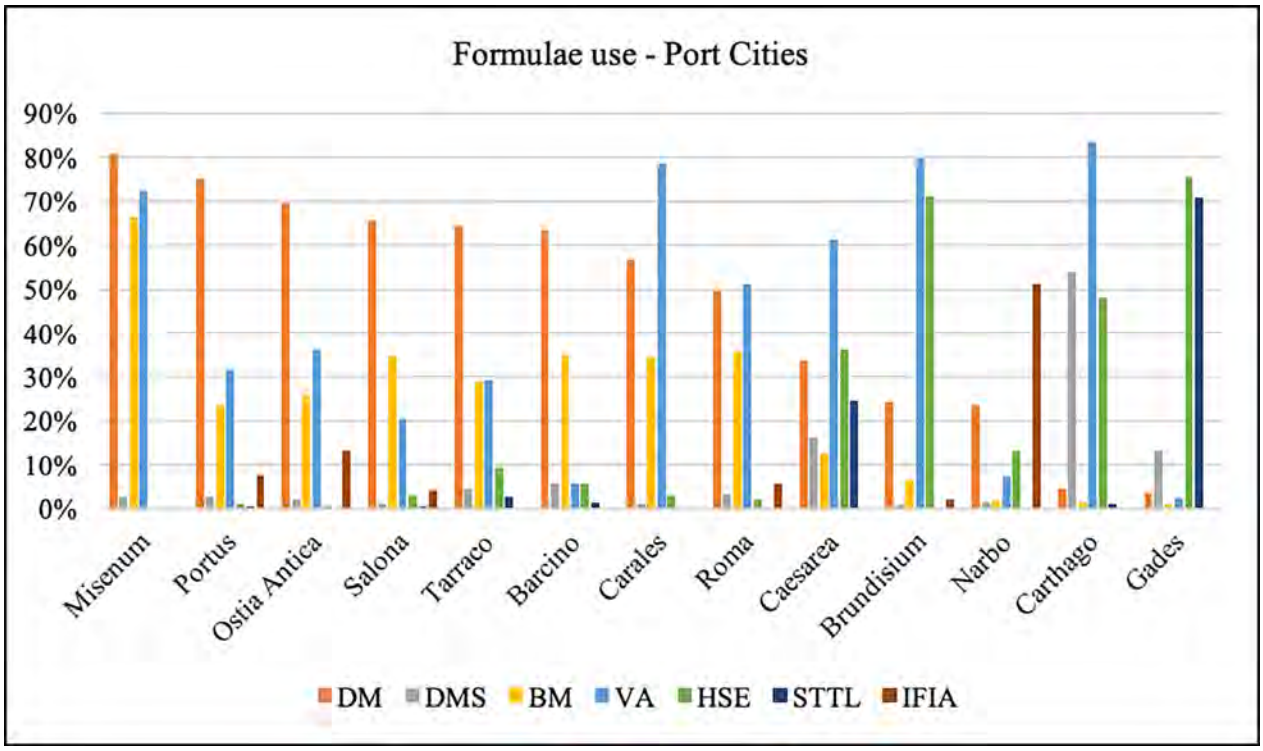


Figure 3



A similar geographical variation appears when we examine the data to see how many formulae are used in a single inscription. **Figure 4** shows that Ostia and Portus prefer to use one formula rather than two in their epitaphs, whereas Puteoli (Campania) and Brundisium (Apulia), Carales (Sardinia) and Caesarea (Mauretania Caesariensis), prefer two. Carthage (Africa Proconsularis) and Misenum (Campania) prefer using three.

Interestingly we can see that whereas most cities in Italy have a preference for one to two formulae, some cities such as Brundisium and Misenum have a preference for a higher number, a pattern popular in Spain and North Africa. We can also see that the North African pattern of using a higher number of formulae occurs more frequently in Africa Proconsularis, than it does in Mauretania Caesariensis.

However, the pattern is slightly more complicated once we examine exactly which combinations of formulae the cities are using (**Fig. 5**). Ostian inscriptions contain the same combinations as Rome and Portus, whereas Puteoli and Misenum prefer a three-formula combination; Caesarea (Mauretania Caesariensis) uses a wider range of combinations, whereas Carthage (Africa Proconsularis) indicates a strong preference for one combination namely DMSVAHSE.

Figure 4

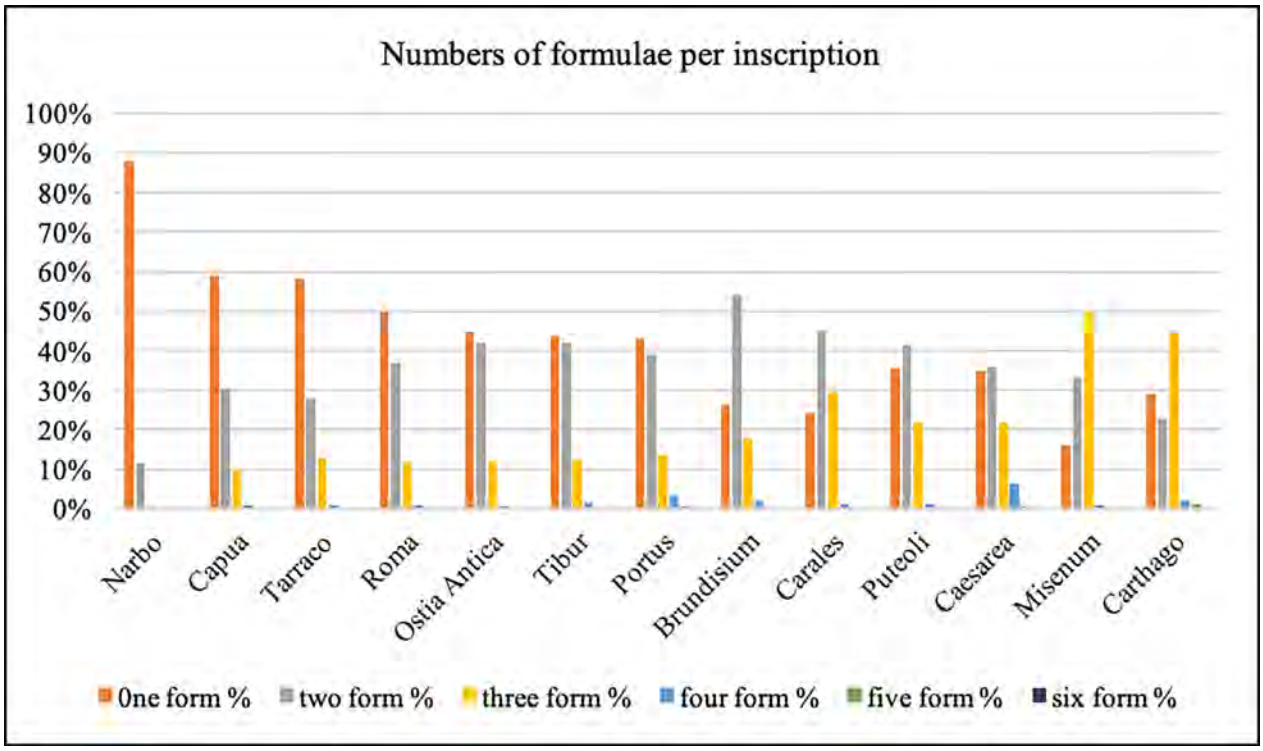
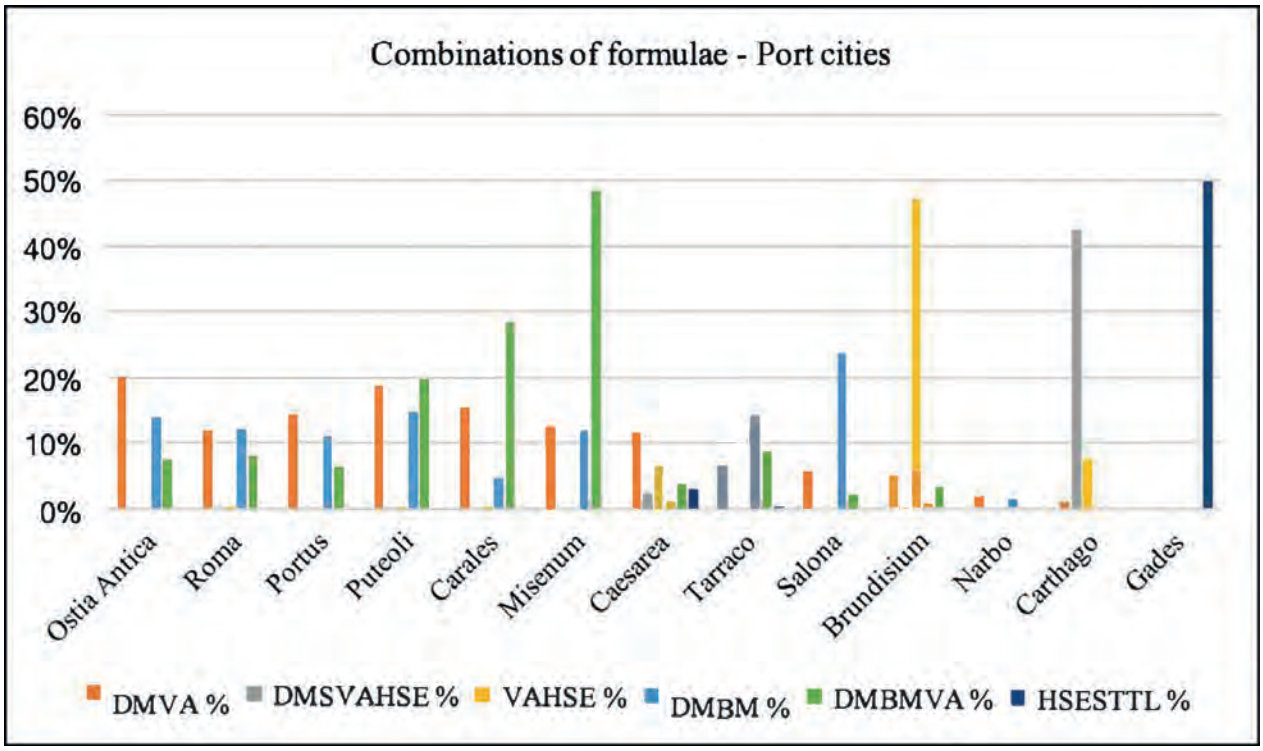


Figure 5



When we examine use of abbreviations in epitaphs, we can see that Rome, Ostia, Puteoli and Misenum in Campania have a high preference for abbreviations (**Figures 6** and **7**). This preference is shared by other port cities such as Brundisium, Tarraco and Carales. Interestingly Portus and Narbo have a greater preference for writing formulae in full. Regional specific formulae such as HSE and STTL are more likely to be used in full in inscriptions in Campania.

Figure 6

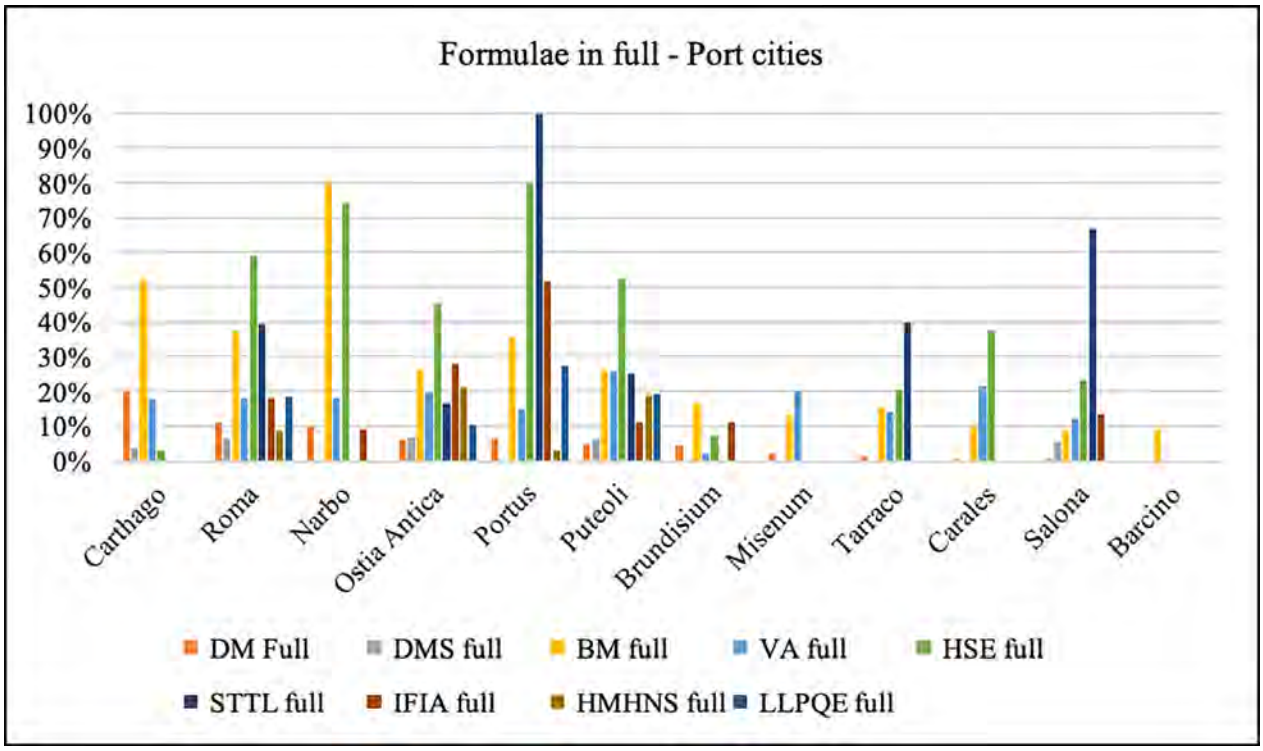
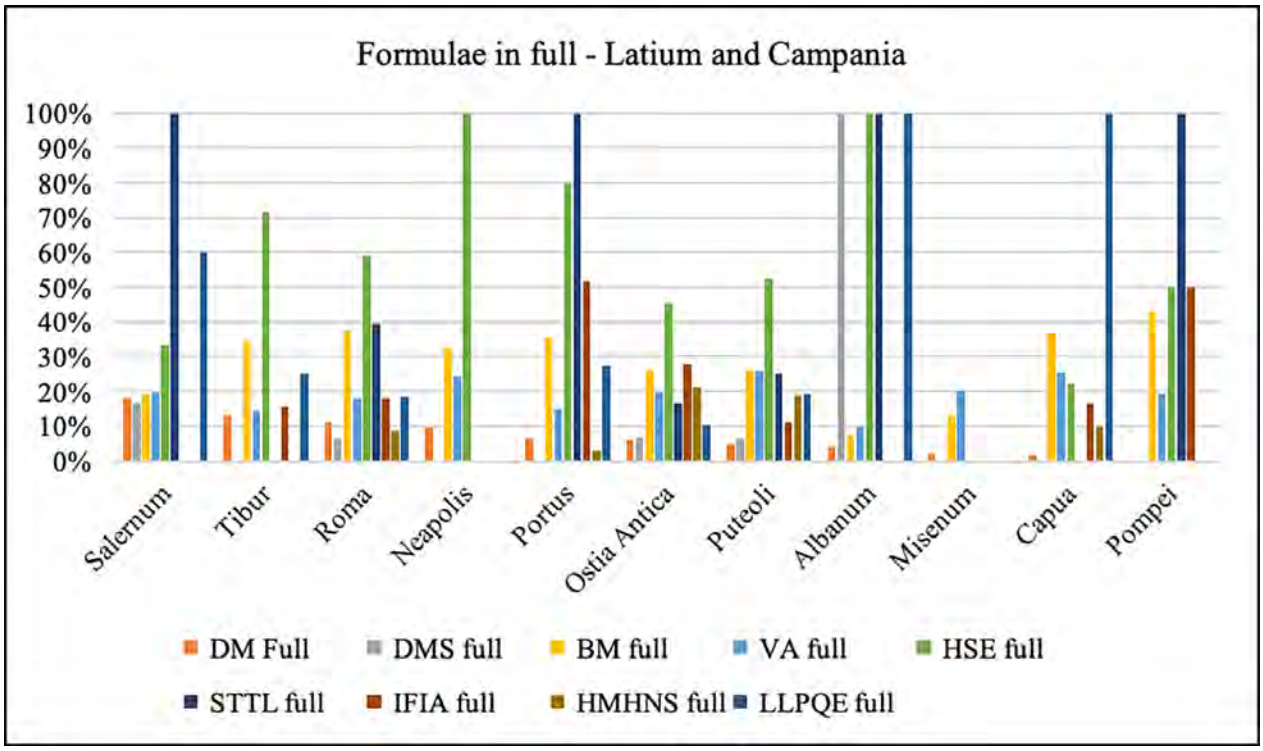


Figure 7



Discussion and conclusions

An analysis of the data indicates that epitaphs in Ostia include formulae consistent with the prevailing pattern evident in most parts of Campania. Moreover, there is a very close association with Rome and Portus in terms of which formulae are used, and how they are combined. When we analyse whether formulae are written in full or abbreviated, epitaphs in Ostia, like those in Rome, are more likely to use abbreviated forms whereas those in Portus have a higher preference for writing formulae in full. Epitaphs in Ostia are a similar length to those in other parts of Campania but are shorter than those in Portus. These differences in the epigraphy of Ostia when compared with Portus have important implications for how we study the epigraphy of the two places. All too often the inscriptions of Ostia and Portus are analysed as a whole whereas the current study has identified several features where the epigraphy of the two places can be shown to be different.[8] When we examine the length of the epitaphs and the use of formulae in full, Portus demonstrates an epigraphic signature which is distinct from not only Ostia but Rome and Puteoli too. Longer inscriptions and the frequent use of formulae in full may be due to the unique position of Portus as the imperial harbour of Rome.

When we compare the epitaphs in Ostia with other port cities around the Mediterranean, a different picture emerges. Whereas epitaphs in some cities in Italy (particularly Puteoli, Misenum and Brundisium) have more features in common with ports in North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, the epitaphs in Ostia share very few features with epitaphs in the provinces. However, we can see exceptions in ports such as Salona, and Tarraco, which share an epigraphic signature consistent with that of Ostia. When we consider this alongside the epigraphic signatures for cities in Campania, we can conclude that the epigraphic signature

8 The index of the recent Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy under index of places is a case in point and refers only to Ostia Portus. Bruun – Edmondson 2015.

for Ostia is composed of both local and global elements. Local elements, however, dominate the epigraphic signature.

In terms of cities and regions represented in the *stationes* of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni at Ostia, there is very little consistency with epitaphs at Ostia when compared with the epigraphic signatures for these cities and regions.[9] Like most cities in North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula,[10] the cities and regions represented in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni display epigraphic signatures divergent from the prevailing pattern centred on Rome and Ostia. Carthage in particular has an epigraphic signature which is very different to Rome and Ostia both in use of formulae and length of inscriptions. Even ports such as Carales in Sardinia which are close to Ostia in terms of sailing time have few features in common. Even though epitaphs in the port city of Narbo in Gallia Narbonensis share a preference for the formula *In fronte.. in agro* which is consistent with epitaphs centred on Ostia and Rome, these are in much higher proportions than we find there.[11] This seems to confirm our assumption that the epigraphic signature of Ostia is not influenced by commemorators from overseas.

The use of formulae in epitaphs is a global practice and a fundamental characteristic of the epigraphic habit. But an analysis of how and where they are used indicates that this global practice displays strong regional variation. By analysing the epigraphic signature of Ostia and comparing it with cities in Campania and in the provinces, we have been able to identify clusters of cities with similar epigraphic signatures. Although there must have been a close relationship between the populations of Ostia and Portus, their respective epigraphic signatures indicate some surprising differences. This deserves further study. We have also been able to establish that those cities which have close trading links with Ostia have very different epigraphic signatures, implying that commemorators are 'hosted' in Ostia but within a very 'local' epigraphic culture. Thus, overseas commemorators may shape some elements of the epigraphic signature but they do not change it overall. These conclusions indicate that this global practice was adapted to local preferences thus establishing a local epigraphic signature.



Figure 8 (Cat. no. 43). This marble cinerary urn was set up by Attia Tryphosa to her husband Caius Larcius Felix. The epitaph dedicated to Larcius Felix includes two common formulae: *Dis Manibus* and *bene merenti*. Translated it reads: "To the Spirits of the Dead. Attia Tryphosa made this for her well deserving husband Caius Larcius Felix". Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 62566. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

9 The following regions and cities have *stationes* in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni at Ostia. Where relevant the number of epitaphs included in the current study for each of these cities is indicated: Carthage and surrounding cities (Carthage n=1935); Colonia Iulia Curubis (not included in current study); Sabratha (n=24); Turris Libisonis, Sardinia (n=90); Carales, Sardinia (n=260); Narbo Martius, Narbonensis (n=295); traders from Mauretania Caesariensis (cities in province n=2048) and Alexandria (not included in current study).

10 The only exception to this is the cluster of cities closely connected with Cirta which have a high preference for using *Dis Manibus* rather than *Dis Manibus Sacrum* which is more popular in most cities in North Africa.

11 This pattern of commemoration is much more closely associated with cities in north-eastern Italy such as Altinum and Ateste.

Shipowners and *Curatores* in Ostia

Ghislaine van der Ploeg

In order to meet the demands of its population, Rome had to import vast quantities of goods as local supplies proved insufficient. One of the cheapest and easiest ways to transport these was by sea. Though the Tiber connected the city of Rome with the Mediterranean Sea, it was not possible for the larger and deeper-lying sea ships to travel directly upriver to Rome because of the narrowness of the river. Therefore, the port of Ostia was founded on a natural estuary of the Tiber where these goods could be unloaded and transferred to smaller vessels which could then sail to Rome.[1] The seaships transporting foodstuffs were especially large as they could have a capacity of up to 250 tons whereas the smaller riverboats used to travel upstream to Rome would only have had a capacity of seventy tons.[2] The uploading and reloading of a cargo could take several days which necessitated the storage of goods temporarily in warehouses. Products as diverse as wine, pottery, oil, pottery, fish sauces, wild animals, and building materials, for example marble, were imported.[3] However, it was grain which was of especial importance for the Roman population as a result of the *annona*, the Roman grain dole.[4] This handout was vital for feeding the Roman population and, as the city expanded over time, local sources of grain proved inadequate to meet the needs of the population. Grain had to be imported to satisfy this demand and one of the main places from which grain was exported to Ostia was Roman North Africa. While Egypt had been the main producer of grain during the Augustan period, by the 1st century CE Africa had become the primary supplier to Rome.[5] Ostia was, thus, vital for ensuring that the Roman population was well fed and much money could be made from the importation of goods to Rome, making it attractive for people to become involved in this trade. Shipowners, in particular, could become very wealthy through the importation and transportation of goods to Rome though much risk was also involved in this as many ships were wrecked out at sea.[6]

A system of ports had been created as the result of the exportation of grain to Rome which facilitated the importation of other goods such as wine and wild beasts from Africa to Italy.[7] Carthage, located in the province of Africa Proconsularis, was the main port from which ships sailed to Ostia and, according to Pliny the Elder, a ship could make this journey in only two days during the sailing season (Plin. *nat.* 19, 1, 4). The ease of travel and strong connections with Roman North Africa meant that many Africans were able to settle and work in Ostia (**Fig. 1**). Numerous inscriptions were erected by people who originated in the African provinces, among which a group of shipowners, *navicularii*, from Carthage. These men set up a

1 Strab. 5, 3, 5.

2 Aldrete 2004, 215.

3 Keay 2012, 3.

4 Rickman 1980.

5 Martin *et al.* 2002, 276-78.

6 Rickman 2008, 7.

7 Stone 2014, 566.

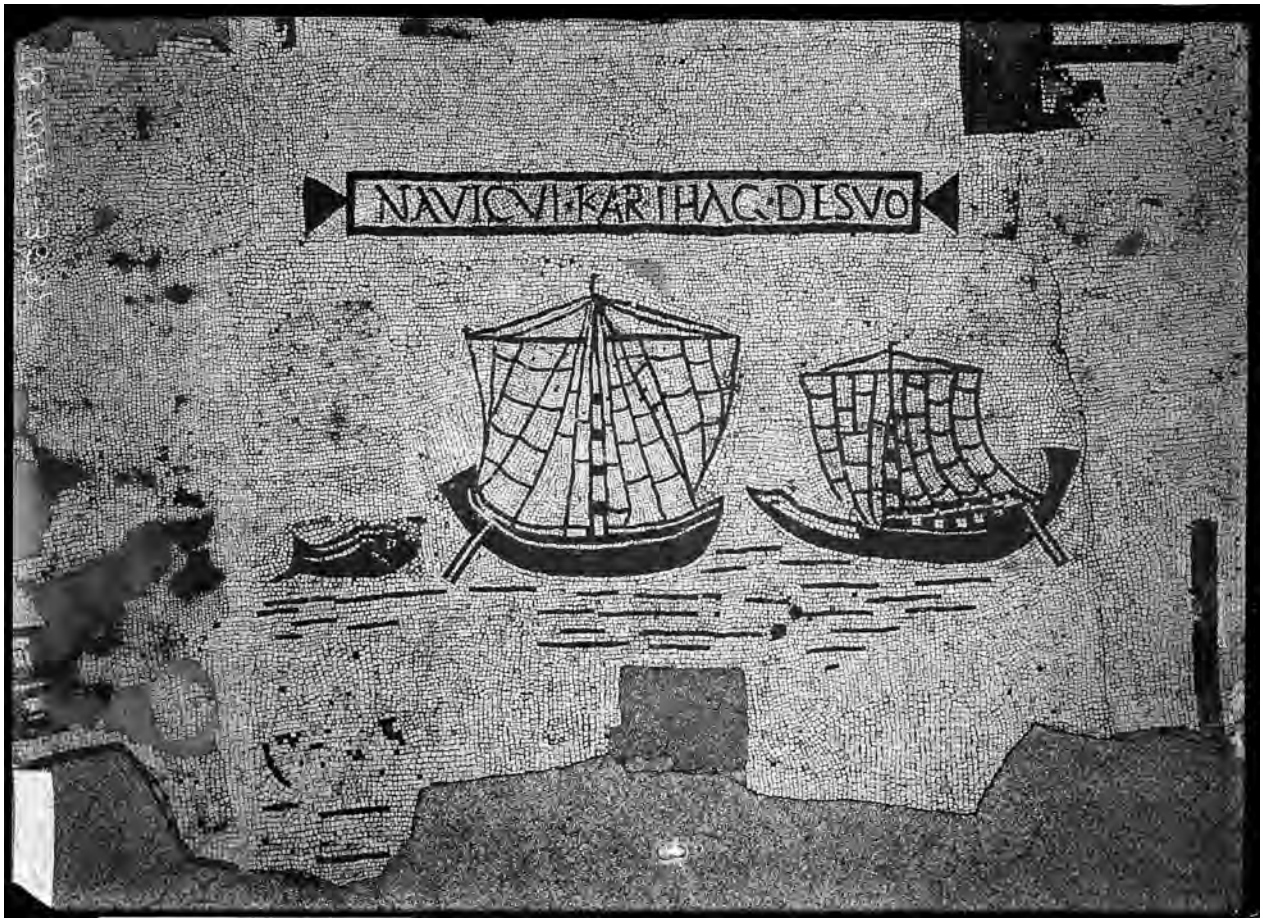


Figure 1. The mosaic of shipowners from Carthage at the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

dedication in Portus honouring the emperor Antoninus Pius. The reason for why they erected this inscription is unknown, but it could perhaps have been the result of some kind of benefaction or favour granted to them by the emperor, or simply to honour him:

Imp(eratori) Caesari / divi Hadriani fil(io) / divi Traiani Parthic(i) nepoti / divi Nervae pronep(oti) / T(ito) Aelio Hadriano / Antonino Aug(usto) Pio / pont(ifici) max(imo) trib(unicia) pot(estate) IIII / co(n)s(uli) III p(atri) p(atriae) / domini navium Carthagi/n(i)ensium ex Africa (*CIL* XIV 99).[8]

'To Imperator Caesar, the son of the divine Hadrian, grandson of the divine Trajan Parthicus, great-grandson of the divine Nerva. Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, *pontifex maximus*, tribune of the people for the fourth time, consul for the 3rd time, *pater patriae*, (set up) by the Carthaginian shipowners from Africa.'

This inscription is noteworthy as there is, in fact, very little evidence relating to shipowners found in Ostia. The paucity of epigraphic evidence concerning these men is likely because they would not actually have lived in Ostia itself but elsewhere, for example the men in the inscription from Portus would have been based in Carthage. Therefore, honorific or funerary inscriptions commemorating these shipowners would

8 Terpstra 2013, 119.

not have been erected in Ostia but in another place. The few inscriptions which have been found concerning shipowners indicate that most of these people were of a non-elite birth.[9] This is possibly due to the fact that the senatorial elites in Rome had been forbidden by law to own ships above a certain size from the 3rd century BCE onwards. The *plebiscitum Claudianum* is dated to between 219 and 218 BCE and it prohibited senators and their families from owning ships which could contain more than 300 amphorae (Liv. 21, 63, 3-4).[10] However, it is likely that senators and other elites would still actually have owned ships but that they would have used freedmen or other middlemen in order to circumvent these laws.[11] It was also possible for a group of people to join forces and collectively buy a ship in case they could not afford to do so by themselves. These ventures could lead to potential riches but also ruin, as thousands of shipwrecks have been found across the Mediterranean.[12]

As most shipowners were not physically present in Ostia, they would have needed middlemen in order to take care of their business interests there as well as some kind of organisational backing. The latter was provided by one of the associations, the *collegia*, of Ostia, namely the *navicularii Ostienses*. The meeting hall of the *navicularii* was located in Regio IV and is called the Schola del Traiano on the basis of a monumental statue of Trajan which was found here. The main hall was richly decorated with statues and an impressive mosaic (**Fig. 2**) which is still visible on the site now.[13] While there would have been many inscriptions erected here in antiquity, only one is extant today, namely:

[M(arco) Pacceio L(uci) f(ilio)] / q(uaestori) pr[o pr(aetore)] / naviculari{e}i O[stienses] / quod is primus sim[ulacrum(?) 3] / statuarium pro[misit(?)].[14]

'To Marcus Pacceius, son of Lucius, *quaestor propraetor*, the Ostian shipowners, because he first picture…. Promised a statue for….'

This inscription predates this association building as it is dated to the Augustan age. In it, a civic official called Marcus Pacceius is honoured collectively by the shipowners, presumably in return for some favour he has given them. For example, it is possible that Pacceius provided funds for them to decorate their meeting hall with and that, in return, they honoured him by erecting a statue for him.[15]

In addition to receiving support from the *collegium*, shipowners would have used agents and intermediaries to act on their behalf. The possibility of shipowners living elsewhere in the empire is backed by the existence of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni (**Fig. 3**). This square is located next to the theatre in Ostia and it consists of three porticos which housed sixty-one stations. These stations were all decorated with black and white mosaics containing texts which commonly mention *navicularii* from across the empire, for example *navicularii* from Misua, Sabratha, and Carthage which were all located in Africa.[16] These texts were often

9 Rohde 2012, 117.

10 Tchernia 2016, 150-72.

11 Rickman 2008, 12.

12 Rickman 2008, 7.

13 Hermansen 1981, 71-74.

14 *AE* 1955 178.

15 Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2006, 93-94.

16 Misua: *CIL* XIV 10; Sabratha: *CIL* XIV 4549.14; Carthage: *CIL* XIV 18.



Figure 2. The meeting hall of the *collegium* of *Navicularii Ostienses* in the Schola del Traiano. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 3. Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

accompanied by connected images, for example an elephant is depicted in station fourteen which belonged to the traders from Sabratha in Libya who likely dealt in wild animals or ivory (Figure on p. 168). The term *navicularii* was not that commonly found in the inscriptions of Ostia outside of the Piazzale and its frequent use here gives an indication both to what the function of this Piazzale was and why so few shipowners seemed to live in Ostia.[17] It is likely that these *stationes* housed various middlemen who acted as intermediaries for people who came from abroad but wanted to trade in Ostia or import goods here.[18]

These middlemen would have originated elsewhere in the empire, for example in Africa, but were now permanently based in Ostia and they acted on behalf of others from their place of origin who were located outside of Ostia. In doing so, trust networks were created based upon either place of origin or longstanding residence in Ostia which would have connected traders in Italy and abroad. This also meant that people who visited the Piazzale were likely foreigners in need of assistance from the men working out of these *stationes*. Agents were used in many commercial activities and spheres in Ostia; this was a profession like any other. As such, it could also be mentioned in funerary inscriptions as occupation was a standard element which was included in these epitaphs. One such epitaph from Ostia mentions a *curator navium* (**Fig. 4**; **Cat. no. 44**):



Figure 4. The funerary inscription of the *curator navium Karthaginiensium*. Ostia Deposito 20, inv. 11210. Photo: Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

L(ucius) Caelius L(uci) fil(ius) A[rn(ensi)] / Aprilis Valerian[us] / curator navium Kartha[g(iniensium)] / et Arellia Eleuthera eius / fecerunt sibi et / lib(ertis) libert(abusque) posteri(s)q(ue) eorum.[19]

'Lucius Caelius Aprilis Valerianus, son of Lucius, member of the Arnensis tribe, *curator* of the ships of Carthage, and Arellia Eleuthera, his wife, have made (this grave) for themselves, for their freedmen and women, and for their posterity.'

This is the only funerary inscription which mentions a *curator*. It is likely that the *curatores* were in charge of the ships when they had entered into the harbour. Arnaud points out that these men would have had to have been close to the actual shipowners as they took the place of the ship captain when the ship was inside the port.[20] There were two associations in Ostia for these *curatores*, namely the *curatores navium marinarum* and the *curatores navium amnalium*.[21] As Valerianus defines himself as a '*curator navium*

17 Terpstra 2013, 112.

18 Terpstra 2013, 124.

19 *CIL* XIV 4626.

20 Arnaud 2016, 141.

21 Arnaud 2016, 141.

Kartha[g(iniensium)' it is probable that he was responsible in particular for the ships docking at Ostia which came from Carthage. It is very likely that he himself was also from this city based upon his tribe, Arnensis, and his *gentilicium*, Valerianus, which were both common in Carthage.[22] Caelius seems to have lived in Ostia for a long period of time with his wife, who was probably a freedwoman, and decided not to return to Africa but preferred to be interred in Ostia.[23]

This inscription is highly important for understanding who the *curatores* were as it indicates that it is probable that these men were organised on the basis of their place of origin and that they were local men sent to Ostia to manage the ships which travelled there. It was also likely a lifelong position so that the person could establish trust networks with people both from Ostia and Africa.[24] The *curator* would have been in the position to mediate between the shipowners and local traders, who could store products in their warehouses and ferry the goods further upriver in smaller boats. It seems probable that these men would have had their offices in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, or at least that they would have been strongly connected to this structure, became of the visual and textual links to other places within the empire shown in the mosaics. The existence of *curatores* in Ostia also explains the absence of shipowners here as there was little need for them to move to Ostia when they had these agents in place to take care of their business. The shipowners could rely on local people who were based in Ostia to take care of things there while they remained living elsewhere in the Roman empire.

22 Arnaud 2016, 141.

23 Noy 2002, 115.

24 Arnaud 2016, 142.

Portraits and identities at Ostia

Marina Prusac-Lindhagen

Roman portrait statues were put on display for the purpose of honouring and commemorating meritorious individuals, and expressed social status and cultural belonging through a rich repertoire of visual codes. The collection of Roman marble portraits from Ostia Antica, Isola Sacra and nearby Portus is considerable in terms of size, quality and contextual information, and illuminating as regards of individual, collective, social and urban identities. The majority dates to between the first century BCE and the third century CE. They were retrieved from within the city walls, and few sites have yielded as many portraits.[1] Many ended up in museums and collections outside Italy, but the bulk share is still at Ostia. There are portrait busts and statues, alongside sarcophagus reliefs with images of the deceased. Some portraits were executed in a style so realistic that it is easy to imagine the individuals depicted as they walked the streets of Ostia, resided in its buildings or arrived by ship from afar.

The demographic constellations of Ostia are fairly well known from inscriptions and religious architecture. An overview of the collective social and cultural identities of the portraits from Ostia would require a topographical map with a reconstruction of the find contexts of each portrait. In the present study, I focus on examples of individual portraits that may provide insights into the heterogeneity of the social and cultural identities of the city's inhabitants.

Urban identity at Ostia

Every city has a unique character expressed by its architecture and urban life. Harbour cities across the world differ widely, but also share some fundamental features as places of transit with more or less hybrid cultural expressions. All kinds of travellers to and from Rome passed through Ostia, and its inhabitants came from different cultural contexts and social circles. They were acquainted with the visual expressions of each other's identities. Clothing, hairstyles, jewellery and other symbolic details revealed differences in status and origin, varied among groups and made them stand out as distinctive.[2] Together, such details formed the city's visual identity code.

Identity is a complex concept that includes several aspects of an individual or a group's self-definition in opposition to others.[3] Identities are always in flux, as people are continuously exposed to external influences that lead to adjustments, reactions and transformations. The portraits from Ostia include coiffures and headgear signalling specific group identities, as well as other identity markers that were added in different

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1 The majority of the portraits from Ostia were published in Calza 1964 and 1977.

2 There is a vast literature on this topic. For an up-to-date approach, see Harlow 2017. See also Berg, this volume.

3 Identity has been the subject of extensive study over recent decades and the literature abounds. For a helpful overview of different perspectives, see Huskinson 2000.

materials and have been lost, such as jewellery, and pigments that were used as paint. Social and cultural references such as ethnic craftsmanship and patterns have been lost.

In Russell Meiggs' seminal work *Roman Ostia*, there is a chapter entitled 'The People' that gives an overview of their many different origins, mainly based on inscriptions.[4] A large number of inhabitants were grain and wine traders from the province of Africa who clustered around the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Another widely represented group was composed of traders, including freedmen, from Spain. There were freedmen of different professions from Gaul, including builders and a prominent member of the cult of Magna Mater. There was a guild of shipbuilders from the Greek east, as well as many traders from cities, islands and regions such as Alexandria, Cnidus, Tralles, Miletus, Syrian Seleucia, Phrygia, Thrace, Rhodes, Nicomedia and Ephesus. The eastern Greeks included a shoemaker, physician, marble worker and servants to the fleet – to give an impression of the variety of skills and professions. According to Meiggs, the majority of the easterners seem to have settled in the harbour rather than in the town of Ostia. The fleet also included servants from Egypt, Pannonia, Corsica and Sardinia. In addition, there were slaves from as many parts of the world.[5]

Settlers from Italy were in general fewer, or are not recorded in the inscriptions, but individuals from Ravenna, Praeneste, Vercellae and Etruria, including Umbria, are attested. Meiggs suggests that veterans from the praetorian and urban cohorts, buried in the cemeteries of Ostia, were also of Italian origin.

Some immigrants married local women and such relationships naturally contributed to a continuous cultural hybridization of Ostia's urban character. It was also common to marry slaves. The majority of the inhabitants were freedmen preoccupied with trade and business, but they also had social ambitions visible in the many inscriptions that relate them to the administration of cults and other urban offices.[6] It was not unusual for them to become *magistri*. Some dedicated monuments to the city, and some were commemorated with portrait statues. Their greatest social achievement was the official function of maintaining the imperial cult, and freedmen are attested among the *seviri Augustales*. Those who achieved this honour had probably become wealthy and adapted to the lifestyle of the Roman nobility.

The majority of the portrait statues from Ostia probably represent freedmen, but it is just as challenging to identify their social as their cultural identity. The clues that can be found in portrait statues are sometimes explicit, in the form of headgear and clothing, as in the case of priests. At other times, the identity codes can be vague. When statue heads are separated from their bodies, as is most often the case, stylistic features may suggest identity and social context, but interpretations based on subtle references will always be hypothetical. Yet, by comparing the different portrait groups, it is possible to say something about collective social and cultural identities.

The social status of the ideal

Studies of Roman portraiture are based on a long research tradition that has well-established and fine-tuned typologies and relative chronologies. Deviations from the typological groupings, such as unusual stylistic preferences and attributes, often contribute to a broader understanding of social and cultural patterns. This article deals with such examples. Deviance can, however, only be recognised because the material has been typologically organised.

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4 Meiggs 1973, 214-34.

5 Meiggs 1973, 224-29.

6 Meiggs 1973, 222-23.

It has been customary among scholars to differentiate between 'private' and 'public' portraits, thereby defining two overarching groups of social identities, but many portrait statues fulfilled both functions.[7]

The distinction between imperial and non-imperial portraits seems to be a more useful approach. The individuals depicted in imperial portraits, in particular those of deceased and deified emperors, were represented as divine, with faces as idealised as the images of the gods. In comparison, non-imperial portraits were usually commemorative and emphasised individual features to a greater extent. Many portraits, especially in reliefs, show freedmen families and are carved in a style that often presents exaggerated realistic features, as in Roman portraits elsewhere. Generic and stereotypical character images of foreigners as 'barbarians' do exist, but they are not portraits in the true sense of the word, that is, representations of individuals.

The typologies of Roman portraits have benefitted from images on coins with relief portraits, inscribed names and titles. Imperial portraits are often of superior craftsmanship, and when they depict deceased rulers are usually larger than life-size. In addition, the imperial images are often of an idealizing nature that downplays individual facial features, but they can still be identified and compared to coin images with inscribed names and titles. More than seventy portraits from Ostia are imperial or have been associated with the imperial family, whereas the number of non-imperial portraits exceeds a hundred.

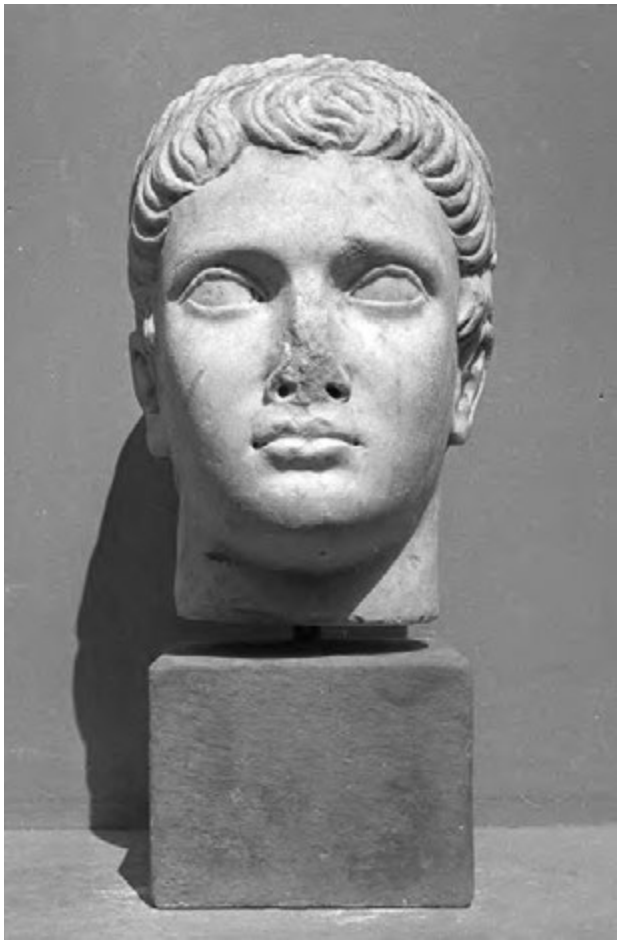


Figure 1. Portrait of a male member of the Claudian family, c. 25 CE. From Portus, the Episcopio. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 1502. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The idealizing style of imperial portraiture was predominant in the Julio-Claudian period, and an example depicting a male member of the Claudian family from 25 CE from the Episcopio in Portus differs only slightly from stylised images of athletes (**Fig. 1**).[8] The individual representation was merged with the super-human ideals introduced to Roman portrait art with Augustus. In the Greek world, the early Hellenistic period had produced godlike representations of rulers such as Alexander the Great. The purpose of the idealizing style was to increase the viewer's belief in the supreme qualities of the sitter.

In the second half of the first century, the emperor Vespasian (69–79 CE) revised the imperial portrait style, returning to the more realistic standards of the Republican period. A characteristic example of the realistic portraiture of Vespasian was

7 Fejfer 2008, 16.

8 Calza 1964, 37-38, no. 44. The portrait is in Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 1502.

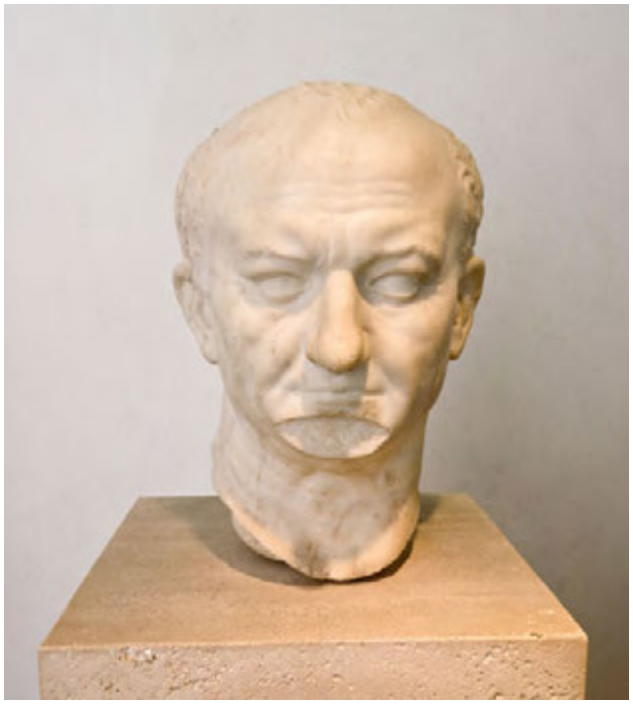


Figure 2. Portrait of Vespasian, 69–79 CE. Found on the Campo della Magna Mater. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 330. Photo: Paul Williams, Alamy Stock Photo.



Figure 3. Portrait of Trajan, of the Hadrianic period, 117–138 CE. From Ostia, found in rubble in a shop in the theatre. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 17. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

found in Ostia in 1868, on the Campo della Magna Mater (**Fig. 2**).[9] Shortly afterwards, however, Vespasian's younger son, the emperor Domitian (81–96 CE), reintroduced a strongly idealizing imperial fashion. Later imperial portraits seem to alternate between idealizing and realistic styles.

The portrait of Trajan (96–117 CE) found in the rubble in a shop off the theatre at Ostia shows an interesting blend of idealizing and realistic features (**Fig. 3**).[10] It was made after the emperor's death, in the Hadrianic period (117–138 CE). The nose and neck are broken, and the ears are crushed, but the remainder of the portrait is in excellent condition. The locks of hair above the forehead allude to the Republican general and politician Pompey, whose representation in turn quoted that of Alexander the Great. References to earlier rulers, directly and indirectly, were meant to communicate superior leadership, but the facial features are individual in nature.

The relationship between idealizing and realistic features in the portrait of Trajan can be compared to that of an unknown female of the same period, found on the *Decumanus* near the theatre.[11] The hairstyle of this female portrait was old-fashioned and conservative at the time it was made. It might belong to the earlier, Flavian period, but non-imperial portraits often adapt more slowly to new trends than imperial portraits. The *matrona* depicted in the portrait probably wore a conventional hairstyle that was judged proper among her circle.[12]

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9 Calza 1964, 45-46, no. 62. See Rosso 2009 for a description and bibliographical references. The portrait is on display in Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, inv. 330. It measures 40 cm in height, which is almost double that of an average Roman statue head.

10 Calza 1964, 59-60, no. 89. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 17.

11 Calza 1964, 48-49, no. 67. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 60.

12 Herrmann 1991, 46; Prusac 2011, 140, no. 173. For hairstyles and identity, see Berg, this volume.

Social identity and occupational status

Another female portrait from the Trajanic period at Ostia is the magnificent statue of Julia Procula (**Fig. 4**). She was represented in a Greek style in the family tomb at Isola Sacra, dressed as the goddess Hygieia.[13] It is widely known that Roman art was fundamentally influenced by Greek ideals, and the case of Julia Procula is not unique but serves as an example of how Greek cultural features could be used as expressions of social status.

The appearance and the find context reveal the statue's function as a funerary monument. There are inscriptions on the statue base and on the marble cinerary urn. Julia Procula's name is given in both, and the second informs us that the grave monument was dedicated by her mother Munatia Helpis.[14] The grave enclosure was dedicated by Munatia Helpis and C. Marcius Demetrius. The latter is associated with a *medicus* of high social standing who worked as the private physician of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. C. Marcius Demetrius may have been Munatia Helpis' second husband, but there is not enough information to determine his relationship with Julia Procula.[15] He died in 170 CE, some thirty or forty years before the erection of the statue.



Figure 4. Statue of Julia Procula as Hygieia, of the first half of the second century CE. From Ostia, Isola Sacra. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 61. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The style and Julia Procula's representation as Hygieia, with the telling *kekryphalos* on her head and the Greek-style dress, was chosen by her relatives, perhaps as a signifier of social status enhanced by the profession of the family's most prominent male members. The statue type was typical for a female or goddess represented in a classicizing style, and signified a certain social standing. The representation is inspired by classicizing ideals best known from the widespread large and small Herculaneum women statue types. The body of Julia Procula's statue differs from these in the arrangement of the folds of the garment and the outstretched right arm holding a libation plate. The left hand holds a round *pyxis* and the serene expression emphasizes the *pietas* of the sitter, indicating how her family wanted to present her on her grave.

Julia Procula's portrait may have been inserted into a reused statue body.[16] Combining copies of Greek statues and individualised heads was a wide-

13 Statue of Julia Procula as Hygieia, of the first half of the second century CE. From Ostia, Isola Sacra. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 61. Calza 1964, 65-66, no. 100, pl. 59.

14 Calza 1964, 65-66; Speier 1972, 101-02, no. 3122.

15 For a thorough discussion of Julia Procula's identity, see Meiggs 1973, 563-65.

16 For the reuse, see e.g. Prusac 2011, 140, no. 173.

spread custom in the Roman period.[17] But the Romans often combined portraits with stock bodies of specific types that expressed the virtue of the individual represented, such as the small and large Herculaneum woman.[18] It is not possible to conclude whether the statue body of Julia Procula was reused or acquired from a workshop that produced more or less standardised versions of Greek-style sculptures.

The popularity of the large and small Herculaneum woman and other Greek classicizing statue types was not random or merely dictated by aesthetics. On the one hand, they served as expressions of social status and identity. On the other, they represented the sitter as an inhabitant of the Roman Empire, where classicizing ideals were widespread expressions of cultural sophistication and *pietas*. Imperial portrait art was inspired by Classical and Hellenistic ideals, and Greek idealization was also used to express social standing. The portrait statue of Julia Procula thus signalled both social belonging through the commissioning of a Greek-style statue body, and social status as the member of a family with a proud occupational tradition. Other family graves at Isola Sacra also affirm the social status of doctors.[19]

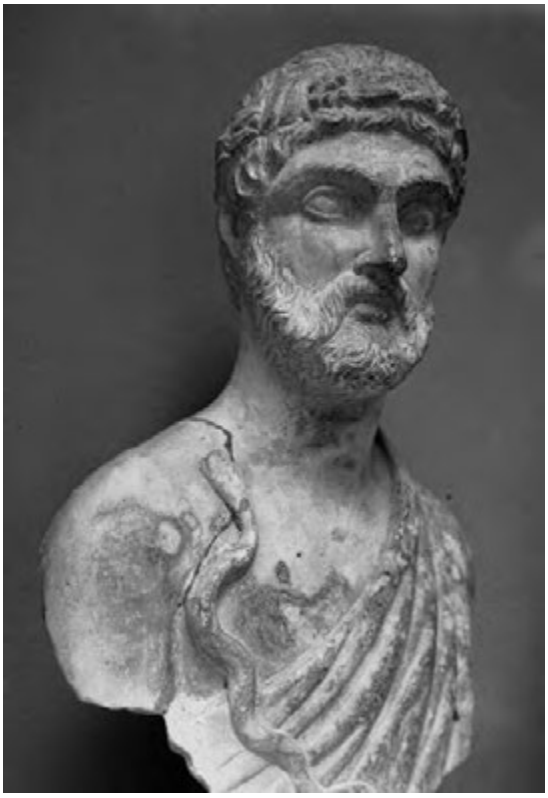


Figure 5. Portrait-bust of a man with a snake, perhaps Pythagoras, a physician, or a priest of Asclepius. Found in the Porta Romana necropolis. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 36. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

To the right:

Figure 6. Portrait of a bald man, perhaps a priest of an eastern cult, c. 45 BCE. From Ostia, the Sede degli Augustali. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 71. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

Figure 7. Detail with portrait from a kliné sarcophagus of the third century CE. The portrait belongs to a reclining figure with attributes associated with the cult of Magna Mater. From Ostia, Isola Sacra. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 158. Photo: Marina Prusac-Lindhagen.

The medical profession is clearly also important in an extraordinary portrait bust from Ostia that shows a male with a snake on his chest (**Fig. 5**).[20] It was found in a funerary context in the Porta Romana necropolis, and dated to the second century CE, though it seems in fact to belong to the mid-third century CE. Most likely, the bust was originally produced in the Hadrianic period and recut in the Gallienic period or later. The rich hairstyle is composed of locks that were cut closer to the skull. Originally, the strands of hair were probably carefully defined with a sharp and pointed chisel, as in the beard, but later, a rougher and less careful technique was used to create a less fluffy hairstyle. The wreath around the head was also cut down and recurved. The result is a stylistic discrepancy between the hairstyle and the beard. The symmetrically carved eyebrows were punctuated with short stitches in a style that appeared in the third century and became typical in late antique portraits.

The sitter's identity is unknown and different interpretations are possible, despite the snake which at the time of production would have been a recognizable attribute. Busts of the eastern deity Sabazios are

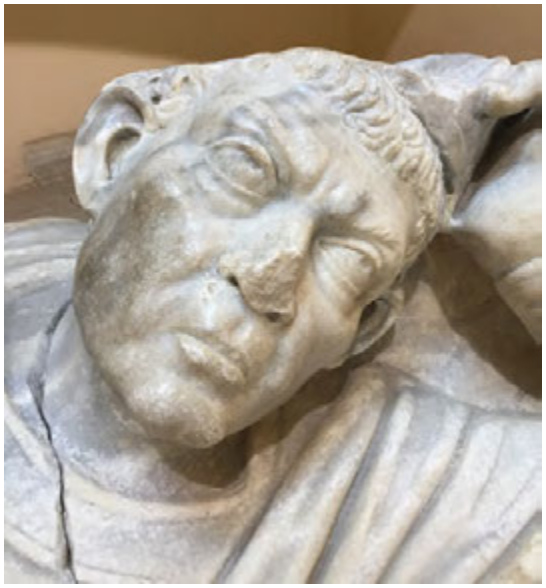
17 Stewart 2003, 47-59.

18 See e.g. Trimble 2000; Vorster 2007.

19 Meiggs 1973, 233-34.

20 Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 36. Calza 1964, 18, no. 7, pl. 4.7.





usually decorated with serpents and there were adherents of his cult at Ostia.[21] Meiggs' list of the cultural variations among the inhabitants of Ostia shows that they included many easterners. Yet, the rather mainstream Roman style of the portrait suggests an association with Pythagoras or Asclepius, who were both – irrespective of their different functions – acknowledged by the Romans at an early period.[22] The choice of a snake as an attribute may indicate the profession of mathematician, physician or priest.

There are several examples of images of priests from Ostia that reveal externally imposed cultural features. A male portrait from c. 45 BCE from the Sede degli Augustali is usually interpreted as a priest of an oriental cult given the bald head (**Fig. 6**).[23] Some eastern cults gained a strong foothold at Ostia. First and foremost, the cults of Isis, Serapis and Mithras are widely attested, as are the followers of Cybele or "the Great Mother", Magna Mater.

The deceased male reclining on a sarcophagus from Isola Sacra is identified as an *archigallus*, a priest of the cult of Magna Mater (**Fig. 7**).[24] In the third century CE, when the sarcophagus was made, the original Roman cult of Magna Mater was fused with that of Cybele, an eastern version. The religious identity of the *archigallus* on the sarcophagus is revealed by several details, above all the pine branch in his right hand, which refers to the cult of Attis, the son of Cybele, and, on the same wrist, a bracelet with the goddess seated on her throne.[25] Albeit fragmentary, he wears a Phrygian *mitra* on his head.

Headgear could be used as an explicit identity marker but it is not always possible to determine what message it conveys. For example, the elaborate diadem of a portrait from the Terme di Nettuno at Ostia, dated to the late first or early second century CE, might identify an eastern priest or a victor at the Capitoline games (**Fig. 8**).[26] If the portrait shows an eastern priest, the subject might be a eunuch; if it shows a victor, it might be a woman.

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21 Lane 1989, 21.

22 Astolfi 2003.

23 Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 71. Calza 1964, 26-27, no. 22.

24 Archigallus on a *kline* sarcophagus, from the Portus cemetery on the Isola Sacra. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 158.

25 Klöckner 2017, 350.

26 Portrait of a man, perhaps a priest or an artist, late first or early second century CE. From Ostia, frigidarium of the Terme di Nettuno. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 350. Felletti Mai 1953, 101, no. 192. See also Giuliano 1988, 260-61.



Figure 8. Portrait of a man, perhaps a priest or an artist, late first or early second century CE. From Ostia, *frigidarium* of the Terme di Nettuno. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 350. Photo: G. Fittschen-Badura, arachne.dainst.org/entity/166049.



Figure 9. Sarcophagus fragment with *clipeus* with couple, early third century CE. From Portus, Episcopio. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 1508. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The *archigalli* have been approached as representatives of a 'third genus', because they oscillate between genders.[27] They differ considerably from the mainstream Roman male/female dichotomy in the arts, which can be observed, for example, in the *clipeus* sarcophagus with a couple from the Episcopio in Portus (**Fig. 9**).[28]

A cultural melting-pot

The pair in the *clipeus* of the sarcophagus from the Episcopio in Portus represent a typical Roman couple of the early third century CE. The close-cropped hairstyle of the male to the right in the relief stands out in sharp contrast to the undulating coiffure of the female, and their clothing follows the fashions of their time for men and women. At first glance, they represent a standard Roman couple, but as Meiggs' list of the cultural origin of freedmen shows, they may have immigrated to Ostia from any one of a large number of places. The standardised style and iconography of sarcophagus reliefs make it difficult to identify cultural origins without the help of inscriptions.

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27 Klöckner 2017.

28 Museo Ostiense, inv. 1508. Calza 1977, 61-62, no. 77.



Figure 10. Portrait of a man, perhaps of African origin, 90–100 CE. From Ostia, near the Terme di Nettuno. Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 357. Photo: G. Fittschen-Badura, arachne.dainst.org/entity/166529.

Some marble portraits from Ostia have been interpreted as representations of individuals from Africa. One of these is a bust from the Terme di Nettuno dated to the late first or early second century CE (**Fig. 10**).[29] The rich, curly hairstyle may, however, suggest that it was made later in the second century, in the late Antonine period. It may have been subsequently recut, since the locks of hair seem to have been shortened. The hairstyle could be compared to that of the portrait of Volcacius Myropnous, a late Antonine bust from Isola Sacra.[30] Both portraits show males of military rank. Volcacius Myropnous wears a Greek military *chlamys*, and the inscription on the base of the bust is in Greek. That from the Terme di Nettuno has a naked chest adorned with a Roman belt, *balteus*, that runs diagonally from the shoulder. The bare chest may indicate a non-Roman cultural origin, but it is not possible to identify what that origin might be, or what the bare chest and *balteus* might signify to the inhabitants of Ostia.

Identifying individuals of African origin in Roman portraits is a challenging enterprise. Firstly, it is important to remember that the Roman province of Africa was not exclusively inhabited by black groups, and 'Africans' therefore included a wide range of people. The Africans represented in Roman art were often not black, since Roman Africa included the northern part of the continent, whose inhabitants had lighter skin than people from the central and southern regions. A prominent example is the emperor Septimius Severus (192–211 CE), who came from Leptis Magna. Secondly, we need to establish a way of differentiating stereotypical representations from portraits. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, some portraits were made of dark stone types that were not randomly selected, but intended to represent individuals with dark skin.[31] However, ancient sculpture was painted, and portraits made of white marble may have been coloured with dark pigments. Thirdly, identification of cultural identity based on facial features can be misleading. It would be interesting to study some pieces as examples of portraits of individuals of African origin, but it would be difficult to draw conclusions.[32]

Septimius Severus' wife, Julia Domna, was from Roman Syria. They were not the first non-Roman members of the imperial family, but they were the first from Africa and the east to ascend to the throne. At

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29 Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 336; Felletti Maj 1953, 130, no. 256; Calza 1977, 40-41, no. 49. The portrait has often been described together with another portrait from the Terme di Nettuno that has been associated with Clodius Albinus (196–197 CE), Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 357; Calza 1964, 50, no. 69; Felletti Maj 1953, 94, no. 174.

30 Ostia, inv. 38. Calza 1977, 33-34, no. 36, pl. 28.

31 Vercoutter – Burgner 1976.

32 Calza 1977, 36-37, nos. 40-42, pl. 32.

the transition to the third century CE, Rome had become a melting pot, and Ostia was the channel through which its inhabitants passed. What it meant to be Roman had changed, and having a mixed origin was probably more common than otherwise.

Fine portraits of Septimius Severus and Julia Domna have been discovered at Ostia. The portrait statue of Julia Domna as Ceres found on the *Decumanus* is an excellent example of imperial and upper class individuals being dressed as gods, in accordance with a fashion that had become popular in the late first century CE and endured until Late Antiquity (**Fig. 11**).[33] The statue of Julia Procula (above) is another example. The trend can be interpreted in several ways. Looking to ideal representations was a long-standing habit in Roman art, and references to deities were typical of imperial art. For members of the nobility who could not trace their origins back to the old Roman families, being represented in a Roman fashion with the style and iconography of the Greco-Roman tradition, was one way of blending in. Julia Domna as Ceres is an example of a non-Italian empress who was visually represented in a way that embraced *romanitas*. The choice of Ceres could be compared to the earlier adoption of fertility goddesses in imperial art, beginning with the female figure on the Ara Pacis sometimes referred to as Tellus and Roma, and depictions of Livia as Ceres or Fortuna.[34]



Figure 11. Portrait statue of the Empress Julia Domna as the fertility goddess Ceres, early third century CE. From Ostia, Piazzale di Giulia Domna. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 21. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Subtle and explicit identity markers

The present study has offered a brief mapping of the identity of portraits at Ostia based on their visual representation. It has not added new knowledge to the existing understanding of social, religious and cultural identities at Ostia, but has approached the topic through portraits that exemplify how identity can be expressed through portraiture. The portraits discussed show that social identities were expressed in the same way as in Rome and other cities and towns of the Roman empire. Class and nobility could be expressed through external, Greek-inspired idealization, style, type and iconography, as in the case of Julia Procula. The elements that were originally Greek became Roman, and were used by prominent immigrants, such as Julia Domna, to blend in.

The gradual transformation of *romanitas* is perhaps particularly evident in the acceptance of foreign cults in the Roman pantheon, and the importance gained by some of these. "Exotic" attributes such as a certain type of headgear, a *balteus* on a naked chest, or a snake in an unusual context can be difficult to interpret. It seems, based on the extant material, that social identity was mainly expressed through clothing and jewellery added to the portrait sculptures in paint and materials that have usually been lost. Elements that symbolised religious adherence to foreign cults were often sculpted and can more easily be decoded.

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33 Portrait statue of the Empress Julia Domna as Ceres. Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. 21. Calza 1964, 79-80, no. 127; Calza 1977, 50-51, no. 63. See also Wood 1999, 165.

34 See e.g. Pollini 2014, 165.

Meiggs' list of the origins of Ostia's inhabitants shows a cultural mixture that cannot be discerned from the portraits alone. A comparison of the find contexts of the portraits and clusters of cult members or immigrants on the topographical map of the city might shed new light on the significance of portraits to different groups, or the lack thereof, as among the Jews. A topographical analysis of the find contexts of portraits would contribute to a more detailed understanding of the cultural heterogeneity of city life at Ostia and how it was visualised by different individuals. Judging from their many origins, being (at least partly) immigrant was more common than otherwise, but in Roman portraiture, *translatio romana* had a strong impact. Since the portraits were believed to represent the *persona* of the individual represented, it could be suggested that portraiture was one of the arenas in which immigrants most clearly demonstrated their willingness to blend in and become "Roman".

Images of the 'Foreign Other' in Roman Ostia

Ria Berg

Non-Roman ethnic groups were a significant part of Ostia's population, but in what ways were their images present in the figurative worlds of the ancient city? In Roman iconography, individuals in foreign garb had well-established general roles as stock motifs in certain contexts of public and private art.[1] The most widespread group of such representations would undoubtedly have been the divine images and statues of cult. Statues of Greek and 'orientalizing' gods appeared in public and private spaces in distinctly non-Roman dress (Attis, Mithra), or with elements of such garments (Isis, Kybele, Serapis). Outlandishly dressed gods were certainly also widespread in the Ostian cityscape, though these images were probably not seen primarily as 'foreign', but rather as something archaic, distant or markedly diverse and distinct from realistic everyday garments and appearances.

This article will discuss three types of representations of foreigners in the context of the city of Ostia: province personifications and defeated enemies, mainly displayed in the public sphere, and caricatural ethnic "others" represented on utensils and tools, and thus more common in private spaces.

Galleries of nations

In monumental art, personifications of Roman provinces or, rather, of the nations of the Empire often took the guise of divine and idealized female figures, not wearing genuine national costumes or hairstyles, but bearing selected ethnic material attributes that helped to identify them.[2] Galleries of ethnic personifications seem to have made their first appearance in Rome in the portico of Pompey's theatre, in the form of a series of 14 statues of nations conquered and paraded in the commander's triumphs.[3] The nearby Augustan *porticus ad nationes*, of which only literary accounts are preserved, certainly displayed such figures;[4] the same is probably also true of Augustus' Forum and Ara Pacis reliefs.[5] In the city of Rome, such ethnic galleries culminate in the reliefs of the Hadrianeum in the Campus Martius, where at least 25 and up to as many as 80 images of the Empire's peoples, together with trophies of arms, likely decorated the top of the portico surrounding the temple.[6] Outside Rome and Italy, the best-known example of such a gallery is the portico in front of the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion of Aphrodisias with a series of relief images depicting various ethnic

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1 Schneider 1986; 2007; Ferris 2000; 2011; Edwards 2003.

2 Ostrowski 1990; 1996; Sapelli 1999; Jimenez 2016.

3 Plin. *nat*. 36, 41; Suet. *Nero* 46. Hughes 2009, 4.

4 Plin. *nat*. 36, 39; Serv. *Aen*. 8, 722.

5 Liverani 1995, 220-21.

6 The literature on the identification, interpretation and placement of the Hadrianeum reliefs is vast. See, for example, Liverani 1995, 229-33; Sapelli 1999, and, more recently, Hughes 2009 and Juhász 2018.



Figure 1. A marble capital decorated with a central trophy of barbarian arms, flanked by two half-clad, lamenting barbarian women. From Portus, Torlonia collection. Photo: ICCD.

groups of the Empire.[7] However, similar galleries were also present in many other cities, for example in the basilica of Tarragona (first half of the 1st century CE),[8] in the so-called Parthian monument of Ephesus (Antonine period),[9] in Leptis Magna and in the porticoes around the temple of Juno Calestis in Thugga (Severan period). In Lugdunum, a relief base represented the 60 Gallic nations on an altar dedicated to Augustus and Roma, and in Pozzuoli a relief base depicted the personifications of the eastern cities that Antoninus Pius had helped after an earthquake.[10]

Though many great Mediterranean port cities figure in the above list, this figurative convention does not seem to have enjoyed much popularity in Ostia. Only one gallery of personifications seems to have been present, in a mosaic floor partly unearthed below Via dei Vigili and belonging to the Claudian bath complex underneath the later Terme di Nettuno (see above pp. 80-82, fig. 13).[11] At the centre of the mosaic, three female province personifications are shown as protomes, all wearing classical hairstyles and garments: Spain has an olive wreath on her head, Africa a headdress with an elephant trunk and tusks, Alexandria a crocodile on her shoulder. Sicily is not shown as a female personification, but as a *triskele*. The fact that most of the surrounding mosaic surface is covered with trophies of barbarian arms, hexagonal shields and spears, raises a question often posed regarding provincial personifications: do they represent enemies captured by force or

7 Smith 1988; Liverani 1995, 227-29; Hughes 2009, 2.

8 Liverani 1995, 222-23.

9 Liverani 1995, 233-43.

10 Ostrowski 1996, 268; Liverani 1995, 224.

11 Calza 1912; Becatti 1961.



Figure 2. Relief fragment with a naked barbarian man tied to a trophy. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 740. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 3. Relief fragment showing *fercula* (possibly displaying tied prisoners) carried in a triumphal procession. Below, spolia of barbarian arms. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 740. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

well-integrated members of a common union?[12] Though the overall design proliferates with warlike weapons, the four provinces here must have been selected as choice trading partners, rather than as examples of military victory. Thus, in this public context, built at the same time as the first important construction works on the Claudian harbour, the theme of provinces as peaceful partners in sea-trade was underlined, though the military undertones were a constant reminder of the martial foundations of Imperial trading power.[13] Furthermore, the central figures of dolphins, and the juxtaposition of four provinces with four winds make the whole complex a sort of symbolic map of the commercial basin of the Mediterranean Sea.

Interestingly, these seem to be the only instances of a gallery of province personifications in Ostia. As a place where the presence of such personifications might have been expected, the Piazzale delle Corporazioni needs further consideration here. Associations of *navicularii* from Africa, Gaul, and Sardinia presided over these rooms, interpreted as a sort of commercial stalls in the porticoes surrounding the central garden and temple.[14] The floor mosaics in each room refer to the place of origin of the *navicularii* in question with name tags and figurative symbols. The symbols are chosen among their typical products (oil amphorae, grain, elephants), geographical features (the Nile delta) or botanical peculiarities (palm trees), in preference to personifications of provinces. Personifications, also carried in triumph as trophies, *simulacra gentium*,

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12 Oval shields were primarily associated with the Celts and hexagonal shields with the Germans, at least in the scholarly tradition, see Hunter 2009, 797. For the question of the symbolism of province personifications, see Toynbee 1934, 2; Liverani 1995, 247; Hughes 2009, 5 and passim.

13 A further, rare instance of a province personification in Ostia is another floor mosaic, the isolated protome of Sicily, a woman with a *triskele*-headdress, in the Terme della Trinacria.

14 For an overview of the extensive bibliography on the functions and meaning of the Piazzale, see Terpstra 2014.

may have held negative meanings for the inhabitants of the provinces themselves.[15] Only in one case, in *statio* no. 11 plausibly belonging to the *naviculari musluvitani* from Mauretania, do we see two female busts without any particular attributes – they could be interpreted as personifications of two (sailing) seasons or of Africa and the grain trade. However, a comparison with the aforementioned empire-wide monuments featuring galleries of ethnic personifications gives rise to the following observations. Firstly, the province galleries are mostly placed in porticoes surrounding a temple, exactly as in the Ostian monument. Notably, in the case of the porticus of Pompey, they were set in a *porticus post scaenam*. This perspective might support reading the mosaics of the Piazzale as a gallery of provinces, in this case self-represented through commercial symbols rather than the more 'official' female personifications dictated by Imperial designs. Secondly, in most cases the personification galleries are monuments dedicated to or connected with the Imperial cult (the Forum of Augustus, the Sebasteion in Aphrodisias, the Hadrianeum, the Parthian monument in Ephesus, the altar of Augustus at Lugdunum). Inversely, interpreting the central temple of Piazzale delle Corporazioni as dedicated to the Imperial cult, as proposed by Patrizio Pensabene and Bouke van der Meer for a series of other reasons, is reinforced by this comparison.[16] The Piazzale could, thus, with its 61 *stationes*, be seen as a commercial version of the Roman *porticus ad nationes* or Hadrianeum.

Defeated barbarians

In the city of Rome, among the most visible images of foreigners were the defeated 'barbarian' enemies – reliefs and statues of captive, subjugated, chained and kneeling Parthians, Germans, and Gauls were on show on arches along the triumphal route, and among the architectural decorations of the Imperial Fora.[17] Ostia, unlike Rome, had few such warlike monuments. The primary triumphal monument in Ostia would have been Domitian's arch in Portus, known only from a lateral view in the Torlonia relief with a quadriga of elephants on its top (see Figure on p. 452). Interestingly, in this case too the theme of victory seems to have been interpreted in a commercial vein: the *quadriga* of elephants on its top referred to the mythological victories of the god Dionysus in India, a connection strengthened by its vicinity to the temple of Bacchus and the *forum vinarium*.[18] Thus, the Ostian arch commemorated the triumphs of the wine trade, rather than military glory and the subjugation of peoples. The presence of another monument with triumphal imagery in Portus, probably from the Severan era, is revealed by the discovery of a relief decorated capital representing, on both sides, trophies and pairs of male and female barbarian prisoners (**Fig. 1**).[19]

Eight fragments of an architectonic relief in white marble, found in the area of the Basilica of Ostia in 1938 (according to the Inventory), represent scenes from a triumphal procession and a frieze with spolia of barbarian arms (**Fig. 2**). However, a series of images representing captive and defeated barbarians from Ostia are known in the form of 'Campana' plaques. They have been found in a *taberna* along the *Decumanus*, opposite the theatre and probably belonged to the roof decorations of a public building in the area.[20] They date to the first part of the first century CE, and probably belonged to the ceiling decorations of a public

15 Ostrowski 1996, 267-68.

16 Pensabene 2005, 502-03; van der Meer 2009.

17 Demougeot 1984; La Rocca 1994; Schneider 1986; 1998; 2002; 2007; Ferris 2000; 2011.

18 Tuck 2008.

19 Visconti 1880, 18-19, cat. 14.

20 The handwritten *Giornale degli scavi*, vol. 25: "1.6.1939. Settore C. Dalle stanze orientali dei primi grandi horrea scavati di fronte al teatro e più precisamente in quelle più vicine al Decumano presso il casotto del custode si trovano frammenti di lastre di terracotta figurate con barbari e trofei dei due tipi von Rohden - Winnefeld, *Die ant. Terrakotten*, Tav. LXX 2 e LXXXVII.2".



Figure 4. Fragments of Campana plaques, captive barbarians stand on either side of a victory trophy. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 3477. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

building. The fragments belong to two figural types. The first shows a central victory trophy, with two captive barbarians of the generic northern type (**Fig. 4**; **Cat. no. 46**).[21] Both wear an ample fringed mantle, and have long dishevelled hair, beards and moustaches. The central trophy is a tree trunk on which the weapons of the defeated are suspended: hexagonal and oval shields, a dragon-headed *carnyx* horn, and a fringed mantle. The facial expressions of the barbarians are pained, though they are shown in a calm and resigned pose, conveying silent pathos.

The second pictorial type displays two barbarian captives being carried in a triumph, continuing the moral lecture on the harsh fate of defeated enemies (**Figs. 5-6**).[22] From Ostia, only three unconnected fragments have been found, but they can be interpreted thanks to similar, more fully preserved plaques like those in the British Museum. Two male barbarians are bound by a chain around their necks and legs, seated in a heavy chariot, a *carpentum*, drawn by two mules, presumably in a triumphal procession; each captive is held by a Roman guard. A further Roman figure leads the mules by the reins in front. The captives wear their national costume, a mantle over their nude upper body and trousers; their hair is long and unkempt. Their expressions are particularly lively and vexed, mouths open in lament. One gestures visibly, stretching out his right arm, perhaps in supplication; the other holds a hand against his face, in a gesture of mourning or weeping. In this case, too, an atmosphere of tragic pathos is effectively created. The power relations in the image are also unmistakable. In this case, the enemies' bodies are treated as inanimate objects: bound and carried around as trophies of war. Yet the barbarian captives are certainly not shown as dehumanized: they are at the centre of the image and of the viewer's attention, in poses full of desperation and agony like the tragic heroes of Greek myth. In this, they are similar in spirit to the most thoroughly analysed of all Roman representations of barbarians, the putative Gaulish trophy of Caesar, and in particular the Dying Gaul.

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21 Ostia inv. 3477, three connected fragments of one plate, of which one is missing, stamp of *M. Antonius Epaphra* (*CIL* XV 2542), and a fragment of the right side of another similar plate. Inv. 13272 is a small fragment of a similar plate, showing only the barbarian arms on the trophy (head of the *carnyx*), and a fragment of different stamp *Valens* (*CIL* XV 2552-53). The latter piece has been published by Tortorella 1981, 68, fig. 9. For the type and its parallels, see Von Rohden 1911, 131-32, and pl. LXXV, 2. Tortorella 1981 gives a further example of the same subject on a plate by a third producer, *Octavius* (*CIL* XV 2548), fig. 10: Roma, Museo delle Terme, fig. 11: British Museum, inv. n. D 626.

22 Ostia Antiquarium inv. 3345, inv. 3348 and inv. 3349. For the type and parallels, see von Rohden 1911, 132-33, fig. 248, pl. 87.1 and Beard 133-34, fig. 24; British Museum inv. 1805,0703.342. A variant with a plaque carried in front of the captives, in Moscow, in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, inv. AT 3712, of Antonius Felix (*CIL* XV 2543). For captives and *carpentum* chariots in triumphs, see Östenberg 2009, 33, esp. n. 98. Gabelmann 1981, 5-7, 453-56, figs. 14-16. For triumphal images on Campana plaques, see Tortorella 2008.



Figure 5. Three unconnected fragments of a Campana plaque, two captives in a chariot in a triumphal procession. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 3345, inv. 3348 and inv. 3349. Photo: Ria Berg.



Figure 6. A fully preserved terracotta plaque with two barbarians in a carriage. British Museum, inv. 1805,0703.342. ©The Trustees of the British Museum.

Various scholars have observed and noted that the imposing figure of the Dying Gaul amplifies the enemy's strength and the threat he poses, whilst simultaneously inducing the viewer to feel empathy for his fate.[23] However, the depiction of the barbarians' armour or dress never aims at ethnic accuracy or realism.[24] Rather, they are characterized simply as non-Romans, on the verge of being absorbed into the Roman system of habits, grooming and clothing.

As for the topographical placement of such images, they occur above all in the *loci* of political power. In Rome, such images cluster around the Palatine (Parthian trophy of Augustus), the Roman Forum (Porticus of Gaius and Lucius, arch of Septimius Severus) and the Imperial Fora (Caryatids of the Forum of Augustus' and Dacians of the Forum of Trajan). In Ostia, the Forum and the area around the theatre and the Piazzale delle Corporazioni seem to have been central for such imagery.[25] Secondarily, images of captive enemies are placed on *loci* of movement. Triumphal arches, as such, are dynamic monuments that evoke firstly the passage of the military procession, and secondly normal city traffic. In Rome, there is a strong topographical connection between the *pompa triumphalis* and theatres. The Ostian Campana plaques also suggest movement as they originally formed a long continuous frieze along a rooftop; near their findspot, in front of the theater, a triumphal arch was erected in the Severan period. This can be interpreted as a reference

23 Pollitt 1986, 96; Edwards 2003, 62; Ferris 2011, 188 with bibliography.

24 Hunter 2009, 797-98.

25 A more detailed account of the Ostian reliefs depicting barbarians and trophies is in preparation by the author.

to the temporary nature of the captives' status as prisoners of war, soon to be integrated into Roman society, first as slaves and later, perhaps, as freedmen. The theatrical connection also associates barbarian prisoners to the characters of tragedy.

Caricatural foreigners in the minor arts

Besides captive enemies and divine personifications, a third type of images of foreigners, often in a servile role, are those of the minor arts such as *lychnophoroi*, moulded handles, vessels and lamps, mostly visible only in the private sphere.[26]

The northern and eastern barbarian types (Gauls, Germans, Dacians, and Parthians), common on public war monuments, rarely appear in the minor arts.[27] An exception to this rule is a terracotta statuette from Ostia depicting a Dacian, recognizable from the trousers, ample fringed mantle, and sleeved tunic (**Fig. 7; Cat. no. 47**). The figure does not, however, wear the typical pointed hat. The image, though somewhat caricatural, does not seem intended to induce scorn or laughter at the expense of the defeated. Rather, the figure seems to maintain dignity in defeat like the corresponding large-scale statues of Dacians in Trajan's Forum, for example by not showing the hands in chains, but only allusively placed in front of the body. The figurine was found in a side room on the eastern side of the *macellum*.[28] Its purpose remains enigmatic: a souvenir of war or of Trajan's Forum? A private and portable trophy?



Figure 7. Statuette of a bearded barbarian, probably a Dacian captive. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3510. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 8. Bronze applique in the form of an African boy. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3558. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

By contrast, Africans or Ethiopians rarely appeared as defeated enemies on public trophies (for obvious geo-political reasons), but were chosen more often as subjects in the minor arts.[29] A small bronze applique from Ostia takes the form of a bust of a black African youth (**Fig. 8; Cat. no. 48**). It was found in a hoard of bronze objects, in the Insula of Diana, and its original use context is unknown.[30] The status and meaning

26 Lenski 2013.

27 Rare instances are a *situla* with handles in the form of couples duelling, bearded northern barbarians wearing trousers and with a nude upper body (from Herculaneum, MANN inv. 73146; see Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli 1990, 277, cat. 85, figs. 192-93) and a nude, bearded barbarian captive, chained on the top of a water-heater as a handle (from Pompeii, so-called Albergo dei Christiani MANN inv. 73879; see Giordano – Kahn 1979, 64-68, interpreted as a Jewish captive).

28 *Giornale di scavo* 30.7.1938: "Da una stanza ad E del piazzale pavimentato di marmo e di mosaico."

29 Ferris 2011, 185; Mitchell 2013. Oggiano 2015, 514: Not only ethnic "Others" were represented on utensils as decorative elements, but also other groups socially or politically outside the hegemonic power structure.

30 Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 3558. *NSc* 1915, 255-57, fig. 20 (Calza).

of the person depicted is not obvious. The figure is dressed in a small hooded cloak and is drawing the hood down with his fingers. Such short, hooded mantles, the *paenula* or *cucullus*, generally had servile connotations, often closely linked to a genre of statuettes depicting child slaves working as lantern bearers.[31] The mantle served to keep out the cold air during the lantern-bearer slaves' nightly rounds following their master's entourage. Their ethnic origin is not always underlined, but quite often such slaves seem to have been Africans. A good parallel for our figure is a bronze statuette in the Louvre, a small African boy with a hooded *paenula*, in a crouching position, blowing with swollen cheeks. The child is very likely a *lanternarius*, shown while blowing out his light.[32] Many such images aim at a humorous effect, contrasting the light of the lantern with the dark skin of its bearer; they may be tinged with empathy, showing the small lantern-bearer sleeping, or alert and concentrated on his work.[33]

The applique is of fine workmanship, detailing the facial features of the subject individually. The sartorial details of the heavy cloak, seemingly embroidered at the seams, and the thin tunic below also confer a certain touch of luxury on the image.[34] Indeed, so-called Ethiopian slaves, mostly from eastern Africa, obtained through the long and difficult slave trade routes that only a few survived, were first and foremost considered luxurious rarities, not to be employed in the fields and in agricultural work, but among the most publicly visible slaves.[35] Thus, in his *Annals* Tacitus has the Emperor Tiberius, in a speech railing against excessive luxuries, mention "the cosmopolitan hordes of slaves", *familiarum numerum et nationes*, among the vast mansions, gold and silver plate, and precious works of art in bronze.[36] Among slaves, an exotic skin colour might thus become easily recognizable proof of a distant origin, and therefore synonymous with an extremely high price. Obviously, this attitude, through the aesthetic appreciation for a different appearance, became an instrument of objectification, conflating human beings with material exotic luxury imports.

The form and function of our applique reflects this luxury connotation. It was most probably made as a *tondo* medallion to decorate a *fulcrum*, the bronze headrest of a dining couch, reserved for elite use during formal dinners. The *fulcrum* normally presents an animal head above, usually the Dionysian mule, and below, a bust of a mythological figure like a Cupid, Dionysus, satyr or maenad, all members of the Dionysian *thiasus*.[37] Thus, the ethnic otherness of the African figure is elevated to a mythological realm, becoming, as it were, a member of the Dionysian *thiasus*. Some parallels can also be seen in the rare *fulcrum tondo* with a personification bust of the province of Africa bearing a dish of fruit.[38]

Ephebic figures as table or lamp-holders were a particularly Roman creation as banquet paraphernalia: specifically, the *lychnophoroi* represented the ideally beautiful slave youths who served at dinner-parties, as thoroughly discussed by Noel Lenski in a recent article.[39] Lenski states that, "In some very real

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31 For example, the marble statue of a sleeping child *lanternarius* in a hooded *cucullus*, Museo Nazionale Romano, Terme di Diocleziono, inv. 125587. Boldrighini 2017, 229, fig. VII.41.

32 Louvre inv. Br. 701. Bastien 2009, 235; Boldrighini 2017, 178-79, fig. IV.4. This piece is also a furniture attachment.

33 In a bronze lantern-bearer statuette, in the Florence archaeological museum inv. 2321, as a visual pun, the hood of the figure becomes the beak of an ointment vessel.

34 The exceptional clothing was commented on already by the excavator, Guido Calza, who deemed it a slave cloak, but "curioso e notabile", suggesting that the person's status as a slave was considered more important than his race, *NSc* 1915, 257: "così nella traduzione realisticamente artistica è prevalsa la caratteristica servile alla caratteristica della razza".

35 Fentress 2011, 67-68.

36 Tac. *ann*. 3, 53.

37 See, for example, the Cupid *tondo* in the Amiternum bed, Musei Capitolini inv. 1074. Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli 1990, 163, fig. 122, 165, fig. 125, cat. 29.

38 Alessandria, Museo Civico inv. 724. Giacobello 2010, 167.

39 Lenski 2013, 129-39. See also Schneider 1986, for eastern youths as *trapezoforoi*, for example Taf. 47, cat. BS 1 BS 2.



Figure 9. Statuette with a caricatural African figure. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3237. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 10. A terracotta lamp in the form of a caricatural head. The nozzle of the lamp, below the figure's mouth, is missing. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2731. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

sense, Romans regarded their slaves as implements", citing for example Petronius' Trimalchio drying his hands at table in the hair of a servant boy. Seen in this company, our bronze figure takes on the role of an expensive, exotic and ideally beautiful banquet servant, integrated into the Roman system of slavery and thus depicted primarily for his servile status, elevated to a semi-divine sphere by his beauty.

A fragmentary terracotta figurine shows an individual of African origin with a different intent (**Fig. 9; Cat. no. 50**).[40] It is blatantly caricatural and grotesque, with furrowed brow, exaggerated facial features and emaciated chest. A very similar bony chest can be observed on the figurine of a choking man, personifying envy, analysed by Alexandre Mitchell in a discussion of the functions of ancient pathological caricature figures.[41] Mitchell notes that these figures, sometimes pygmies and hunchbacks, often bear traces of red paint, like this Ostian example, and rings to suspend them as talismans, to avert the evil eye and envy from households.[42] Thus, in this case the apotropaic function, combining different traits of otherness, prevailed over ethnic portraiture on this Ostian object.

A further Ostian example worth studying in this context is a terracotta lamp in the form of a caricatural head (**Fig. 10; Cat. no. 49**). Thanks to the use of an unusual black-gloss coating, and the pronounced characterization of the nose, mouth and hair, it seems to depict a black African. Yet the identification is not – and is probably not meant to be – totally secure. The lamp can be compared to more elaborate types of lamps in the form of the head of an African, in bronze, widespread throughout the Hellenistic world from the second century BCE, and continuing into the early Empire with little variation.[43] Such luxury items, again, associate Africans with exotic luxury products. The beak of the lamp, sometimes set into the mouth of the figure with the burning flame, seems grotesque: various scholars have given sexual interpretations to such scenes.[44] It has also been proposed that such lamps may represent African performers – in this case, fire-eaters – who provided entertainment during banquets.[45] A pun on the interplay between the lamp light and the dark countenance

40 Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 3237.

41 Mitchell 2013, 288, fig. 13. From Smyrna, Musée du Louvre, inv. CA 5131. A similar choking figurine, bald, with huge ears, bones visible on the chest, was also found in Ostia, Antiquarium inv. 3513. It is perforated at the neck for suspension.

42 Mitchell 2013, 290-91.

43 The bronze lamps with African heads, though chronologically diffuse, were not particularly common – for example in the publication of bronze lamps from Pompeii, only one example is present, Conticello De' Spagnolis – De Carolis 1988.

44 Fentress 2011, 67-68, fig. 8.

45 Grandjouan 1961, 33.

may again have been intended.[46] In any case, in this object there is considerably less empathy or admiration, and more commodification and caricatural derision.

A further key to interpretation is the wreath worn by some examples of head-lamps. These place the lamp in a pictorial context connected to the Dionysian and theatrical sphere: other head-lamps, representing Dionysus, Silens, Satyrs, and theatrical masks, the New Comedy figure of the comic, cunning slave, are all characterized by wreaths.[47] In such company, the African head once more takes on the role of a Dionysian banquet servant or entertainer, with a comical tinge.

Humour is a recurrent theme in the representation of otherness; Ada Cohen, in an article discussing the uses of visual humour, notes that humour affords great insight into the workings of ethnic, racial and gender identities: "In visual arts, seemingly serious scenes can be humorous in intent and humorous scenes may have serious undercurrents."[48] For example, the pygmies, stereotypical foreigners, as examined by Versluys and Meyboom, are extremely complex and multi-layered cultural signifiers, not just ethnic caricatures.[49] Ithyphallic lamps with pygmy-type bodies may present African facial features, or appear in eastern clothes, or be Dionysian satyrs in theatrical masks. Here apotropaic powers are connected with humour, laughter and sexuality. Ethnicity is just one thread in this fabric.

This necessarily leads us to the difficult and much debated question of whether such depictions should be read as racist, and whether this modern concept can in any way be applied to ancient Roman society.[50] Do these utensils objectify human beings as consumable commodities in the same way as similar objects in early 20th-century America, such as the salt cellars in the form of African Americans?[51] In Ostia, many of the viewers and users of these objects were non-Romans. How would viewers from different ethnic groups have received them? Interestingly, similar images were used and manufactured in Hellenistic Greece, Delos, Roman Alexandria, Asia Minor and Carthage – revealing that the half-fictive image of the foreign-Other was, in a way, a mirage that could always be projected further away from the Self.

The Romans could be described as 'ethnocentric', judging themselves culturally superior to all other nations and depicting them in stereotypical ways, without paying attention to real details of the dress, grooming or weapons of the ethnic Other. The idealized provinces were assimilated to gods, captive barbarians were likened to actors in a tragic play, the grotesque ethnic figurines in a comedy, and their masks, tragic or comical, could eventually also be removed and changed. Scornful laughter at the different, as grotesque, was effectively counterbalanced by multiple positive interpretations: the images also elicited empathy and compassion, and may have been seen as powerful and ideally beautiful, mythological and divine, exotic and luxurious, apotropaic and religious.

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46 Snowden, 1983, 82-83.

47 For example, some Latial productions in the collections of the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Roma present this feature, Barbera 1992, 198, cat. 3, figs. 3-4; 204, cat. 6, fig. 8; head of an African with a wreath, 201, cat. 15, fig. 18; African head with a band around the head, 219, cat. 16, fig. 20. For the theatrical connection of caricatural figures, see also Mitchell 2013; Papadodima 2014.

48 Cohen 2011, 465, 479.

49 Meyboom – Versluys 2007.

50 Snowden refuted the idea that classical references to black Africans could be deemed racist (1983, 63), but admitted that the ancients expressed ethnocentric judgments of other cultures and had "narcissistic canons of beauty". Benjamin Isaac, more pessimistically, deemed Classical Antiquity to be "proto-racist", particularly on the basis of the ancients' environmental theory, racism as a "form of determinism… which ignores individuality, personal characteristics", 2004, 21. For discussion, see Fentress 2011, 65-67; Cohen 2011, 478-79; Gruen 2011.

51 Robin Bernstein 2009, 68 has noted that, in the early 20th century United States, material objects representing African Americans created and maintained racial prejudice, associating them "with consumable commodities".

PRODUCTION

Ostia as Centre of Production

Arja Karivieri

Agriculture

In the vicinity of Ostia, the Tiber river delta provided fertile soil for cultivation and livestock farming.[1] Particularly in the area of present-day Dragoncello, east of Ostia, there were a high concentration of *villae rusticae*. The area was populated by the time when the *colonia* of Ostia was founded, in the fourth and third centuries BCE. This early settlement was characterized by relatively modest *villae* built of tuff using the *opus quadratum* technique. These were mostly small family farms; the objects found during the excavations consist mainly of cooking wares. Small farms were abandoned in the second half of the second century BCE, possibly as a result of the economic crisis caused by the Punic wars, or as agriculture concentrated on large *latifundium* farms owned by the rich, and the small farms were no longer rebuilt. From the third century BCE onwards, large villas for more intensive production were built in the area, and these were expanded and refurbished in the following centuries. Each villa had 25 to 40 hectares of farmland and irrigation systems bringing water from the Tiber River. *Inter alia,* structures suggesting wine or olive processing and facilities for storing food, probably cereals, have been found adjacent to larger villas. Farming continued to be intense around Ostia until the late second century CE, and archaeological finds from rural villas attest to their use until the fourth and fifth centuries CE.[2]

By the sea, near the estuary, was an area of sandy land mixed with clayey sediments where vegetables and fruit were grown; there were possibly plantations belonging to the inhabitants of the city. These products were sold either in the *tabernae* or in larger markets. Ancient writers particularly praise leeks and melons produced in Ostia. For example, the area of Isola Sacra provided pasture areas, and vegetables, herbs and flowers were also cultivated there for sale in Portus and Ostia.[3] According to Pliny the Younger, figs and mulberries (*morus*) grew in abundance in the area of his villa near Ostia.[4] In a recent study conducted by Bellotti *et al*., palynological analyses of 20 samples from the core S5 drilled in the marsh land south of the Tiber delta displayed a significant amount of cultivated and anthropochore plants starting from around 450 BCE, including an increase of *Olea*, *Vitis*, cereals, walnut tree and chestnut, evidence of human activity in the area.[5]

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1 Bellotti *et al*. 2011; for the most recent synthesis of geoarchaeological studies and new proposals for the dating of the geological development of the Tiber river delta through history, see Salomon 2020.

2 Olcese – Gonzàlez Muro – Pellegrino 2017, 2-4; Fascitiello 2018; Pellegrino – Fascitiello 2018.

3 Meiggs 1973, 265-66; Pavolini 1986, 48, 50.

4 Plin. *epist*. 2, 17, 15. Meiggs 1973, 265.

5 Bellotti *et al*. 2011.

Fishing

Fishing was an important source of livelihood, and fishermen on the coast of Ostia and Portus had to maintain the fish supply for the Roman market. Fresh fish, especially large specimens like red mullet, were highly appreciated and consumed at the banquets of upper-class customers, whereas people of modest means bought sprats and sardines.[6] Five inscriptions pertaining to Ostia and Rome refer to the association of fishermen (*piscatores*) and divers of the river Tiber, the association of boatmen and fishermen, and the association of fishermen and fishmongers. These inscriptions show the importance of the *collegia* of fishermen that collaborated with fishmongers.[7] The *curriculum* on the funerary altar of Cn. Sentius Felix from the early second century CE includes the fact that he was patron of fishmongers (*piscatores propolares*).[8] Annalisa Marzano suggests that the same individuals both fished and salted the fish.[9]

Fish-salting activity can be assumed to have taken place, due to the coastal lagoons and the large salt works in the Tiber delta[10] (for the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*, see the article by Morelli in this volume). In her article, Cinzia Morelli reports on the new results of archaeological research on the Ostia salt-beds, which show the importance of salt production for the region's production and commerce. Salt was used especially in the preparation of the most important spice in Roman cuisine, the fish sauce, *garum*. *Salinator* was also usual as a family name in Ostian grave inscriptions (cf. **Cat. no. 173**); according to Russell Meiggs, the name derives from the freedom given to slaves who were employed in salt production.[11] Salted fish products were available for various social strata, rural labourers and the Roman army, also as food for ship crews, as sixty small vessels recovered among the provisions in a shipwreck in the Rhône at Arles suggest. These vessels from Ostia/Portus contained a fish paste made of small fish.[12]

However, intensive fishing became a problem during the Imperial period, and the stock suffered so much that Emperor Claudius asked the commander of the Misenum fleet to introduce wrasses (*Scarus*) – fish from the Dardanelles – between Ostia and the coast of Campania.[13] Further evidence for the activities of Ostia's fishermen are fish hooks found during the excavations (double hook, **Cat. no. 53**); tools used to weave and repair nets, and to repair sails have also been found. In 1959, a wooden fishing boat was found in the area of Claudius' harbour at Portus, with a fish-well in the centre of it for the transport of living fish, a box which could be closed with a lid during transport. The Fiumicino 5 wreck is the only preserved example of the *naves vivariae* that could keep the fish alive and supply the banquets of the Roman aristocracy with fresh fish.[14] It is assumed that the boat was locally constructed, for local traffic in the Tiber delta, along the coast and the river up to Rome. Both fish and crustaceans could be transported to Rome, or as Giulia Boetto emphasizes, to the markets of Portus and Ostia. Boetto suggests that the fish-well of Fiumicino 5 was used for mullet (*Mugil sp.),* gilt-head bream (*Sparus aurata* L.), bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax* L.), eels, as well as

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6 Marzano 2018, 438-42.

7 Marzano 2018, 442-43, n. 30. See also *CIL* VI 1872; *CIL* VI 29700; *CIL* VI 29701; Tran 2006, 151, 158-60, 190-91, 230, 301, 316-18, 339-40, 354.

8 *CIL* XIV 409. Meiggs 1973, 267; Tran 2006, 263; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, no. 81, 276-79.

9 Marzano 2018, 445.

10 Marzano 2018, 442-43.

11 Meiggs 1973, 268-69.

12 Marzano 2018, 442-43.

13 Meiggs 1973, 267-68.

14 Boetto 2016, 123-25, figs. 21.1-21.4.

shrimp (*Crangon crangon* L.) and sole (*Solea solea* L.).[15] Many of these popular fish species are also represented in a mosaic emblema from Isola Sacra (see p. 224 and **Cat. no. 54**).

Fishing is also depicted in two floor mosaics in Ostia, both related to envy. The fishmonger's shop, the Taberna dei Pescivendoli, features a dolphin that was widely believed to interfere with fishing (**Fig. 1**). The mosaic in the Insula of Invidiosus, on the other hand, shows a boy who is pointing at a fisherman who has caught fish; the boy is marked with the word *Invidiosus*, envious (**Fig. 2**).[16]



Figure 1. The dolphin mosaic in the Taberna dei Pescivendoli, with the inscription "*INBIDE CALCO TE*", "Envious one, I tread on you". Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 2. The mosaic in the Insula dell'Invidioso depicting a fisherman who has caught fish, and a boy pointing at him; the boy marked with the text "*Invidiosus*", "Envious". Photo: Arja Karivieri.

15 Boetto 2016, 126-27, fig. 21.7.

16 Pavolini 1986, 50-51.

Wood and timber as production material

The cities and fleets of Ostia and Portus needed huge amounts of wood, which was sourced from the Latium area. Unlike today, when pine trees dominate the landscape because of modern forestry, oak-dominated forests grew in the area during ancient times.[17] The new settlement in the coastal area is also connected with the appearance of *Pinus pinaster/pinea*, cultivated pines introduced by Romans.[18] The city of Ostia needed a great deal of wood: for heating baths, cooking, shipbuilding, building construction, lighting (torches and shingles), furnaces for pottery, glass and metal production, and wood for the funeral pyres.[19] The windows and doors of Ostia's houses, for example, were made of wood, and there were plenty of carpenters working in the city. In rich houses, thin polished alabaster plates were used in the windows, while in ordinary houses glass was used from the beginning of the Imperial period. In the third century CE, glass technology evolved and the former thick, frosted glass was replaced by transparent glass. In modest homes, only wooden hatches covered the windows.[20]

Workspace for artisans and craftsmen

Only in recent years have artisan workshops been found in Ostia and Portus. Some *tabernae* also produced on-site products for sale. The excavations of the Caseggiato delle Fornaci building complex revealed furnaces and basins that are related to industrial production. The floors were covered either with lava stones or with tiles placed in the floor with the *opus spicatum* method, in the shape of herringbone. Working spaces were often located behind shops opening onto the street. Such workshops have been found on the ground floor of many *insulae*, along with retail rooms and apartments. Pavolini suggests that the slaves responsible for production could be confined to the working rooms, where they spent the night after the workday.[21]

To the south of the Via della Foce there is a building complex that was built in the second century CE. Its façade consists of a row of *tabernae*, behind which there were three elongated rooms, possibly offices or production facilities. Each elongated room had a small "temple" on each side, interpreted as an altar of the guardian divinity of a possible guild. The same building complex has a space where the masonry-built basins were used for production, as well as an area for housing, possibly for members of the guild.[22]

The mosaics of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni mention several professional groups, such as flax handlers, rope weavers, felt makers, etc.[23] (see the article by Mustakallio – Karivieri in this book). Many terracotta and grave reliefs depict practitioners of various professions and crafts (see Larsson Lovén's article in this book; **Cat. nos. 28, 57, 59, 61-62, 117-119**), and many grave inscriptions from Isola Sacra mention the occupations of the deceased. Pieces of raw metals, such as hematite, which could be used as dye, have

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17 Bellotti *et al*. 2011: Between 1900 and 600 BCE, the landscape was covered by "a mixed oak-dominated woodland with evergreen elements." After c. 1000 BCE, *Quercus* and *Juniperus* spread on the newly available land.

18 Bellotti *et al*. 2011.

19 Meiggs 1973, 269-70.

20 Pavolini 1986, 71.

21 Pavolini 1986, 53, 55.

22 Pavolini 1986, 55-56.

23 For a useful general overview of artisans and merchants in the cities, see Wilson – Flohr 2016, especially Salvaterra – Cristofori 2016 on research in Italy in the twentieth century.

been found in the excavations of Ostia, as well as metal and glass slag and moulds that were used by local workshops to produce metal objects and glassware (**Cat. nos. 115-116**).[24]

Ceramic and brick production

The Tiber estuary provided clay in abundance for pottery production, but most of the bricks for the buildings of Ostia were made in Rome or its immediate vicinity on the upper reaches of the Tiber. River boats brought Ostian products to Rome and were able to return with a brick cargo.[25] Only a couple of local brick producers are known from the second century CE, but these include one woman, Stertinia Bassula, who owned at least four brick workshops (*officinae*).[26] Simple table ware too was produced in Ostia, as is evidenced by wasters found in dumps during excavations, such as a pile of plates and another pile of ceramic cups. Terracotta figurines were also made locally. In the Imperial period, finer glazed tableware, plates and drinking cups were produced in Ostia. One of the well-known producers was Sestus Annius Afrus, whose main workshop was in Arezzo (10 BCE – 10 CE). As Pavolini suggests, products from Ostia's workshop may have been manufactured for export.[27]

Production of terracotta oil lamps in Ostia

The most common source of illumination in Ostia was a ceramic oil lamp made of burnt clay, using olive oil as fuel. The earliest known oil lamps, dating back to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, were bowl-shaped dishes, in which, in addition to olive oil, wicks made of plant fibers, especially flax, were used. In the second century BCE, ceramic lamps began to be manufactured using moulds made of clay or gypsum, whereby the top and bottom of the lamp were made of separate moulds, and the lamp parts were joined at the seam by fluid clay before the final drying and burning of the lamp in the kiln. The use of moulds made it possible to use both intricate ornamental patterns and motifs. The moulds also made it possible to produce lamps in serial production, which is already visible in the archaeological finds of the first century BCE: several similar lamps have been found, for example, in connection with the excavation of lamp kilns and waste heaps of Roman lamp factories.

Some of the oil lamps found in Ostia are signed, i.e., the signature of the lamp maker or workshop owner can be found in the bottom of the lamp. Such a way of naming a lamp shop appears in some terracotta lamps from the first century BCE until the fifth century CE. The manufacturer's name is usually in the genitive or in the nominative; it is often a single name of Greek origin or a Latin name in the genitive, often abbreviated.[28]

Oil lamps were essential for everyday life everywhere – which is why they were also manufactured throughout the Roman Empire, and Italian oil lamps were traded throughout the western Mediterranean,

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24 Pavolini 1986, 56, 64.

25 Meiggs 1973, 270.

26 Cf. also the *I bolli doliari romani dell'Italia centro-occidentale* - database created by Eva Margareta Steinby, on the website of the Institutum Romanum Finlandiae (http://www.bollidoliari.org/), including the brick stamps of known producers, the dates and documented find contexts. The database includes a large amount of images and bibliography for further studies. See also Setälä 1977, 133, 190-91, for Stertinia Bassula. For the most recent study of female property ownership at Ostia during the Principate, see Bruun 2018, suggesting that female ownership was much more common at Ostia than at Rome, more than thirty per cent of the total.

27 Pavolini 1986, 59-60.

28 Ellis 1995, 292-93.

Gaul, southern Spain and Africa. Some central Italian workshops also manufactured lamps locally in the provinces. In other words, they had "subsidiaries" that produced the same products for local needs. We also know that in the provinces, "pirate" replicas of desired products were sometimes made, that is, the original lamp was used as a model for making moulds. Such replicas can be identified by the colour and quality of the clay and by a lower quality than the original lamp, and sometimes by a fake signature that is different from the original.

Monica Ceci has studied 57 oil lamps found in the Casa di Diana, most of which can be connected to lamp makers who were active in Rome and Ostia in the late second and early third centuries CE.[29] Usually, a lamp from the Imperial age has a circular central disk above, with an image in relief, a slightly outward sloping border around the central disk, a rounded nozzle with a wick-hole, and a pierced handle. At the bottom of one of the lamps is the signature LFABRICMAS, which is an abbreviation of the name Lucius Fabricius Masculus: he was a well-known lamp manufacturer in Rome during the Antonine period (end of the second century CE). There are other lamp manufacturers in Rome whose names begin in the same way as Lucius Fabricius, such as LFABRISATVR. According to scholars, this may suggest that all these producers were freed slaves of the same person, named Lucius Fabricius – the former owner would have wanted to control the quality of the lamps they made, to ensure that his name and social status were not associated with any low-quality production.[30]

The most widespread lamp product of the early imperial period is probably the so-called *Firmalampe*, which was manufactured in northern Italy, but also in many local lamp shops, especially in the northern provinces of the Roman Empire. The popularity of these lamps was based on their simple form, which was easy to copy and produce in series. This type of lamps was manufactured from the mid-first century until the third century CE. According to Ceci, "Factory Lamps" were also manufactured in Ostia and were stamped by several manufacturers.[31] The most common group among the finds from the Casa di Diana are lamps with a heart-shaped nozzle; in addition, there are lamps in which the rim framing the plain central disk is decorated with two or three rows of globules.[32]

Most lamp finds at the Casa di Diana can be dated to the Severan period, and two lamp makers who signed their products with the abbreviation ANNISER or CIVNBIT are particularly prominent in the artefacts. The ANNISER abbreviation was used by Annius Serapiodorus; he is the only producer who can be said to have manufactured the lamps in the Ostia region, since the lamps he signed have been found in and around Ostia.[33] The exhibition features a lamp of Annius Serapiodorus depicting the Good Shepherd (**Cat. no. 160**; see the article by Karivieri on Christianity in this volume, pp. 371-85, figs. 5a-b). The products of the lamp maker C. Iunius Bitus (or Bito) are found especially in Rome and the surrounding areas, but also in large numbers in Ostia. It is possible, therefore, that C. Iunius Bitus' workshop was also located in Ostia.[34] There are many similar themes in the product lines of these two major lamp workshops, and it is possible that lamp makers shared disk motifs and matrixes with each other and got inspiration for their products from major manufacturing centres in Africa.[35] The lamps were apparently made specifically for

29 Ceci 2013.

30 Pavolini 1976-77, table 1; Anselmino Balducci 1994, 453, table 1; Pavolini 1995, 458; Ceci 2013, 159.

31 Ceci 2013, 160, 188, notes 17-19.

32 Ceci 2013, 160-61, 178-84.

33 Meiggs 1973, 270-71; Ceci 2013, 165.

34 Ceci 2013, 165-67.

35 Ceci 2013, 169.



Figure 3. The Attic lamp decorated with an erotic scene on the disk (see the image on p. 317), signed by the Athenian lamp maker Preimos on the base. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2707. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

the local clientele, while higher quality products were brought to Ostia from both Africa and Athens. One example of this is a unique lamp made of fine clay and decorated with an erotic motif, produced by the Athenian lamp maker Preimos in the mid-third century CE. (**Fig. 3; Cat. no. 140**; see also Berg's article *Hic Amor Habitat*, pp. 313-18, fig. 6).

Bakeries

Up to now, seven or eight bakeries have been identified in Ostia; of these, two bakeries, the Caseggiato dei Molini on the Via dei Molini and the Molino I, XIII, 4 near the Porta Laurentina on the Semità dei Cippi, are the best known (**Fig. 4**). In ancient Rome, bakeries generally also functioned as grain mills, which allowed bakeries to become quite large building complexes. The grinding of grain, the kneading of the dough and the moulding of the bread took place in a large central hall, and the finished products could be sold through the associated *taberna* or, for example, through itinerant bread merchants.[36] Some grave reliefs depict bakery workers in their various activities, or grinding horses and mules, such as the relief in front of the grave monument of P. Nonius Zethus exhibited in the exhibition, which also displays objects used in bakery (**Cat. no. 15**; see the article by Berg in this volume, p. 89). The cereal grains were dropped into the hourglass-shaped hollow top of the grinding stones (*catillus*), from whence the grains dropped down through the central opening and, as the top rotated, were finely ground against the wall of the immobile, conical base of the mill-stone (*meta*). There was a hole in the centre of the exterior of the *catillus* where a wooden beam was attached, and a donkey or mule attached to the other end of the beam to rotate the *catillus* and grind the grain under the supervision of a bakery worker. The flour was collected in wooden or metal containers plausibly attached on top of the base surrounding the *meta*.

After the sieving of the flour, the dough was made by mixing the flour with water and salt in the dough reservoirs, kneading-machines, and raised with yeast (*fermentum*). The reservoirs were made of lava stone (*lapis molaris*), the rough surface of which grinds the crumbs of the grains finer; these reservoirs have been preserved at Ostia's bakeries on both the Via dei Molini and the Semità dei Cippi.[37] Kneading the dough could also be done mechanically by a combination of fixed and rotating blades attached to a vertical spindle that was rotated with a crossbeam pushed by slaves or animals.[38] A well-preserved example of Ostian baking ovens is the large dome-shaped round oven at the Caseggiato dei Molini bakery that was documented in 1996. The oven is nearly five meters in diameter and, according to researchers, may have had one or more rotating grates because of the four horizontal recesses in the walls made of tuff.[39]

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36 Bakker *et al*. 1999; Bakker 2001; Holleran 2012, 131-32.

37 Pavolini 1986, 60, 62.

38 Bakker *et al*. 1999, 6-7; Bakker 2001.

39 Bakker *et al*. 1999, 59-60.



Figure 4. Bakery on the Semità dei Cippi. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Risto Valjus has analysed the epigraphic evidence connected with bakers and grain dealers of Ostia, especially the origin of M. Caerellius Iazemis, who made a dedication to the Temple of Hercules at Tivoli.[40] Valjus draws attention to the Cappadocian origin of his name Iazemis and the references by Athenaeus to Cappadocian bread as an appreciated speciality, made with milk, oil and salt. The name of M. Caerellius appears in two other inscriptions at Ostia, referring to a man with the *cognomen* Hieronymus.[41] Valjus sees M. Caerellius Iazemis as a freedman at Ostia, who served three times as a magistrate for the collegium of *pistores*, and as *codicarius* transported grain to Rome, a man who may have worked first as a baker, *pistor*, making bread according to old traditions and was later active in the grain trade, *mercator frumentarius*, and transport, *codicarius*.[42]

Fullonicae - multifunctional textile processing facilities

Fullonicae were multifunctional facilities for textile processing; they could be used for the washing, dyeing, bleaching and finishing of textiles. At least four *fullonicae* are known from Ostia, the most important of which is located on the Via degli Augustali (**Figs. 5-6**). Roof-supporting square brick pillars and four large basins used for laundry are still visible in the centre of the four-sided elongated building. From the south, water entered into the building and flowed from one basin to another through lead pipes. The surface of the basins was covered with waterproof plaster. The laundry used urine, which was collected by the staff of the *fullonica* at the entrances to the public baths and restaurants from the containers on the floors. In the space

40 *CIL* XIV 4234. Valjus 1998; Valjus 1999, 39.

41 *CIL* XIV 70 and *CIL* XIV 4569, *dec.* III,7. Ath. 3, 112c; 3,113b; 4,129e and 4,647c. Valjus 1998, 263.

42 Valjus 1998, 264.



Figure 5. *Fullonica* on the Via degli Augustali. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

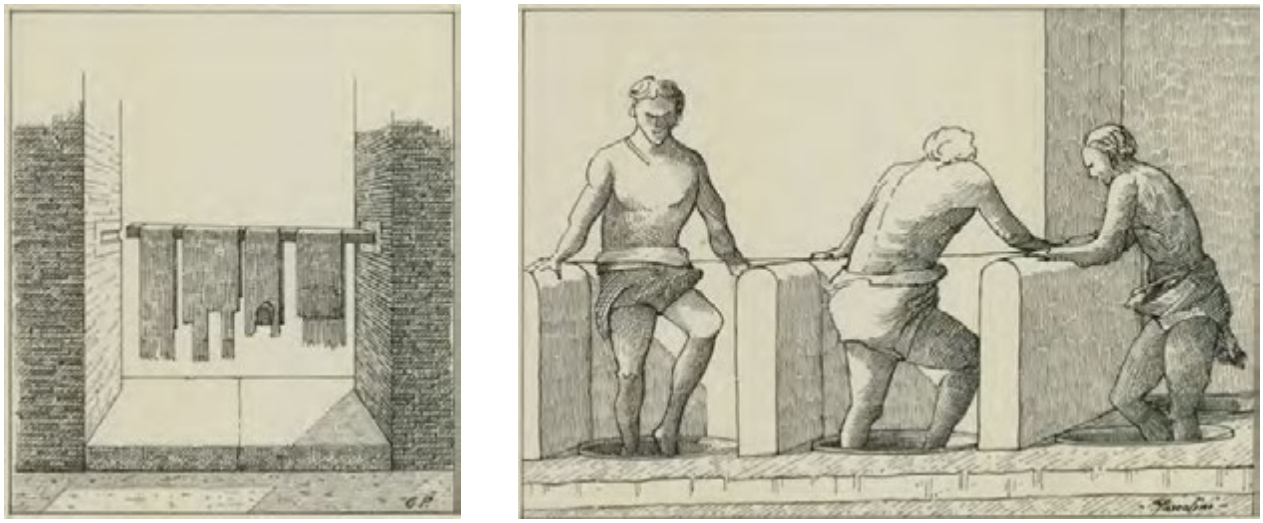


Figure 6. Reconstruction drawing, representing the activities in the *fullonica* on the Via degli Augustali. Drawing: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

used for the further processing of textiles, there were 34 ceramic fulling tubs separated by shallow walls, fulling stalls, along the walls, and two tubs beside the central pillars of the building: workers could lean on the shallow walls between the tubs while treading the textiles in the vessels (*Saltus fullonicus*) (**Fig. 6**). Between the brick pillars, wooden bars were placed, on which the fabrics were hung to dry.[43]

43 Pietrogrande 1976; fig. 20 reconstruction drawing of the *fullonica* on the Via degli Augustali, Pavolini 1986, 62-64, figs. 19-20; Flohr 2013, 23-30 and *passim*. See also Miko Flohr's new analysis of two Ostian *fullonicae*, I, XIII, 3, and the *fullonica* on the

The owners and supervisors of the *fullonicae* had their own association in Ostia, *Corpus Fontanorum*, which is mentioned in an inscription from 232 CE.[44]

Masonry and measuring

The tools of the masons are depicted in the terracotta relief found in the area of the Via dei Balconi (**Cat. no. 57**; see p. 469), and the lead plumb (**Cat. no. 58**) on display at the exhibition, which was an essential aid in masonry work and major building projects. The harps and bronze sticks needed in construction and renovation by architects, masons, carpenters, for floor and wall tiles, for mosaics and wall painters have also been found in Ostia. The measuring sticks are 29.6 cm long, *pes*, which corresponds to the Roman standard foot; it was the basic unit in Roman architecture. Also, the size of the tombs outside the city walls was precisely given by the foot measurement, which determined the future size of the burial monuments to be built and the space available to the grave-builders; the size of the burial plot is not seldom mentioned in the titular epitaph, mostly between 10 and 15 feet.[45] (See also the articles by DeLaine and Blid in this volume).

Via degli Augustali (V, VII, 3), Flohr 2017, 46-53; the article explores the world of smell and sound in *fullonicae*, and Flohr suggests new interpretations specifically of how the smell of urine might have been neutralized in *fullonicae* using fuller's earth, *creta*, a clay flour. Seneca tells in a colourful way about the everyday life of *fullonica* employees; Sen. *epist*. 15, 4.

44 *CIL* XIV, 4573. Meiggs 1973, 312.

45 Pavolini 1986, 65, figs. 21 and 23; Hope 2007, 140.

Zooarchaeological Research and Our Understanding of Animals in Ancient Ostia

Michael MacKinnon

In the world of Roman antiquity, animals were important in multiple aspects of human life. They provided meat, milk and other resources for dietary consumption, while also provisioning resources such as skins, hides, wool, fur, bone, and other commodities for general use. Some were also harnessed as working beasts, pulling carts, ploughs, and other equipment, or transporting people. Many factored in ritual settings as offerings, while others may have been kept as pets. What one ate, and how one incorporated animals in one's life, moreover, might yield clues about that individual himself/herself, such as identity and ethnicity, social status, dietary preferences, beliefs, and access to resources, among other components.

Fortunately, archaeologists can reconstruct the contribution of animals to past cultures by examining faunal remains recovered from excavations. Bones, teeth and shells often survive well in archaeological contexts – numerous deposits of which have been recovered and analyzed from work at ancient Ostia, in particular. Zooarchaeologists (i.e., specialists in archaeological animal bone analysis) examine these remains and determine criteria such as which species is represented, which part of the skeleton is preserved, the animal's age when it died, its state of health, as well as modifications to the bone that might result from butchery, work conditions, or methods of its disposal.

In much the same way that a forensic detective works, the data collected allow the zooarchaeologist to reconstruct the living population of animals in ancient times, and in turn gather information about how these animals may have been herded, kept, raised, exploited, consumed, or otherwise used among human cultures. This information can be linked with other lines of evidence, including references to animals, farming, and diet as found in the ancient Latin sources (e.g., farming and natural history manuals of authors such as Cato, Varro, Columella, and Pliny the Elder), as well with images and depictions of animals as collected from ancient Roman art.

Although a large extent of the ancient city of Ostia has been excavated, at present zooarchaeological materials were only systematically collected from a handful of locations, as shown in the figure (**Fig. 1**). Luckily, materials from these deposits collectively span the full range of occupation at the site, from 300 BCE until 700 CE. Moreover, they derive from different types of contexts – streets, houses, shops, work areas, etc. – which allows for a better understanding of variability as regards human use (and eventual disposal) of animals and their remains.

Several important patterns emerge from assessment of these zooarchaeological data.[1] First, the mean frequency values for the key domestic livestock consumed in Ostia (that is meat from cattle, sheep, goats and pigs) remain relatively consistent through time from the Republican period into late antiquity. Pigs account for around 60-70% (by counts of bones), with sheep and goats collectively registering values of around 20-

[1] See MacKinnon 2014, with a synthesis of the latest results.

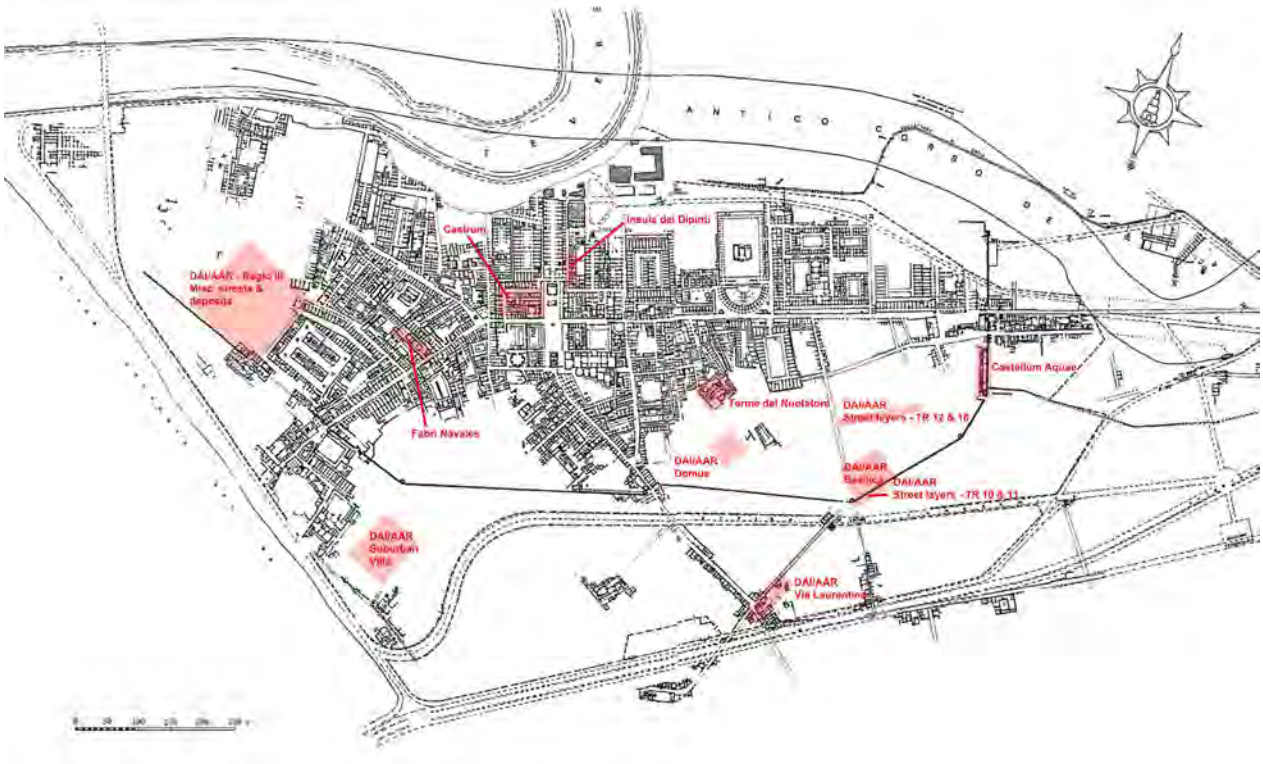


Figure 1. Zooarchaeological materials were systematically collected from the excavations of the locations marked on this plan of Ostia. Plan: Michael MacKinnon.

30%, and cattle trailing at around 5-10%. Wild animals (**Fig. 2**) and fish (**Fig. 3**) never seem to contribute in any significant fashion to the diet, perhaps surprisingly given the site's proximity to the sea, and the presumed extent of forested land and good hunting noted in the ancient sources for this area.[2]

In large part, these frequency values noted for Ostia conform well to those associated with many other Roman sites in the regions of Etruria and Latium overall, and most especially with trends among neighboring urban centers, such as Rome.[3] Such findings suggest a level of comparability among Roman sites in general – that is many followed similar trends in their use and exploitation of animals. Pigs were an important dietary resource during Roman antiquity, and especially so among urban locations. Ostia continues the pattern displayed by other urban sites in the region by maintaining an elevated frequency of pigs into late antiquity, while contemporary rural sites display a rise in sheep and goat values for this period. Clearly, urban centers, such as Ostia, still maintained critical markets for pork into late antiquity, even when herding of sheep and goats registered as a more popular (and perhaps safer) option for animal husbandry operations during the socially and economically difficult times of late antiquity, as the Roman empire crumbled. Nonetheless, the popularity of pork did not appear to decline at this time, and urban sites could capitalize on this demand in supplying resources.

While pigs continued to be an important item among menus in Ostia throughout antiquity, variations among some zooarchaeological patterns do register spatially within the city. For example, younger ages of animals, alongside bones associated with choicer types of meat cuts, commonly figure among samples connected with residential complexes, as opposed to those recovered from street layers. Domestic fowl are also represented fairly abundantly among residential complexes than within street layers. Overall, status

2 MacKinnon 2014, 200.

3 MacKinnon 2014, 200.

differences may be evident here, with households incorporating better-quality meats, from a wider range of species, while street deposits reflect lower status, 'common' food fare, as might be served through local bars or taverns. Many people had limited resources in which to store and cook foodstuffs, notably meat, in their homes. Consequently, they often relied upon the purchase of quick, 'take-away' prepared foods from local bars. More elite households, however, were less restricted in this regard. They could purchase or otherwise acquire various cuts of meat, with richer households often selecting tastier portions of these, but they also display evidence for acquisition of entire animals as well. In other words, live sheep, goat, and pigs, especially, were also being introduced to some household contexts in Ostia, where they were presumably butchered and also consumed. Wealth and status in Ostia certainly carried its perks – one could dine not only on quality meat cuts, but also feast on whole roasted animals as well.[4]

A second feature to emerge in the assessment of zooarchaeological evidence from Ostia centers upon where materials were disposed, and how such aspects link to the management of rubbish in the city. Obviously, there is some expectation that people are not living among their trash! In fact, how and where faunal materials were deposited at Ostia shows variation: some were incorporated within construction fills or other building projects; some were buried within complexes, perhaps in pits or garden deposits, during occupation phases; some were thrown away more casually, perhaps as refuse in street deposits; some were discarded in bulk, largely in extramural (or out-of-the-way) areas. Zooarchaeological data for Ostia indicate that larger pieces of faunal rubbish tended to be removed to peripheral spots and to trash heaps outside the city walls, whereas smaller pieces were more easily tolerated inside, as scrappy bits thrown into streets or elements swept aside to corners and other spots during clearing of floors, yards or surfaces.[5]

Overall, people in ancient Ostia were somewhat pragmatic and organized in how they integrated industries and other ventures that involved animals within the urban fabric of their city. Shops that sold fresh meat and preserved cuts existed in the city, but given issues such as space limitations for housing and for disposing of materials, not to mention concerns linked to hygiene and noxious sights and smells, presumably some of the more odious tasks of slaughter and initial chopping of carcasses would have been conducted far away from residential sections. One potential area for such operations may have been in the far southeast edge of the city, in the vicinity of the Castellum Aquae. Zooarchaeological materials from that area were fairly distinct from other parts of the city in their heavy preponderance of large, bulky cattle bones, many of which were associated with initial slaughter and processing of these animals.[6]

How was the city of Ostia supplied with animals during antiquity? Details surrounding animal husbandry and supply systems are sometimes hard to reconstruct from zooarchaeological evidence alone. Nevertheless, available data suggest that the city was supplied predominantly with local resources, as opposed to any significant long-distance movement or trade involving animals. Slight seasonal peaks are displayed in the age data for cattle, sheep, goat and pig among zooarchaeological samples. This might indicate some preference to cull animals during particular seasons (notably the fall, in preparation for winter). Nonetheless, there is ample variability among these age data to indicate that an autumn culling was not the only tactic; indeed, evidence suggests some degree of year-round, on-demand provisioning of meat to the city, which could be ably provided through local and regional farms and stockyards.[7] Some inhabitants within

4 MacKinnon 2014, 200.

5 MacKinnon 2014, 182-83, 200-01.

6 MacKinnon 2014, 180, 192.

7 MacKinnon 2014, 190.

the city may have even raised their own animals – such as a pig and a few chickens – in gardens and yards on their own premises.

A busy city such as Ostia clearly demanded various types of animals; but did that demand have an effect on animal size and quality? It certainly appears so. Cattle, sheep, goat, pigs, and domestic fowl all register overall size increases, at least throughout the Imperial period, indicative of improvements in animal breeding. Ostia may have exerted some local pull in its selection of relatively stockier cattle, in particular, compared to other varieties in central Italy. Any stronger work animals may have been appreciated in a city where trade and movement of commodities were critical. As an important 'working' city, Ostia would need quality traction cattle, pulling carts and wagons of goods throughout the area. Horses, donkeys and mules also provided these services, but were also harnessed for riding. They were expensive to keep, however, so often reserved only for wealthier residents. Available zooarchaeological evidence shows a range of sizes for these animals, from 130-163 cm in height (at the shoulders).

Finally, we should not forget that pet animals also factored in the lives of people in ancient Ostia. Chief among these were dogs. Zooarchaeological evidence indicates great variety in the types, sizes and breeds of these dogs – from small, lap-dog breeds, to larger guard dogs and hunting dogs. Dogs (and equids) were generally not consumed in Roman antiquity, and indeed butchery marks on their bones are very rare. Moreover, just as in many parts of the world today, pet dogs were often lovingly attended to; many lived to elderly ages, were well-fed, and pampered. There are even cases where pet dogs received their own burial and tombstone.

Reconstructing the role of animals to our understanding of life and death in ancient Ostia[8] ultimately reveals a wide range of information, not simply about the animals themselves, but how humans may have exploited, cared for, consumed, herded, or otherwise utilized animals and their resources.

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8 For further information and references about animals in Roman Italy, and beyond, consult *The Oxford Handbook of Zooarchaeology* (Albarella 2017); *The Oxford Handbook of Animals in Classical Thought and Life* (Campbell 2014); *Dogs in Antiquity* (Brewer – Clark – Phillips 2001); *Equus: The Horse in the Roman World* (Hyland 1990); *Animals in Roman Life and Art* (Toynbee 1973); *Production and Consumption of Animals in Roman Italy* (MacKinnon 2004).

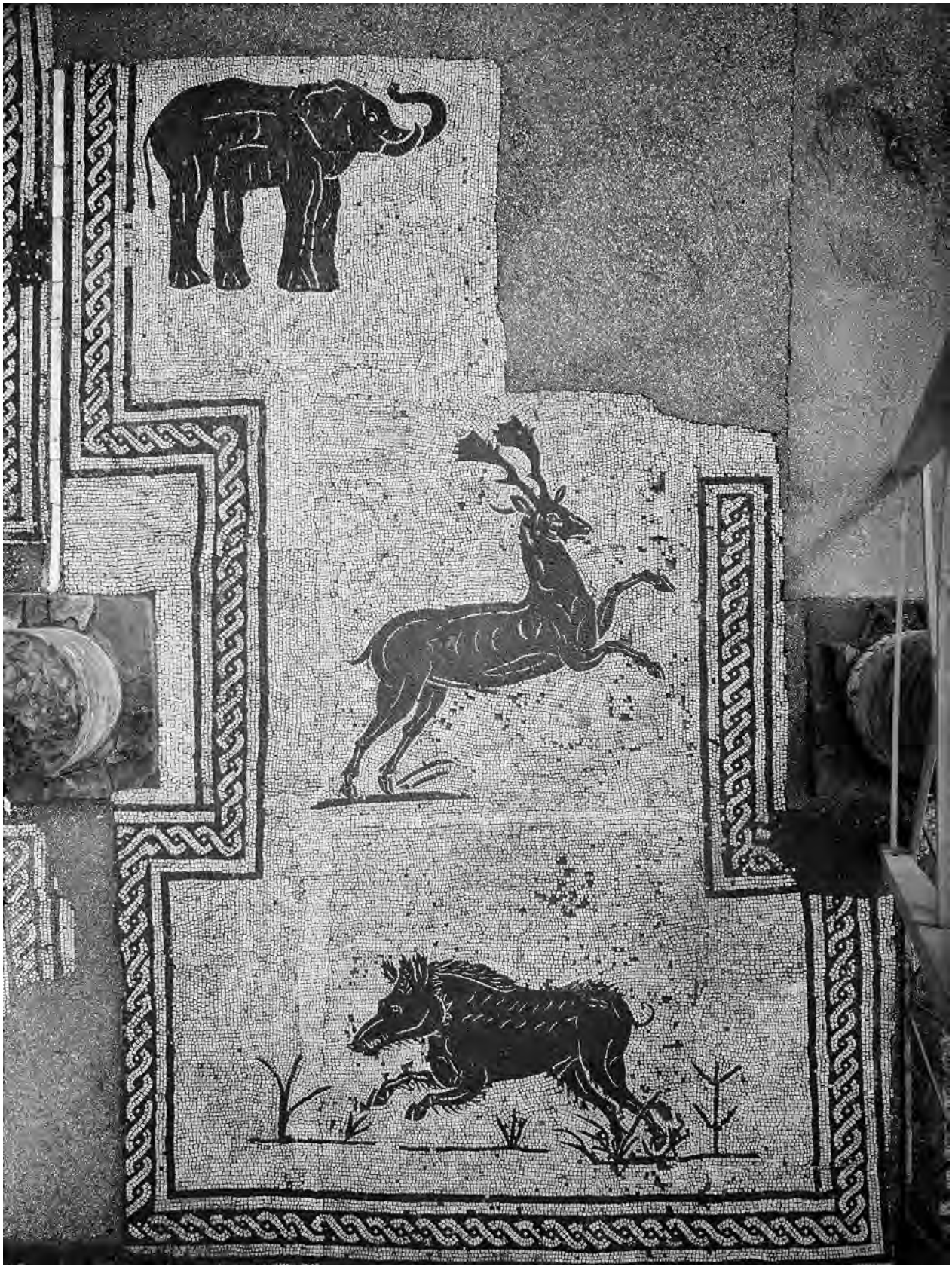


Figure 2. The mosaic in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, showing an elephant, a deer and a boar. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

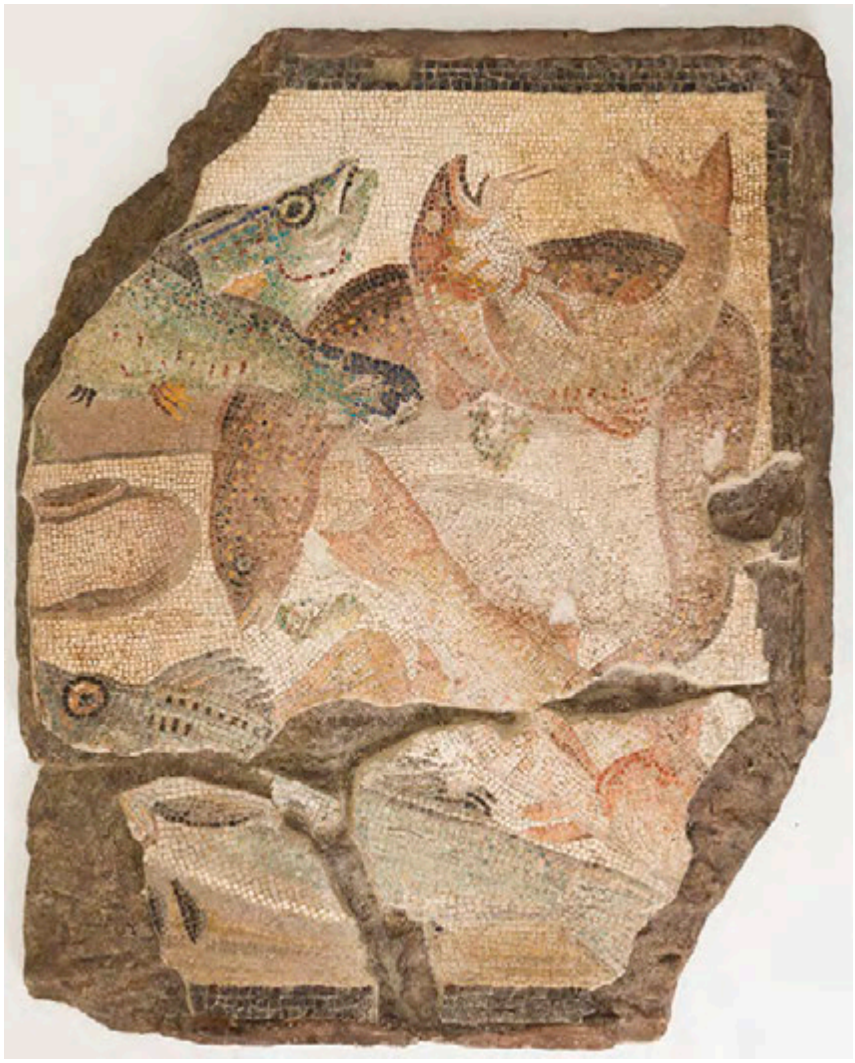


Figure 3. Not many fish bones were found in the zooarchaeological materials from Ostia. Marine themes are however found in the decorative elements of several public baths and private houses. This central *emblema* of a mosaic floor (see Cat. no. 54 for the detailed description) depicts several different species of fish. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 145. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 4. An hourglass mill operated by a donkey. Necropoli di Isola Sacra, Tomb 78. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 14263. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

People at Work in Ostia

Lena Larsson Lovén

In a large Roman city like Ostia, men and women worked for their living in a number of trades. Most information on working people in Ostia comes from the material culture and often from funerary contexts. From around 100 BCE, Romans of various social classes erected commemorative inscriptions as grave markers, sometimes including a job title. A memorial might also present a symbolic image of an occupation. Both inscriptions and images provide important information about work and non-elite groups in Roman society. Epigraphy in particular forms an extensive body of evidence and is the most important source for our knowledge of the names of Roman occupations.[1]

The archaeological remains of Ostia include a large number of workshops, *tabernae*, where a variety of commercial activities once took place; some of them, such as bakeries and inns, can still be identified. According to Pliny the Elder, writing in the first century CE, a shift from breadmaking at home to a professional trade took place in the early to mid-second century BCE, and bakeries with professional labour forces were gradually established in cities.[2] The occupational name of a Roman baker was a *pistor* and in the second century CE there was a bakers' guild, a *corpus pistorum*, in Ostia. Various images reflect the work of bakers, like the sarcophagus front of P. Nonius Zethus (figure on p. 89) and the mosaics of the Tomba della mietitura in the Necropoli di Porto at Isola Sacra.[3] The remains of a number of bakeries are found in the archaeological site of Ostia antica: one is located along Via dei Molini, in region I. A well-preserved inn is found in Via di Diana with a counter facing the street and interior rooms with partially preserved decorations and paintings (figure on p. 292). A scene from a third-century sarcophagus front shows a bar scene (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 100**),



Figure 1. The front of a marble sarcophagus with a bar scene. Necropoli di Isola Sacra, Tomb 90. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3526 (original in the Museo delle Navi, Fiumicino). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Photo Archive.

1 For a more detailed discussion of inscriptions and job titles, see Joshel 1992.

2 Pliny wrote in the 1st century BCE; Plin. *nat.* 18, 28; Zimmer 1982, 20-25.

3 *CIL* 14.393; Zimmer 1982, 114f., no. 25. See the report by Ida Baldassarre in Angelucci *et al.*1990, 90-106, figs. 41, 45-52.

probably an everyday situation familiar to many in Ostia: a woman is serving what is probably wine to two male customers seated at a table.

The work of artisans is reflected in shop-signs and funerary art, such as a relief with tools from Via dei Balconi (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 57**). Various types of goods were on sale in cities, and some images from Ostia mirror commercial activities; they include a partially preserved marble relief of a vegetable seller (figure on p. 290) and another with a scene from a poultry shop (figure on p. 290). The latter comes from a *taberna* in a building on Via della Foce and may originally have been its shop-sign.



Figure 2. Mason's tools depicted in the terracotta relief once attached to the wall of a building on Via del Balconi. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 48421. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Another type of *taberna* identifiable through the archaeological remains is the *fullonica* where new cloth was finished and garments already in use could be washed. In Ostia five probable *fullonicae* have been identified (see figures on p. 217).[4] The general documentation on the people, *fullones*, who worked in *fullonicae* suggests that they were all male. At least one *fullo* is known from Ostia but in reality more people worked in this trade.[5] In addition to clothes, shoes were also part of everyday dress and workshops where shoes could be bought or repaired must have existed in the city but are more difficult to identify archeologically. One partially preserved relief from Ostia shows a female shoemaker, Septimia Stratonice, depicted in profile sitting and holding a shoe last.[6] Another shoemaker from Ostia can be seen in the decoration of a sarcophagus dated to the third century CE. In this case, the shoemaker is a man who is depicted on the left seated next to a cupboard with shoes on the top (**Fig. 3; Cat. no. 59**).[7] Shoes and shoe lasts were longstanding and widespread symbols of this occupation and both men and women could work in this trade.

Food, drink, clothes and shoes were essential parts of Roman everyday life but a large city was also in need of people to provide medical care. From the necropolis of Isola Sacra come two terracotta plaques which in a plain and simple style illustrate the work of a female midwife and a male doctor. The images show typical work-day situations: the midwife, *obstetrix*, assisting a seated woman giving birth is a unique motif in Roman art.[8] (**Fig. 4; Cat. no. 62**) The other relief shows a scene in which a male doctor, a *medicus*, treats the leg of a patient; several medical instruments are depicted to the right of the patient. (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 61**) The individual names are given in the inscriptions; Scribonia Attice for the midwife and Marcus Ulpius Amerimnus for the doctor. They may have been a married couple working in the same profession, which was a fairly common situation for Roman couples.

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4 Pietrogrande 1976; Flohr 2013, 23. For a recent discussion of the criteria for identifying a *fullonica*, see Flohr 2013, 20-30.

5 *AE* 1985, 73.

6 *CIL* 14.4698; Larsson Lovén 2016, 201-11.

7 Zimmer 1982, 132-33, no. 47; Museo Terme di Diocleziano, Rome, inv.no. 184.

8 Isola Sacra, Tomb 100; Kampen 1981, 69-72, fig. 58.



Figure 3. Relief from a 3rd-century CE sarcophagus, depicting a shoemaker, to the left, and a ropemaker to the right. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3439 (original in the Museo Nazionale Romano). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Photo Archive.



Figure 4. A woman giving birth. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 5203. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 5. A *medicus* treats his patient. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 5204. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

The documentation on work and occupations in Ostia partly resembles that of any other Roman city and is partly unique, especially as concerns the epigraphic evidence. The examples mentioned above provide a sample of jobs in an urban context where some professional occupations were organised into guilds, *collegia* or *corpora.* Many of these occupations were not unique to Ostia but could be expected to appear in the material culture of any urban centre: making bread and selling various types of food, producing and washing clothes, repairing old shoes and making new ones, doctors treating patients, midwives helping babies into the world, and more. All these examples reflect aspects of everyday civic life in a Roman city of the imperial period, but the details of the evidence on work vary from place to place. However, Ostia was not just any Roman city but a major port. The archaeological site of Ostia antica is now separated from the former harbour area, or Portus, which is no longer situated by the sea as the coastline has moved since antiquity. This makes Ostia's role as a port city somewhat invisible to modern visitors but several trades documented here clearly reflect its status as a former centre of maritime trade and appear both in texts and images. Among the jobs related to maritime trade are the ship-builders, the *fabri navales*,[9] and various groups who served them such as sail makers and rope makers. There were people working in the port undertaking specialized tasks such as unloading goods, like the porters who carried clay vessels or sacks of grain. Other porters carried the sand used as ballast in ships and there were also people who worked as divers in the port to recover goods that had fallen into the water.

Evidence of various occupations linked to maritime trade can be found in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni (Reg. II, insula IV, 4), a central square behind the Roman theatre in Ostia. The structure consists of a portico with numerous small rooms on three sides. The floors of the portico and inside the rooms are decorated with black and white mosaics, with images and short texts that mention various occupations and a number of overseas towns and cities (see also the article of Mustakallio and Karivieri in this volume). Despite the brevity of the texts, they paint a picture of some long-distance contacts and of groups of traders operating in Ostia. A recurrent occupational title, of which several examples appear in the mosaic decorations of the portico, is the *navicularius*, an individual who made a living from shipping. This occupational

9 *CIL* 14.168, 169.

title may appear in combination with a place name, or sometimes with an indication of the type of goods the *navicularius* specialized in. Most of the examples here relate to places in the western Mediterranean and North Africa such as Sardinia, Narbonne in southern France, and Carthage and Alexandria in North Africa. The iconography of the mosaics in which these place names occur often includes ships, fishes, dolphins, transport vessels, and the famous light house which stood at the entrance to the port of Ostia.

Traders from and connections with other regions are also documented. For instance, several inscriptions mention people, including some belonging to guilds, who traded in goods from the Adriatic Sea.[10] Sometimes additional information is provided, specifying the type of goods traded by a merchant, such as wine[11] or wood.[12]

One of the main goods imported to the harbour of Ostia was grain, huge amounts of which passed through the port, especially in the imperial period. The main purpose of these imports was to secure Rome's grain supply; the product came mainly from Egypt and was shipped from the harbour of Alexandria where it was measured and sealed before transportation. Inscriptions document the existence of various tasks related to the grain trade and artistic depictions show the stages in the handling and measuring of the grain. A recurrent detail in such images is a *modius* – a grain vessel – shown, for example, in the mosaics of Piazzale delle Corporazioni and in another mosaic from the *Aula dei Mensores*, the Guild Hall of the Grain Measurers.[13] The latter mosaic depicts the stage when the grain was measured and checked upon arrival in Ostia by the *mensores frumentarii*. Some of the imported grain was stored in the warehouses, or *horrea*, of Ostia for local use, but the city of Rome was the major grain market. The imports passed through the port where they were unloaded, checked, repacked and reloaded onto smaller ships that could sail up the Tiber to the river ports in Rome where they were unloaded once again. Several occupational groups were involved in this process; those working in the harbour included the labourers who unloaded goods from the ships on arrival and transferred them to smaller river ships or barges which were drawn along the river to Rome. The operators of these smaller river ships and barges were known as *codicarii*.[14]



Figure 6 (Cat. no. 67). In Ostia, there was also a special guild of salvage divers, *urinatores*, in the harbour, employed to recover goods lost overboard during loading. Front of sarcophagus. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 955 (original in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Photo Archive.

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10 *AE* 1987, 191.

11 *CIL* 6.1101 commemorating wine merchants: *negotiantes vini Supernatis et Ariminensis*.

12 *CIL* 14.4549,3; *naviculariorum lignariorum*.

13 *Aula dei mensores* I.XIX.1.3, a guild hall near the Temple of the Measurers in Ostia, along Via della Foce; Clarke 2003, 124-29.

14 *CIL* 14.4234. In this item a man named M. Carellius Iazymus identified himself as a *codicarius* specialized in the grain trade: *codicarius item mercator frumentarius*.

We know little about the men and women who lived and worked in Ostia. Epigraphy and iconography offer some evidence and a means of identifying professional and gender structures in the Roman job market. As a city, Ostia offers a view of Roman work structures that is partly traditional and partly specific. The evidence from Ostia includes the range of standard jobs that we would expect to find in Roman cities, but there are also several occupational categories specifically linked to the port of Ostia and its organisation, and to maritime trade. Proximity to the sea was the raison d'être of Ostia, which experienced its heyday in the early second century CE. The various professional categories discussed above reflect the number of trades and occupations, work logistics in the port, long-distance trade contacts and the complexity of the Roman urban job market as a whole. Both men and women are documented in civilian jobs while the evidence on occupations related to any sort of maritime business suggests that these workers were entirely male. Including a job title in an inscription or visually representing a job may be a way of expressing a professional identity and the examples discussed above include both men and women in their professional capacities. However, in all Roman cities, professional identities were more commonly used for men than for women, reflecting more general gender structures.[15]

15 Larsson Lovén 2016.

The *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*

Cinzia Morelli

The use of salt has extremely ancient origins: already in the Neolithic it was used both to preserve perishable foods by salting them (meat and fish) and to process the by-products of milk. Salt was thus an essential commodity and a basic element in the economy of the populations responsible for producing it: above all the peoples who lived in the coastal areas of Europe and especially those of the Mediterranean, who exploited the heat of the sun to establish large salt producing facilities using evaporation.[1] The most important saltpans of the Mediterranean include those on the coast of Lazio near the mouth of the Tiber.

The Roman salt pans on the north bank of the Tiber

According to tradition,[2] the fourth king of Rome, Ancus Marcius (640-616 BC), founded the city of *Ostia* on the south bank of the river, near its mouth, and established next to it the salt pans fed by a brackish lagoon (Ostia Lagoon or Eastern Lagoon). These saltpans were used until the modern period, but for the Roman era we have only very little direct evidence in the form of structures made of amphorae and used to control the banks of the lagoon.[3]

On the opposite, north bank of the Tiber, again in the vicinity of the river mouth, were the large saltpans controlled first by the Etruscans and later by the Romans, and known by the name of *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*; these salt production facilities were also connected to Ostia and, according to some authors,[4] were the most extensive and important. They are also better known than those on the south bank as they have been the object of major excavation campaigns[5] conducted in recent decades. The *Campus Salinarum Romanarum* was located in the area that in antiquity was centred around the Maccarese Lagoon (or Western Lagoon) and whose edges were marked by three important aggregation centres: the Roman colony of *Fregenae* to the north,[6] the ports of Claudius and Trajan to the south-west[7] and the city of Ostia to the south, immediately beyond the river on its left bank (**Fig. 1**).

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1 Giovannini 2001, 36.

2 Liv. 1, 13, 33.

3 Fea 1831; Giovannini 2001. Recent research and specific studies are also contributing new data of help in defining the area occupied by the lagoon and the Ostia saltpans (Pannuzi 2013). It is also worth recalling the inscription of the *Salinator Eutuches,* dating to between the late 2nd and first half of the 3rd century AD, from the Necropolis near the basilica of Pianabella (building 6A): Pellegrino 1999; Pellegrino 2001 (catalogue XVI.33).

4 Giovannini 2001, 36.

5 These extensive excavation campaigns have covered the area (Municipalities of Rome-XI Ward and Fiumicino) immediately to the north of the Tiber and east of Leonardo da Vinci airport. The studies formed part of the preventive archaeology campaign preceding the building of large public and private infrastructure in this area and allowed for the safeguarding of the structures identified and brought to light as well as a complete understanding of the ancient remains.

6 Located near the mouth of the Arrone river.

7 Located along the ancient coastline immediately to the north of the present-day *Canale di Fiumicino*, which can be identified as the ancient Channel of Trajan.

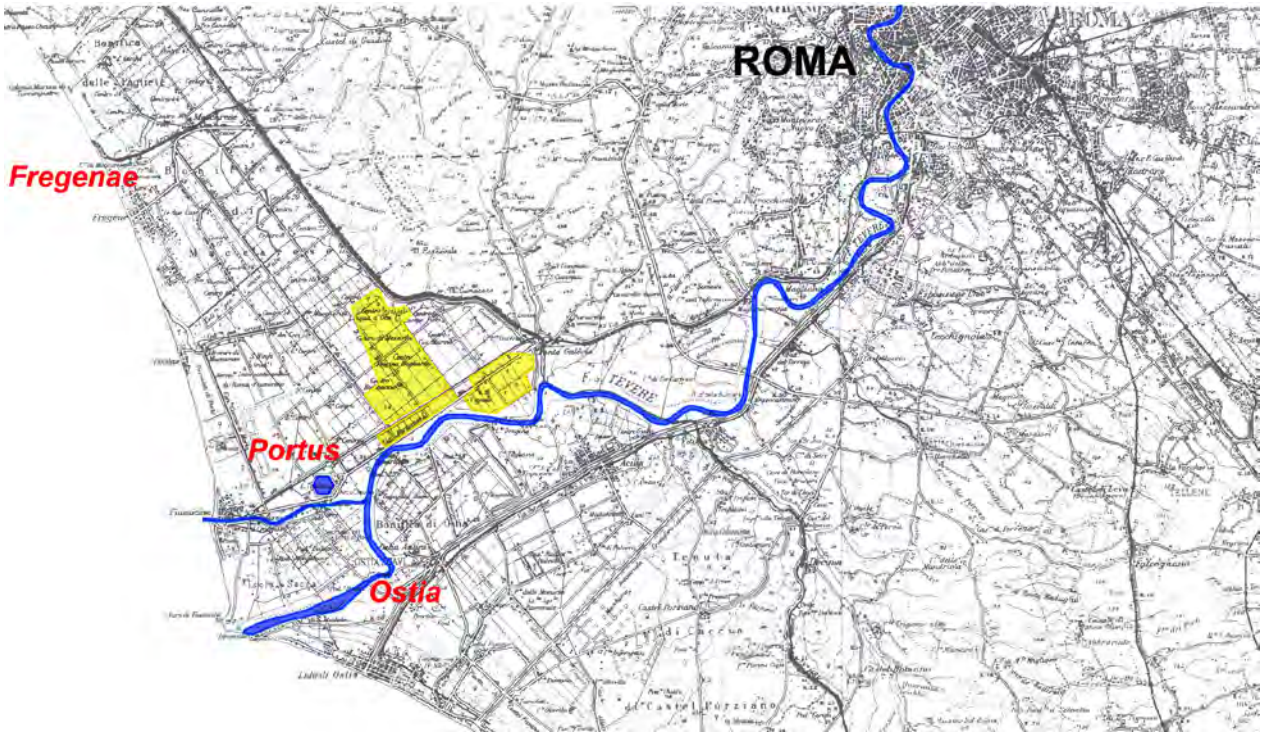


Figure 1. General view of the area on an IGM map (scale 1:100.000): in yellow the territory hitherto investigated, home to numerous ancient features including the Roman salt pans.

The area was subjected to two radical reclamation projects,[8] the first begun in 1883 and the second undertaken in the early decades of the 20th century. These profoundly altered the morphology of the ground and the landscape, obliterating the ancient Maccarese Lagoon (**Fig. 2**), and destroying any trace of ancient remains beneath extensive earthworks. The Lagoon, from the 9th-7th century BC, took the form of a large brackish lagoon around which the salt production facilities developed. These saltpans, controlled first by the Etruscans and later by the Romans, were one of the main production centres in Ostian ter-



Figure 2. Plan of the coastal area surrounding the Tiber by G. Amenduni (1884) showing the Maccarese Lagoon (Western Lagoon – Salt Pans) and the Ostia Lagoon before land reclamation. Map: from Amenduni 1884.

8 Amenduni 1884; Biglieri 1896, 1-56; Lugli – Filibeck 1935, 267; Ministero Agricoltura e Foreste 1947, 181-85; Tomassetti 1977, 498; Parisi Presicce – Villetti 1998, 97-109.

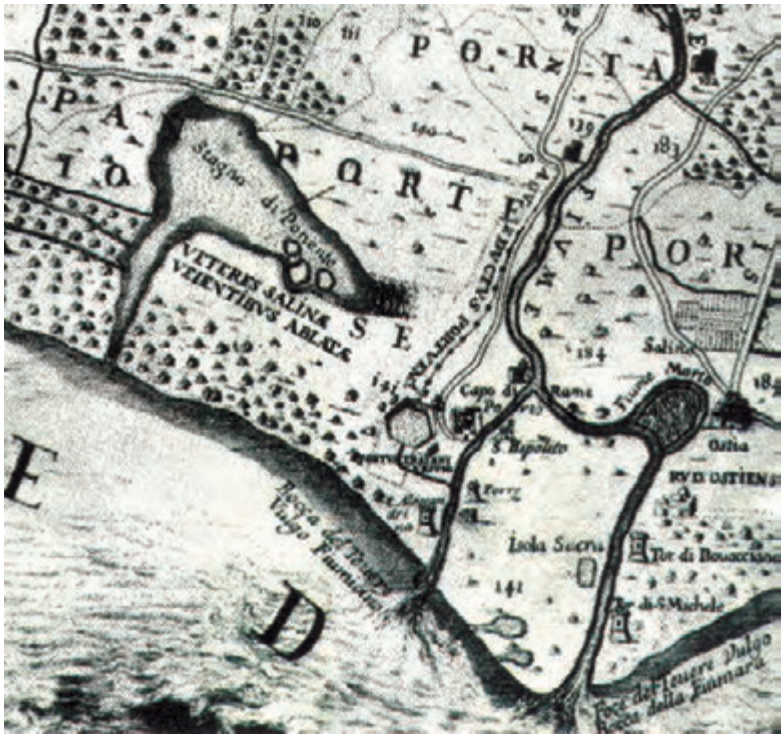


Figure 3. Detail of the plan by G.B. Cingolani in *Topografia geometrica dell'Agro Romano* (1774) showing the *Veteres Salinae Veientibus Ablatae* around the Maccarese Lagoon (Western Lagoon). Map: G. B. Cingolani 1774.

ritory and were, according to some authors,[9] one of the principal causes of the war between Veii and Rome. The salt production facilities did indeed belong to the city of Veii,[10] but no trace of these original pans has hitherto been found (**Fig. 3**).

After the conquest of Veii by Furius Camillus in 396 BC, the importance of these salt pans, and with them the control over the production and sale of salt underlies the repeated attempts on the part of the people of Veii to reconquer the salt-production district: the Etruscans attempted to retake control of the area as many as three times, as recounted by Livy,[11] in 390, 356, and 353 BC, but to no avail. In around the mid-4th century BC the saltpans thus came definitively under Roman control and became the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*,[12] exploited throughout the Republican and imperial periods (**Fig. 4**).[13]

Recent archaeological investigations (**Fig. 5 letter A**) have identified a monumental structure belonging to the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*[14] brought to light in the area north of the Rome-Fiumicino motorway and east of Leonardo Da Vinci airport. It consists of a line (**Fig. 6 – Structure A-A'**), about 1 km long, of 1439 amphorae set vertically into the muddy ground by brute force, one next to the other (**Fig. 7**). Based on the type of amphorae used and the stamps discovered, the creation of this structure can be dated to a period between the second half of the 1st century BC and the first half of the 1st century AD.

The line of amphorae is crossed at right angles by two brick channels (**Fig. 6 – Structures B and C**), about 300 m apart,[15] each equipped with two vertical sluice gates (**Fig. 8**).[16] Two manmade channels dug

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9 Giovannini 1985; Camporeale 1997; Giovannini 2001.

10 Plut. *vit. Rom.* 25, 4; Dion. Hal. *ant. Rom.* 2, 55, 5; 3, 41, 3; Liv. 1, 15.

11 Liv. 5, 45, 8; 7, 17, 6; 7, 19, 8.

12 Nibby 1827, 29; Nibby 1848, 367-69; Lanciani 1888; Tomassetti 1900, 5, 12, 52-58; Ashby 1927, 31; Camporeale 1997; Giovannini 2001; Morelli *et al.* 2004; Morelli 2008; Morelli *et al.* 2011; Grossi *et al*. 2015; Morelli – Forte 2014; Cébeillac Gervasoni – Morelli 2014; Morelli 2016.

13 After the imperial period, the saltpans continue to be mentioned in numerous documents until at least the late 15th century with the name of *Campus Maior*, *Campus Salinarius*, and *Campus Salinus Maior* (Nibby 1827, 29; Nibby 1848, 367-69; Tomassetti 1900, 52-58).

14 Castelli *et al.* 2008; Grossi *et al.* 2009; Morelli *et al.* 2011; Morelli 2014, 56-59; Grossi *et al.* 2015; Morelli 2016, 70-74.

15 The channels, respectively 25.58 m and 23.57 m long, have shoulders in concrete with a facing of *opus reticulatum* connected by a base platform also made of concrete.

16 One sluice was located almost at the centre of the channel and the other at its eastern end. The sides of the sluices made of travertine blocks inserted into the base platform of the channels are preserved *in situ*, bearing on their surface the grooves in which to insert the wooden gates. Some wooden boards belonging to these gates have been found collapsed *in situ*.

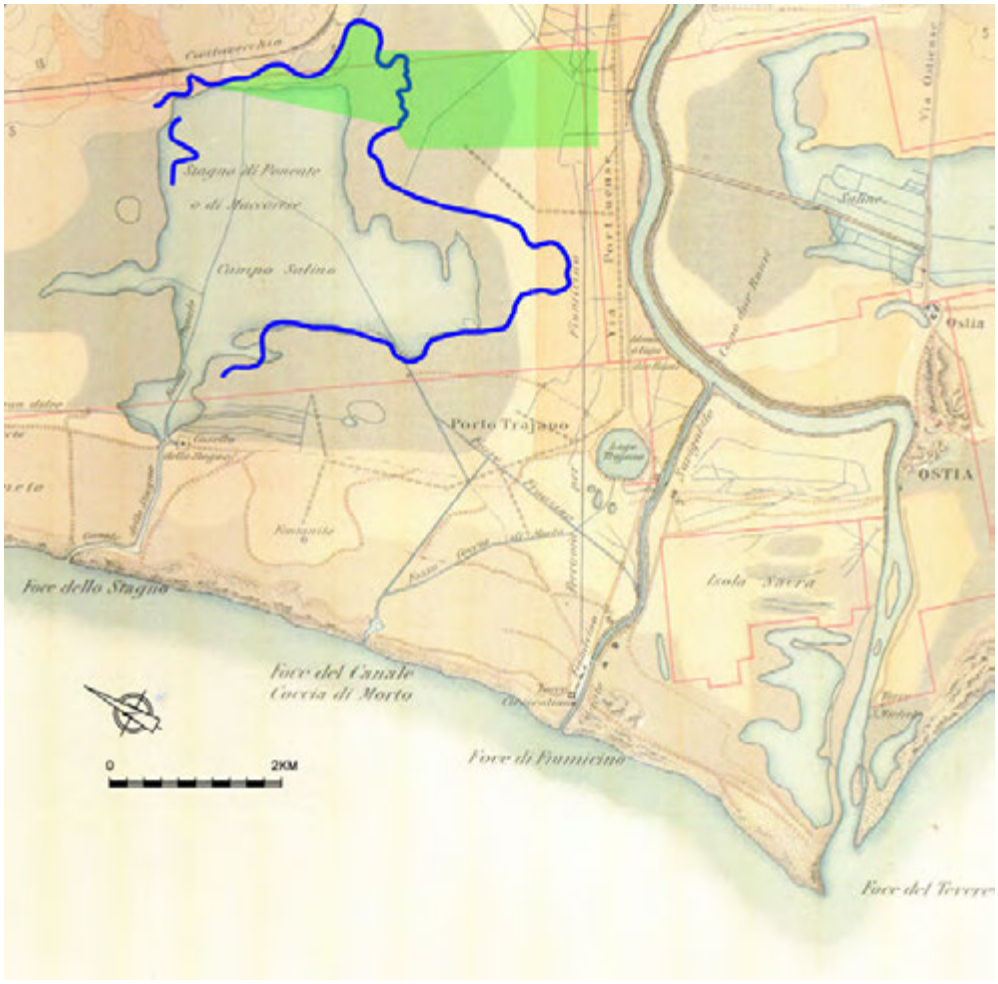


Figure 4. Position on the plan by G. Amenduni (1884) of the shores of the Maccarese Lagoon during the Roman period (in blue) and of the area in which remains of the Roman salt pans have hitherto been brought to light (in green). Plan: D. Citro – M.C. Grossi – C. Morelli.

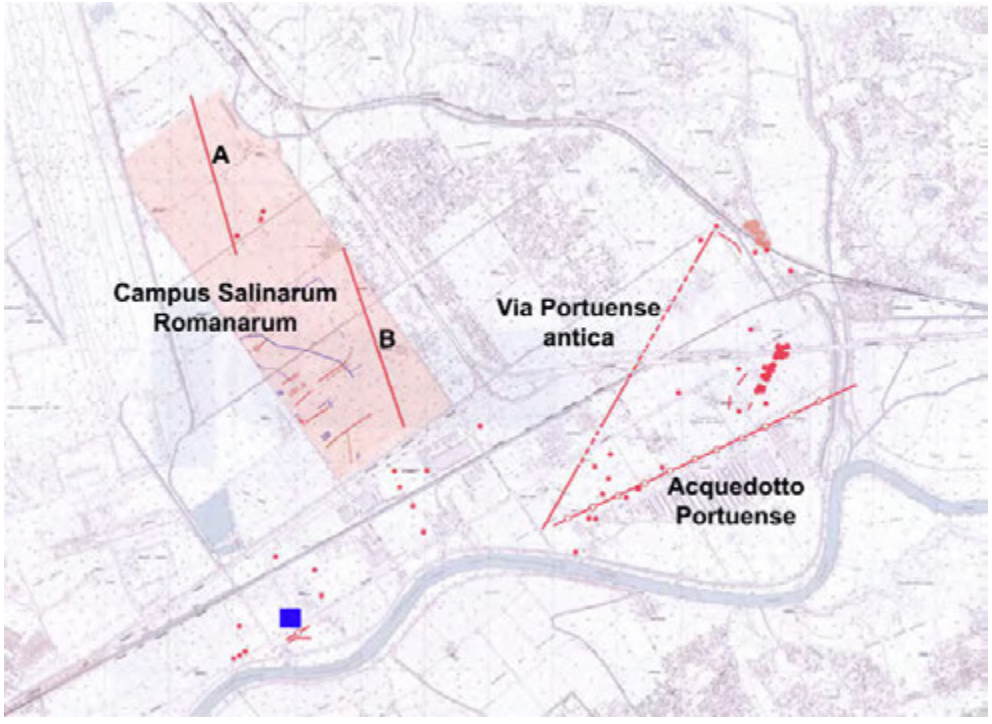


Figure 5. Archaeological map of the area of the Roman salt pans and the surrounding territory: A – amphora embankment; B – large freshwater canal; blue square – location of the building in which the inscription of the *conductores* was found. Map: C. Morelli.

into the ground lead off the two brick canals towards the east (in other words inland)[17] (**Fig. 6 – Channels B and C**). In this area to the east of the line of amphorae other large channels have been found that, given their typology and stratigraphic position, seem to be closely connected to the line of amphorae. Some of these (**Fig. 6 – Channels H and I**) are more or less parallel to the two large channels in the ground leading off the brick channels; others intersect them at right angles[18] (**Fig. 6 – Channels D, E, F, G**).

The most plausible hypothesis is that the line of amphorae served to reinforce a large earth embankment[19] located on the south-eastern edge of the ancient Maccarese Lagoon, intersected by the two brick channels: the embankment contained the waters of the lake, whilst its inflow behind the embankment (to the east) was controlled by the sluices positioned in the two brick channels. In this way the necessary amount of water was allowed to penetrate behind the embankment and was distributed throughout the area by the two large channels dug into the ground and the others connected to them. These channels

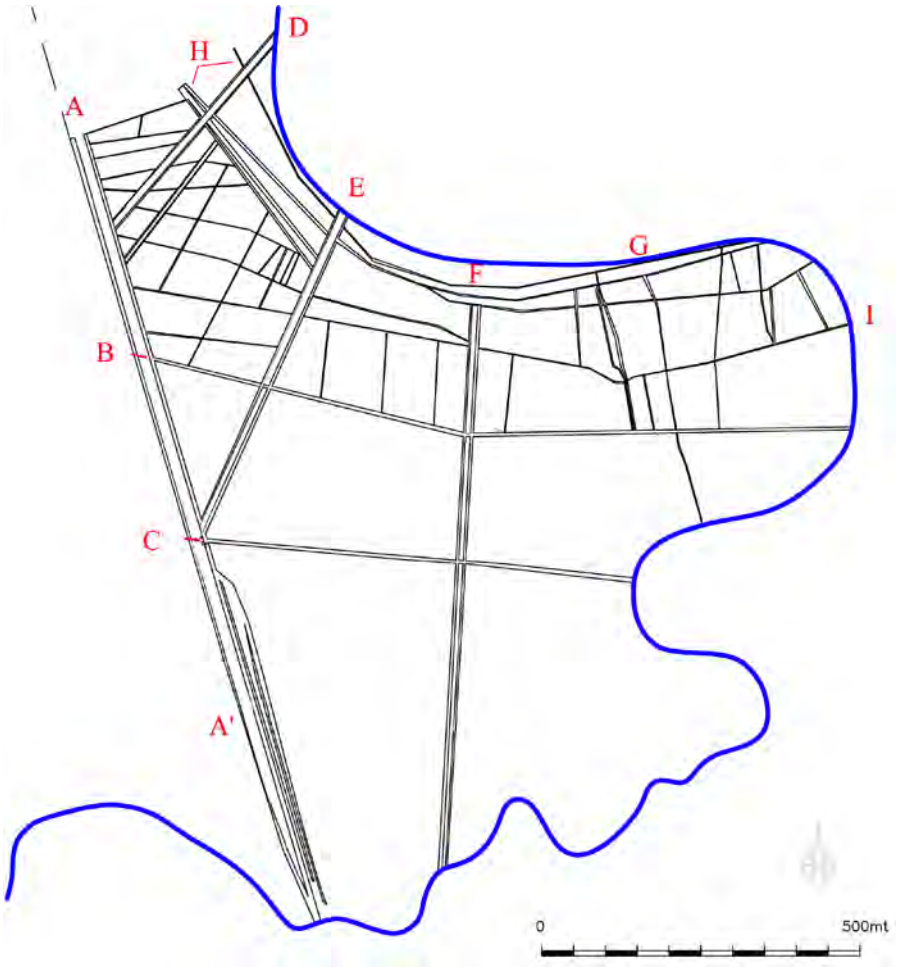


Figure 6. General plan of the area of the amphora embankment: in blue the location of the south-east shore of the Maccarese Lagoon in the Roman period; A- A': line of amphorae; B and C: brick channels crossing the line of amphorae and continuing inland towards the east; D, E, F, G, H, I: principal channels dug into the ground behind the line of amphorae.
Plan: D. Citro – M.C. Grossi.

17 The northernmost of which has been identified for a total length of 1000 m and the southernmost of 575 m.

18 Other smaller channels, more or less parallel to the former, have been identified above all in the northern sector; these create further subdivisions of the area between the large channels identified.

19 The use of amphorae in reclamation, drainage, and ground consolidation works is widely attested in the Roman period (Pesavento Mattioli 1998), whilst the use of amphora containers is attested in ancient salt pans, but placed horizontally in parallel rows to create containment structures (Rivello 2002; Alonso Villalobos *et al.* 2003; Pannuzi 2013, 5). However, at the present state of knowledge we have been unable to identify any direct and close parallel for our structure, which as we have seen presents some fairly unusual technical and dimensional characteristics. Additionally, we should stress that the use of amphorae to reinforce the earth embankment essentially confirms the observations of various authors to the effect that these containers present optimal characteristics, such as their "considerable volume, their characteristic very low weight, a very high resistance to loads" (Antico Gallina 1998) and, not least, virtually non-existent cost since these are reused materials.

marked off fairly large areas of non-modular and sometimes irregular shape[20] (**Fig. 9**) that must have been periodically flooded, probably by letting the channels themselves overflow, to allow for the evaporation of the water and the resulting condensation of the salt.

The continuation of archaeological research in the area south of the amphora embankment made it possible to identify other structures connected to the saltpans; these are an extensive network of manmade channels dug into the ground that channelled the brackish water from the Maccarese Lagoon and distributed it in the surrounding area (**Fig. 5**).[21] These channels belong to two distinct phases: the first can be dated to the Republican and imperial period, the second to the Middle Ages (**Fig. 9**). The Roman water network[22] is fairly regular and has a "chequerboard" pattern with channels crossing one another at right angles delimiting extensive areas probably also intended to be flooded with the brackish water to allow for its evaporation and the condensation of salt.

In the medieval period, by contrast, the channels, which in part reuse the pre-existing Roman hydraulic engineering works, are less regular and along them or at their ends are little basins with a concave bottom and sub-circular profile, inside



Figure 7. View from below of a stretch of the line of amphorae at the time of discovery. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 8. Image from a balloon of one of the brick channels crossing the amphora embankment. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

20 Nonetheless, it should be borne in mind that the irregularity noted is partly due to the geomorphology of the area and above all the presence towards the east of higher ground in the form of the terraces at the feet of hills which in several areas approached the edge of the ancient lagoon.

21 Morelli *et al.* 2004; Morelli *et al.* 2008; Castelli *et al.* 2008; Morelli *et al.* 2011; Morelli 2014, 56-59; Grossi *et al.* 2015; Morelli 2016, 70-74.

22 It is worth noting that the channels are at least in one case equipped with moveable wooden gates used to control the flow of water. The channels of the Roman period hitherto identified date to the 2nd century BC onwards and were used at least throughout the imperial period, with maintenance and reorganization works attested in the 2nd–3rd century AD.

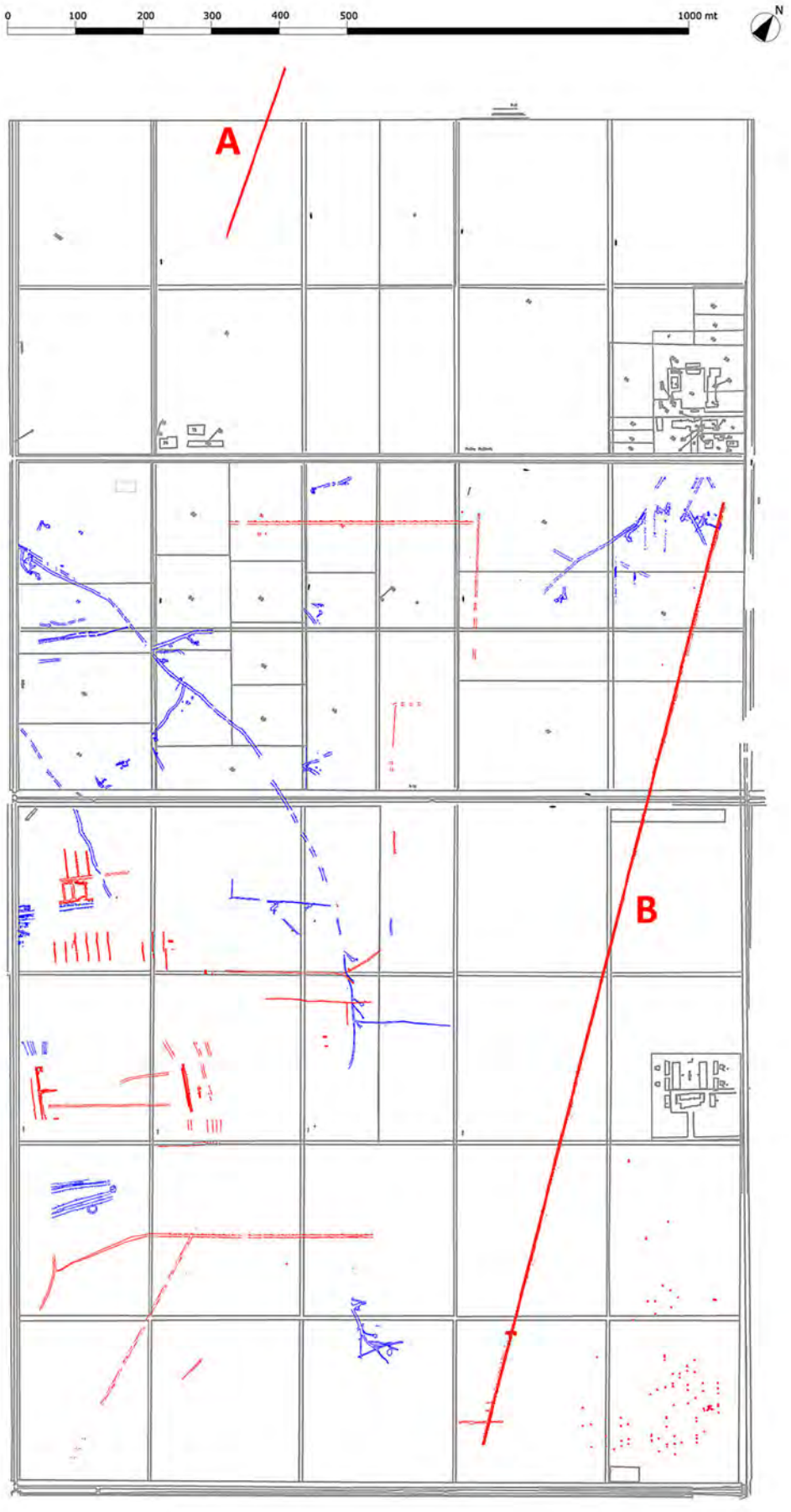


Figure 9. The principal water channels of the Roman period (in red) and of the Middle Ages (in blue) hitherto identified; the letter A indicates the southern stretch of the amphora embankment, the letter B indicates the large freshwater canal. Plan: V. Forte.

which are wooden structures that subdivide them into small spaces (**Fig. 10**).[23] For these basins, given their small size, shape and above all their concave bottom, we can rule out a use as salt production facilities. It is thus plausible that in the Middle Ages this area saw a change in use: the Roman salt production facilities were probably transformed and converted into *piscariae*, in other words structures to catch and farm the fish living in the Maccarese Lagoon.[24]

Finally, we should note the presence of a large canal[25] (**Fig. 5 letter B and Fig. 9 letter B**), used in both the Roman period and the Middle Ages, which channelled fresh water and formed the eastern limit of the water network in both periods;[26] in its southernmost stretch it was crossed by a bridge[27] allowing it to be traversed (**Fig. 11**). The route of the canal, perfectly parallel to that of the large amphora embankment, suggests the existence of an overall project for the saltpans covering a substantial area comprising both the structure made of amphorae and the channels identified to its south.



Figure 10. View of a basin belonging to the medieval phase of the network of channels: the wooden structures preserved inside are visible. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 11. View of a stretch of the large canal during excavation: on either side of the canal the concrete structures belonging to the shoulders of the bridge crossing it are visible, as are the holes for the wooden beams that supported the bridge itself. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

A project like the amphora embankment and the system to channel and distribute water connected to it was of such size and complexity that its design and construction must have required a considerable effort; additionally, the "fragility" of the structures made of earth or dug into the palaeosol must have entailed periodic and costly maintenance work to ensure their functioning. It thus seems fairly likely that these works

23 The radiocarbon dates obtained on the wooden elements found inside the basins cover a broad time period from the late 10th to the early 15th century, with a particular concentration of structures and anthropic activities in the period between the mid-11th and the mid-13th century.

24 Venditelli 1992, 415-21. It is interesting to note some similarities between the wooden structures found in the channels and those described by Venditelli 1992, 393, in connection with the *piscarie* (or "*piscariae*") that existed in Rome along the Tiber in the medieval period.

25 The canal is a maximum of 6 m wide and has been identified for a total length of about 1.5 km.

26 It is likely that this canal served to collect and channel fresh water, prevalently rainwater and in any case surface water, from the hills east of the salt pans, thus protecting the salt extraction areas from the penetration of fresh water and simultaneously providing the salt pans themselves with a supply of fresh water necessary for processing salt. Given its stratigraphic position, it seems to belong to the same phase as the large amphora embankment.

27 The abutments of the bridge in concrete survive, with a facing of *opus reticulatum*; originally wooden beams were inserted into the abutments to support the actual surface structures, also made of wood.



Figure 12. View of a stretch of the *Via Portuensis* during excavation. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

were the result of a state intervention and that they belonged to the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*, owned by the state.[28]

The road network connecting Rome and the salt pans: the Via Campana

Our saltpans were connected to Rome by a road, the *Via Campana* named after the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*.[29] The road started at the *Pons Aemilius* in Rome and ran along the right bank of the Tiber following its course; it was one segment of the important trade route that found its natural continuation, north-west of Rome, in the *Via Salaria* along which the salt reached the populations living in the inland areas of central Italy. The stretch running through our territory was built in the period immediately following the conquest of Veii and of the Etruscan saltpans by Furius Camillus. During the Trajanic period, with the construction of the large port of Trajan, the inadequacy of the old road became apparent; the *Via Campana* was thus accompanied and in part replaced by a new road, the *Via Portuensis*.[30]

In our area, part of the route of the *Via Portuensis* (**Fig. 5** and **Fig. 12**) has been brought to light beneath which some stretches of the *Via Campana* have been identified.[31] The latter presents two layers of road surface[32] which can be interpreted as two

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28 Giovannini 2001, 37. According to the classical sources (Liv. 2, 9, 6) during the Roman period the state had a monopoly on salt, regulating its sale and fixing its price. The price of salt, established on the basis of political strategies, could differ in different areas of Italy and the empire: Livy (29, 37, 3) recalls that in 204 BC the censors increased the price of salt but left it unchanged in Rome. On this issue see most recently Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Morelli 2014.

29 The Via Campana, known from the historical sources (Suet. *Aug.* 64) and inscriptions (*CIL* VI 1610), is also mentioned in the *Notitia* and in the *Curiosum urbis Romae* (Appendices). See Nibby 1837, 598-601; Canina 1845; Tomassetti 1900, 5-7, 19, 25-29; Ashby 1927, 19-31, 219; Platner – Ashby 1929, 561, s.v. 'Via Campana'; Scheid 1976; Tomassetti 1977, 303; Radke 1981, 108-10; Petriaggi 1991, 75-76; Petriaggi *et al.* 1995, 361; Petriaggi *et al.* 2001, 145.

30 Nibby 1827, 7-11, 18, 22-29, 56, 90; Tomassetti 1900, 5-7, 11, 19, 25, 33, 49; Ashby 1927, 219, 227; Platner – Ashby 1929, 566; Scheid 1976; Tomassetti 1977, 303-496; Radke 1981, 110; Petriaggi 1991; Petriaggi *et al.* 1995; Petriaggi *et al.* 2001; Serlorenzi 2002; Serlorenzi *et al.* 2004; Arnoldus Huyzendveld *et al.* 2009; Morelli *et al.* 2011; Morelli 2014, 63-65; Carbonara – Delle Sedie 2014, 136-56; Morelli 2016, 69-80.

31 Serlorenzi 2002; Serlorenzi *et al.* 2004; Scheid 2004; Di Giuseppe – Serlorenzi 2009; Arnoldus Huyzendveld *et al.* 2009; Morelli *et al.* 2011; Serlorenzi – Di Giuseppe 2011; Morelli 2014, 63-65; Carbonara – Delle Sedie 2014, 136-56; Morelli 2016, 69-80.

32 The road surface is 4.60 m wide. The older surface layer consists of a beaten layer of gravel resting on a preparatory layer laid directly on the palaeosol, made of limestone, travertine and organogenic limestone chips with some chips of tufa; the road surface



Figure 13. Image from a balloon of a stretch of the *Via Campana* brought to light beneath the *Via Portuensis*: the grooves made by cart wheels are clearly visible on its gravel surface. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

phases in the life of the same road (**Fig. 13**). The older road, interpretable as the original *Via Campana*, was built in the mid-Republican period at a time between the late 4th and the first half of the 3rd century BC, clearly connected to the start of exploitation of the saltpans by the Romans. In the Julio-Claudian period, perhaps precisely when the Port of Claudius was built, the old *Via Campana* was repaired and improved by raising the road surface and laying the second layer of cobblestones which is particularly carefully made.

The inscription of the *conductores Campi salinarum Romanarum*

Finally, it is worth mentioning a last piece of evidence on the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*, brought to light during the excavation of a building[33] identified in the sector south of the large saltpans near the Tiber (**Fig. 5 blue square** and **Fig. 14**). The structure, in use from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD, was probably a service building (warehouse, office, or residence for the workers). Inside this structure, two large fragmentary travertine blocks were found (**Fig. 15**),[34] one of which bore an inscription attributed on the basis of the consular date to 135 AD. The inscription (**Fig. 16**) reports a dedication to Neptune on the part of two *conductores campi salinarum Romanarum*.[35] During the imperial period, the exploitation of the saltpans was tendered out by the state to contractors, the *conductores salinarum*; these contractors, tied to the state by a contract, had to pay a fee and abide by specific production and sales conditions. The two dedicants who

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is marked by at least four deep grooves left by cart wheels indicating the prolonged and intensive use of the road; some larger stone slabs are arranged at the edge of the road acting as *umbones*. The second road surface rests on a preparatory layer of fine gravel mixed with sandy soil and consists of a compact and well laid layer of cobblestones, also bearing the marks left by cart wheels.

33 Morelli *et al.* 2011, 275-77; Morelli – Forte 2014.

34 The two blocks are of identical shape, size and surface treatment; they are 2.68 high, 0.60 m wide and 0.30/0.33 m deep.

35 *AE* 2014 264. Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Morelli 2014.



Figure 14. Image from a balloon of the building in which the inscription of the *conductores* was found: in yellow the room in which it was buried. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 15. Recomposition of the two twin travertine blocks, one of which (on the right) bears the inscription with a dedication to Neptune on the part of the *conductores.* Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 16. Detail of the inscription of the *conductores.* Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

appear in our inscription, *Lucius Virtius Epaphroditus* and *Lucius Cornelius Hesper*, were thus two contractors of the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum*, in other words the saltpans north of the Tiber.[36]

[36] Given their shape, surface and the presence of dowels we can suggest that the two twin blocks of travertine, of which just one bore the dedication to Neptune, were set up by the two *conductores* in an area sacred to the god inside the building or in its nearby outbuildings, perhaps identifiable as an aedicule or a shrine.

Conclusions

At the end of this short *excursus* we should stress two facts of importance for understanding the development of the layout of our area at the time of the Roman conquest. The first concerns the chronological overlap between the construction of the *Via Campana* and the fairly sudden appearance of numerous settlements concentrated in the area to the south of the *Campus Salinarum Romanarum* (between it and the Tiber) starting from the second half of the 4th-early 3rd century BC.[37] The second is the agreement of this fact with the historical sources that, as we have seen, record that after the conquest of their city in 396 BC the people of Veii attempted to reconquer this area three times, in 390, 356, and 353 BC. It thus seems clear that the area came fully under Roman control only in the second half of the 4th century BC. As a consequence, we can suggest that the construction of the *Via Campana* and the contemporary foundation of settlements, including some devoted to production and services, at precisely the time when Rome managed to definitively establish its control, form part of a deliberate project to occupy and transform the area itself with a view to exploiting the salt pans and controlling the mouth of the Tiber. Additionally, the chronological overlap between the Roman occupation of our area and the foundation of the *castrum* of Ostia is evident; both date to a period after the conquest of Veii and the consolidation of Roman control over the coast of Ostia and Portus.

Despite the bleak image provided of our area by Silius Italicus,[38] who describes the zone in which the Roman saltpans were located as "*obsessae campo squalente*", this must have been, as also confirmed by new archaeological data, a production and commercial hub of primary importance for the development of Rome's predominance and above all for Ostia itself, which from the Republican period became the crucial point of connection between Rome and the Mediterranean.

37 Petriaggi *et al.* 1995, 364, 366-68; Vittori – Vori 1999; Morelli *et al.* 2008, 218-26; Morelli *et al.* 2011, 272-75; Morelli 2014, 60-63; Carbonara – Delle Sedie 2014, 108-22; Carbonara – Forte 2016, 80-91; Morelli 2016, 69-80.

38 Sil. 8, 475.

Slavery in the Roman World

Sanna Joska & Ville Vuolanto

Slavery was a highly visible and characteristic feature of Roman society. It has been estimated that during the (early) Roman empire, of the approximately five million people living in Italy, a fourth or a fifth would have been slaves. In urban areas, over one third of the population might have been slaves. As slavery seems to have been less common in other parts of the empire, a total of between 10% to 15% of the population was unfree. The ownership of slaves was not limited to the wealthiest elites. It has been estimated that up to 15% to 20% of households would have owned at least one slave. Slave ownership evolved into a status-defining factor in the Roman world.[1]

Slaves in the Roman world were not a distinctive group: a free person could become a slave and a slave free; there was no simple way of identifying a slave (no specific ethnic background, clothing or behaviour). Slaves and free people lived and worked together, and shared the same public and social space – there was no apartheid.[2] Nonetheless, in the strictly hierarchical Roman society and in the Roman imaginary there was a constant fear of slaves turning against their owners, stealing, disobeying and defying orders, or even threatening violence. This did sometimes happen, as when the praetor Larcius Macedo was murdered by his slaves, tired of his cruelty, but under normal circumstances slave resistance was less extreme in nature.[3] True slave rebellions were very rare, though the uprising led by Spartacus in the 70s BCE is now the most widely known example of slave resistance in antiquity. Tellingly, one of the very few ways in which the Roman state supported property owners was by offering help in managing their slaves peacefully, and thus maintaining the social status quo. It was strictly forbidden and heavily penalized, for example, to assist a fugitive slave.[4]

Nonetheless, slaves frequently ran away. Doing so was dangerous – a runaway not only lost the hope of emancipation, but incurred the danger of whipping and flogging, being put in irons, or being sent to the mines. Slaves who fled repeatedly could face death, even by crucifixion. Professional slave-catchers (*fugitivarii*) could be hired to bring fugitives back to their owners. Moreover, runaway slaves who had been hunted down were branded or tattooed on their face. This was prohibited in the fourth century CE, when an alternative developed: runaways were to wear a metal collar. One of the over forty such collars known to us was found in Ostia, with the text "hold me so that I don't run away. I am running away" (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 68**).[5] This collar, like almost all the others, asked the reader to stop the slave in question. Most collars also included other information, specifying where and to whom the slave was to be returned, and sometimes even the reward. Since slave collars were relatively expensive (as metal objects) and highly visible, they were

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1 Scheidel 1999; Scheidel 2011.

2 Bruun 2017, 135.

3 Plin. *epist.* 3, 14, with Bradley 1999, 111-17, 123-25 and Joshel 2014, 13-17.

4 *Dig*. 11, 4, 1 (Ulpian); Harper 2011, 256-60.

5 "*Tene me ne fugia[m], fugio*". Translation from Trimble 2016, 458. For runaway slaves, see Bradley 1999, 118-30.

intended to be objects of special domination and control – including in the eyes of fellow-slaves. The text on collars is typically in the first person singular, as if giving voice to the slave whilst in reality highlighting their subordinate status to the viewer as well by underlining their master's total domination over them. Very little of all this changed with Christianity; for example, we have a slave collar from late antique Sicily with the text "I am the slave of Felix the Archdeacon. Retain me lest I flee."[6] There were discussions on how to treat slaves among Christian and Stoic philosophers[7] – but no debate over the justification of slavery as such: slavery was a self-evident and accepted fact in society. In theory, slaves were indeed chattel, completely under the (arbitrary) control of their owners (*dominium*). The treatment of slaves was kept in check only by social customs and morals.[8]



Figure 1. Slave-collar in bronze, found in the *thermopolium* in Via di Diana. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4158. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Where did slaves come from? The majority, during the Roman Republic, were defeated enemies enslaved during the constant warfare. It was in the interests of the Roman elite for the slave market to thrive and costs to remain low – though the highest numbers recorded, like the 150,000 captives said to have been sold after the conquest of Epirus in 167 BC, should perhaps be taken with a pinch of salt. Slaves were also obtained from pirates, kidnappers and slave-raiders, and some were reduced to slavery as a punishment. However, the enslavement of abandoned new-born children seems to have been of greater importance.[9] There are some legal cases of foundlings brought up as slaves, and a number of wet-nursing contracts document the need to feed children who were to become the slaves of their rescuers.[10] Some of the poorest families might sell or give away their new-born babies, and others might lose their freedom having used themselves or their children as collateral on a loan that they were unable to repay.[11] Another substantial

6 Trimble 2016 for slave collars. For Felix, see *AE* 1975, 465, with Harper 2011, 258; Glancy 2012 for Early Christianity.

7 Bradley 1999, 135-53.

8 Gardner 2011.

9 Evans Grubbs 2013.

10 Epirus: Liv. 45, 34, 5. For a balanced discussion, see Bradley 2011, 245-56 and Scheidel 2011, 293-99.

11 Vuolanto 2003.

group of slaves was traded from abroad outside the Roman empire, most often from across the Sahara or Rhine-Danube border area.[12]

The latter required a slave trading system. Every large city in the Roman world had a slave market, and some places developed into slave trading hubs, like Rome, Ephesos, Delos, and Rhodes. Ironically, slaves travelled more than most people in the Roman world. We know of a woman from Libya who was sold in Ravenna to an Egyptian soldier by a man from Asia Minor. The youngest slaves sold were only two, and we know of a girl who had her fifth owner at the age of fourteen.[13] These people were separated from their families, forced to move away to serve foreigners in unfamiliar surroundings in expectation of further sale. Slaves did have *de facto* families – for example, in plenty of inscriptions slaves refer to each other as spouses – but these had no legal validity. Slave owners could break up a slave family whenever they wished.[14]

The most important source of slaves during the Roman empire – trade across borders, abandoned children or the breeding of slaves – is disputed. The children of slaves were evidently important in supporting the slave population, and many slave owners encouraged their slaves to have children; some seem to have turned this into a business, with slave schools and subsequent sales. In Roman culture, home-born slaves (*vernae*) were thought to be more trustworthy and loyal to their owners. Some slave children were brought up as foster children to inherit their owner's name or even their property. The many commemorative inscriptions dedicated by masters to their *vernae* show that the relationship between the owner and the slave was not necessarily purely exploitative, but could also have an emotional component.[15] For example, in a funerary text from Ostia of the mid-second century CE, Sextus Aufustius Agreus laments the death of his *verna* Melior, aged thirteen. Melior was an accountant, and his skills and intelligence were praised by his master, who was also his teacher and clearly very fond of his young slave.[16] As adults, these slaves might join the relatively rare but well-established group of slaves emancipated by their owners to become freedmen, *libertini* (see also **Fig. 2**). Moreover, some slaves were the children of their owners. These cases, too, show that legal status did not necessarily reflect social or emotional relationships.[17]

Many slaves worked in mines and in large *latifundiae*. Slave labour was also essential in bakeries, fulleries and tanneries, and in brick and pottery production. At Ostia, we know of slaves working in the harbours as dockers, and especially in large-scale bakery and fullery establishments, whose production halls might have seen hundreds of slaves working simultaneously. Some slaves would have lived on the premises, others nearby (and perhaps able to enjoy some free time, that is, 'loitering' in the eyes of their masters).[18] Another highly visible group of urban slaves were the sex workers in brothels. At the other end of spectrum, we find the slave managers of estates, of public bodies like city councils, and of the imperial administration. The latter were powerful individuals who might manage vast amounts of wealth, be responsible for taxing whole provinces, and own hundreds of slaves themselves. In between these groups were the slaves of artisans and households. They were the trusted servants and learned teachers of great houses, like Tiro, Cicero's secretary; nurses and tutors for children, doorkeepers, cooks and kitchen helps; and servants and farmhands

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12 Scheidel 2011, 300-04.

13 Laes 2011, 159-61; Scheidel 2011, 301-02.

14 Edmondson 2011, 347-49.

15 Bradley 1999, 48-49; Scheidel 2011, 306-08; Sigismund-Nielsen 2013, 291-92.

16 *CIL* XIV 472 = *ILS* 7755, with Sigismund-Nielsen 2013, 293-96 on *vernae;* Caldelli 2016, 9.

17 Bradley 2011, 256-60; Gardner 2011, 419-21; Scheidel 2011, 306.

18 See Joshel 2014, 150-61.

of ordinary households. Some slaves were masters to others, acting as disciplinarians and informers, in a system of strict hierarchies and dependencies. As there was no shared slave experience, no shared identity and thus no organized resistance could develop.[19]

In one inscription, the (former) owners put words into the mouth of their deceased slave: "Slavery was never inimical to me".[20] The slave's viewpoint may of course have differed. To start with, slaves were never seen as adults, and were described regardless of their age with the words like *pais* (Greek), *puer, puella* (Latin), all meaning 'child'. A slave was always dependent. Though it was to a slave owner's advantage to treat slaves well – those treated fairly worked harder, were more trustworthy, did not run away – many slaves were unquestionably maltreated. Discipline was harsh, violence common, and segregation cells, chains, collars, branding and whipping always a threat. Even under 'normal' circumstances, slaves often lived in their own crowded and dark quarters or barracks. Household slaves slept in corridors or on doorsteps. There was no privacy; this was one aspect of the politics of subjugation. There were also subtler means, like owners renaming their new slaves.[21] In addition, slaves were always sexually available – though this threat was not always acted upon, the mere possibility tinged the everyday experience of all slaves. Seneca the Elder stated: shameful sexual behaviour was criminal for the freeborn, but a necessity for slaves.[22]

Osteological studies reveal the reality of slave life from new standpoints. The skeletons found in the area destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE have been particularly informative, showing frequent marks of extremely heavy work at a young age. For example, the skeleton of a fourteen-year-old girl was found next to an 11-month-old infant. The baby was adorned with jewels, but the girl was severely undernourished, had lost many of her teeth, and had been lifting heavy loads for much of her childhood. She was probably a slave girl, no longer able to perform physical tasks and thus entrusted with caring for her owner's infant child.[23]

We have very little information on the life experience of slaves – nothing written by Roman slaves themselves, and very little even by freedmen. Perhaps the closest we can get is through epigraphy; material remains (like slave collars or the ruins of slave barracks) help us to decipher the more extreme conditions experienced by slaves. We know, however, that hopes of freedom and fears of violence and sexual abuse were prevalent among slaves.[24] Yet even these would vary widely depending on the slave's circumstances. In individual cases they might not hinder friendship and solidarity among slaves. An example is provided by an inscription from Rome: "Iucundus, slave of Taurus, litter bearer, as long as he lived he was a man and he defended himself and others. As long as he lived, he lived honourably. Callista and Philologus donated."[25] Here Iucundus' friends proclaim the important task performed by the deceased, and his upstanding and honourable character – that is, his agency and individuality. From the perspective of elite culture, a slave could not have possessed these virtues and qualities, but reality proved otherwise.

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19 See Bradley 1999, 57-80, for the varieties of slave labour, and ibid. 130 on the lack of 'class solidarity' among slaves. Bruun 2017, 134-35, for the imperial slaves and slaves owned by the city in Ostia (who were members of the '*familia publica*').

20 *CIL* XIII 7119 (Mainz), "*servitus mihi nu[m]qua[m] invida*". The slave, Servandus, was 20 when he died, and was seemingly freed on his death bed ("*libertaten misero mors abstulit iniqua*").

21 Bradley 1999, 84-85, 178; Laes 2011, 163-65; Edmondson 2011, 341-42, 346.

22 Sen. *contr.* 4, pr. 10, with Bradley 1999, 49-50.

23 Laes 2011, 153-55; 165-66; Sigismund-Nielsen 2013, 298-99.

24 See Bradley 1999, 92; Vlassopoulos 2018.

25 *CIL* VI 6308: "*Iucundus Tauri lecticarius quandius vixit vir fuit et se et alios vindicavi(t) quandius vixit honeste vixit. Callista et Philologus dant*".



Figure 2 (Cat. no. 69). This wine-mixing bowl, signed by 'TIGRAN', features plant ornaments surrounding dancers. The bowl was made by M. Perennius Tigranes, a freedman probably of Armenian origin. He became the largest ceramics producer in Arretium in around 15-20 CE. His workshop was probably founded by his master, M. Perennius, for whom Tigranes had first worked as a slave. Having been freed and given his master's name, Tigranes continued the operation of the workshop, succeeded by other freed slaves. The relief-decorated ceramics of Tigranes represent the pinnacle of Italian *sigillata* production. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5205. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

III
Everyday Life in Ostia

FAMILY

Women, Marriage and Family in Roman Society and the Community of Ostia

Katariina Mustakallio & Marja-Leena Hänninen

Growing up in a Roman family

Roman families and households were multifaceted, as Joska and Vuolanto stress in their chapter in this volume on *Children in the Roman World*. In general, girls learned at home from older women, either family members or trusted slaves. As a young woman would ideally become a wife and mother, the ability to run a household was an essential skill. Daughters of wealthy Roman families did receive several years of education, making them literate and educated people, and giving them a higher status in adulthood.[1]

For people of the lower classes and slaves, the initial part of the life course could vary significantly. In rural areas, lower class and slave women worked outside in the fields with their husbands and children; in cities they worked at home and in workshops with their relatives. Textile workshops and *fullonicae* in particular were populated by female workers and slaves of every age.[2] Parents worked alongside their children, and girls helped with all types of domestic labour. Slave children began work at a very early age, and their life was dependent on their master or mistress, as shown in Joska and Vuolanto's chapter on *Slavery in the Roman World*.[3]

For Roman boys and girls of the wealthier classes, life was different. An important milestone in the lives of boys aged fourteen to sixteen was the coming of age ritual at which they were given their *toga virilis*, which might take place at the *Liberalia* festival. One of the few writers to mention the puberty rites of Roman girls is Arnobius in his book *Adversus Gentes*, written in the fourth century CE. In this text, Arnobius listed old Roman customs such as the presentation of a maiden's garment, a toga, to the temple of *Fortuna Virginalis*, who protected new brides and brought them luck. In general, wedding celebrations acted as a coming of age rite for young women.[4]

Roman marriage

As in many patriarchal societies, marriages between Roman citizens were strongly patrilineal: a young married woman moved from her father's home to that of her husband's family. Girls and women usually spent their entire life under male guardianship, first that of their father and then that of their husband or another guardian, unless they were released for some special reason.[5]

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1 Mustakallio 2013, 22.

2 Mustakallio 2013, 22-23.

3 Mustakallio 2013, 23. See also the articles by Joska – Vuolanto in this volume.

4 Mustakallio 2013, 21.

5 See the Augustan Marriage Laws below.

Preparations for marriage began several years before the actual wedding took place with the search for an appropriate family with a child of suitable age. The preferred candidate for both families was someone of somewhat higher social and economic status. The steps to marriage usually involved a ceremonial betrothal, which was an agreement between the bride's father, or her closest male relative, and the bridegroom.[6]

Girls could be betrothed young, between the ages of seven to ten. In elite and upper-class families, they were usually betrothed earlier than in other social groups. In Rome, girls could be legally married at the age of twelve, and boys when they were a few years older. The Augustan Marriage Laws penalized women older than twenty and men older than twenty-five through taxation if they were not married; this may be indicative of the limits of age considered suitable for marriage.[7]

A marriage involved a father giving his daughter, after her twelfth birthday according to Roman law but usually aged over sixteen, to a husband who was generally much older. Marriages played a central role in the continuity of the family and were of crucial importance for increasing the family's status and wealth. Thus, the preparations for a new marriage were significant for the families of both spouses, and the father – or the closest male relative – of the bride and groom usually played a key part. As having a family was virtually obligatory in Rome, it is worth bearing in mind that there were also people who never married at all.[8]



Figure 1. A funerary relief of a married couple. The two spouses are depicted joining their right hands, *dextrarum iunctio*, a symbol of the marriage contract the husband holds in his left hand; his wife holds a pomegranate in her left hand that rests on her husband's shoulder. Three Erotes surrounding the couple represent various aspects of love. 140-150 CE. The relief was found in the area of the Case a Giardino. Museo Ostiense, inv. 5. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The bride and groom prepared for the wedding with offerings, dedications, and sacrifices (**Fig. 1**). These pre-matrimonial practices were preparatory rites of purification and to propitiate the sacred powers and prepare the participants for their new roles as part of a married couple. Gifts and the dowry formed a concrete part of the new relationship between the spouses. The size of a dowry was, of course, dependent on the family's prosperity. The dowry belonged to the husband for the duration of the marriage but in the event of divorce or the husband's death, and if the marriage was childless, the wife or her father could reclaim it.[9]

At Roman weddings it was customary for the bride to pronounce the formula *ubi tu Gaius, ibi ego*

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6 Harlow – Laurence 2010, 56-77.

7 Mustakallio 2013, 24. Hersch 2010, 39-43; on early betrothals in Jewish families, even before the child was born, see Sivan 2015, 299.

8 Huebner 2019, 37-56, esp. 55.

9 Larsson Lovén – Strömberg 2013, 48-49. For Roman customs, see Evans Grubbs 2010, 78-79. On the spoken word, see, e.g. Jolowicz – Nicholas 1972, 96.

Gaia, "where you are Gaius, I am Gaia", during the ceremony.[10] Certain ceremonies were usually performed by families to celebrate weddings, but these were not essential parts of a legal marriage. Though the handing over of the dowry and a written marriage contract usually preceded the marriage, it became legal in Rome (*matrimonium iustum*) only when certain conditions were fulfilled. The pre-condition was the legal capacity to marry, which among other things required both partners to be Roman citizens, but the most important thing was living together as a heterosexual couple with the mutual intention of forming a lasting union and of having children.[11]

Roman marriage forms

The older and more traditional form of marriage in Rome during the early and middle Republic, the *matrimonium cum manu* or so-called *manus*-marriage, was a relationship in which the wife moved from the jurisdiction of her father to that of her husband or his father, if the husband was not yet independent (*sui juris*). This placed her in the position of a daughter in relation to her husband (or his father), thus allowing her to inherit after his death. In the *cum manu* - marriage the wife possessed no property of her own and was entirely under the control of her husband (or his father).[12]

In a typical Roman marriage – known as *sine manu* – from the late Republican period onwards, a wife either remained legally in her father's power (*potestas*) or, if he died, became legally independent (*sui iuris*); depending on her status under the Augustan marriage laws, she may have had a male guardian. The property of husband and wife was kept separate during the marriage. This marriage type solved one of the main problems of the marriage of a daughter: when a daughter remained in her father's power, any property she inherited was under her father's control and did not merge with her husband's property. If the wife died childless, her property reverted to her original family (that of her father) if she had made no will. In any case, all offspring legally belonged to their father's family and in the event of divorce sons and daughters ideally remained with their father. One of the social changes brought by this new form of marriage and the separation of property between the spouses was increasing wealth and social power for elite women, who became prominent agents in society.[13]

Traditional patriarchal society defined women either as virgins, under the control of their fathers, or as matrons, under the control of their husbands. However, the social changes taking place during the Republican period made it increasingly difficult to place all women in one of these categories.[14] One of the responses to this situation seems to have been the laws enacted by the first emperor, Augustus. The Augustan marriage laws comprised separate laws, of which two concerned marriage whilst a third dealt with adultery and other illicit sexual activities. The first marriage law was enacted in 18 BCE and the second, the *lex Papia et Poppaea*, twenty-seven years later to reinforce the original *lex Julia*. Together, these laws decreed that all Roman women between the ages of 20 and 50, and men between the ages of 25 and 60, were to be married and procreating. Certain restrictions regarding inheritance were placed on childless persons. Widows were allowed a grace period of one to two years before they had to remarry, and divorcées just six

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10 Bernard 2011, 59. It is debated whether this Roman vow was a part of the *coemptio* - marriage or if it was used in all marriages, see Hersch 2010, 24.

11 Evans Grubbs 2010, 84.

12 See Gardner 1986, 5-22.

13 Gardner 1986, 31.

14 Pyy 2019, 157.

to eighteen months. At the same time, another law rewarded men and women who had three or more children (and emancipated slaves with four children). Men were given preferment for public offices and various privileges, while women were released from the need for guardianship and were thus free to dispose of their own property.[15]

Family, marriage and property

For most ordinary people in the Greco-Roman world, marriage was an important moment that changed the social status of two people. It was also a time at which the properties of both spouses was of great importance and interest. Most marriage contracts known today were found in Egypt, having survived thanks to the environmental conditions. Most are in Greek and many reflect local marriage practices.[16]

In addition to the dowry, which was of central interest, the documents mention two different kinds of marital property belonging to the bride and that remained with her during the marriage: smaller personal items used for her own adornment, and more significant property, including land and slaves. Some documents reveal even more detailed expectations on the part of both spouses: in addition to the amount of property expected from both sides, marital duties are also mentioned: the husband was to financially support his new family and the wife was expected to behave appropriately during the marriage. In the event of divorce or the death of a spouse, the arrangements agreed beforehand for the care to be provided to any potential children born to the couple became important.[17] Besides these documents in Greek, some fragmentary contracts in Latin, as well as several documents recording Jewish marriages have survived on *papyri.*[18]

Roman soldiers were generally forbidden to marry until the period of Claudius, after which marriage was tolerated to some extent. From the late second century onwards, soldiers had concubines or wives, but it took time for these relationships to be considered legal marriages during the post-Severan era.[19]

We have more extensive written evidence about attitudes to marriage among the elite. For instance, letters survive from the first centuries BCE and CE, for example from Cicero and Pliny the Younger to their wives, indicating the strength of their emotional ties and their feelings for their wives during their absence.[20] Pliny in particular expresses his emotional attachment to his wife Calpurnia and how much he missed her during her absence in his letters.[21]

Christian influences on Roman culture, particularly from the third-fourth centuries CE onwards, slowly led to the development of new ideals of marital and family life. The fundamental idea that marriage was instituted and ordained by God as a lifelong relationship between husband and wife changed the nature of traditional Roman family life, which had long been characterized by divorces and re-marriages. Chris-

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15 Evans Grubbs 2019, 106-09. The adultery law, *lex Julia de adulteriis coercendis,* carried several penalties. *Stuprum*, illicit sex with an unmarried woman or child, or a youth of higher social class as well as sexual relations between a married woman and anyone except her husband became a public crime, to be tried in a newly-created court, the *quaestio perpetua.* These were considered serious crimes with serious penalties: much of their property was confiscated and those convicted were relegated to distant islands.

16 Evans Grubbs 2002, marriage contracts from Egypt and the Near East, from Cave of Letters 122-30, from Dura Europos 133-35.

17 Evans Grubbs 2010, 84.

18 For these documents, see Evans Grubbs 2002, 131.

19 Nevertheless, Judith Evans Grubbs mentions an interesting document from *Dura Europos* written in Greek and dated 232 CE, a marriage contract of a Roman soldier. Evans Grubbs 2010, 85, note 33 (P. DURA 30). On Jewish contacts, see Evans Grubbs 2010, 84. On soldiers and marriage, see Le Bohec 1993, 294-95.

20 Cic. *fam.* 14, 2; 14, 4; Plin. *epist.* 6, 4; 6, 7; 6, 24; 7, 5.

21 Plin. *epist.* 7, 5.

tians considered marriage a special institution and the most important human relationship. However, many old marriage-related traditions and customs remained untouched.[22] Asceticism was also an influential life model and formed a new challenge to family life.[23]

Within Roman culture, the survival and maintenance of the family – and especially of family property – were the primary functions of marriage, but there were also strong immaterial purposes or incentives – such as the continuity of the family name and memory. Strategies for the economic and social advancement of the next generation of the family were principally connected to the careers of male members, but marriages and the creation of a new generation was always a central focus.[24]

Ostian women

The lives of Ostian women are known mainly from the city's rich epigraphic legacy, of which funerary inscriptions constitute the main element. These inscriptions record women who were daughters, wives, mothers, freedwomen and slaves. We do not always know anything other than the name, age and marital status of the deceased woman. However, epigraphic evidence is important since it records lives other than those of people belonging to the highest social classes of the community. Sometimes funerary inscriptions and iconography reveal further details of the life of the deceased. The most striking individual case is perhaps the epitaph of Prima Florentia, who was sixteen years old when she was killed by her husband, according to the epitaph erected by her parents and her relative (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 171**).[25]

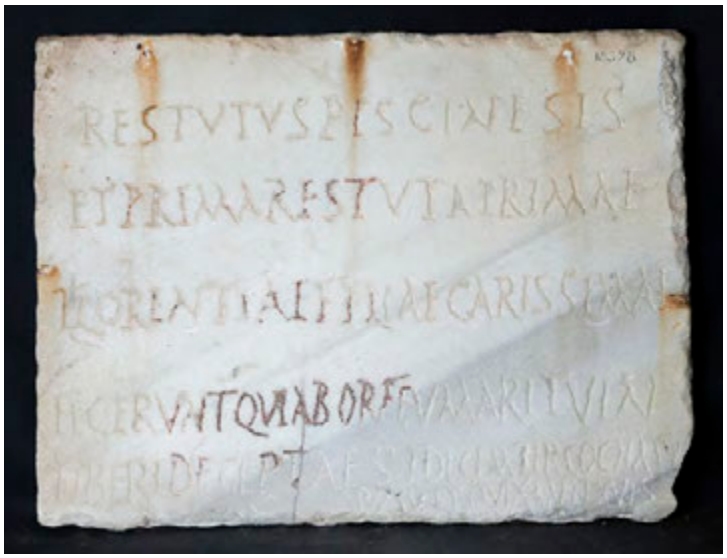


Figure 2. The epitaph of Prima Florentia, erected by her parents and a relative, second century CE. Ostia Depositi 20, inv. 18398. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The epitaphs erected for women typically commemorate them as mothers, wives and daughters, but they may also specify a woman's occupation, visually or in the text. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the necropolis of Isola Sacra with its numerous family tombs of craftspeople and businessmen (and women), a social group dominated mainly by freedmen. The Roman elite may have despised paid work and small-scale commerce, but funerary reliefs depicting various professions suggest that craftspeople themselves were proud of their occupations. One handsome chamber tomb was built by Scribonia Attice for her husband M. Ulpius Amerimnus, her mother, their slaves and freedmen. The relief to the left of the epitaph depicts a surgeon at work and, on the right-hand side, a midwife assisting a woman in childbirth. It has been assumed that health was a family business and that both husband and wife worked in the field,

22 See, e.g. Brown 1991, 30-32.

23 See Brown 1991, 49-60; Wood 1997, 111-27; Vuolanto 2010, 106.

24 See, e.g. Vuolanto 2005, 121.

25 Helttula *et al.* 2007, no. 321: *Restutus Piscinesis et Prima Restuta Primae Florentiae filiae carissimae fecerunt, qui ab Orfeu maritu in Tiberi decepta est. December cocnatu posuit. Q(uae) vix(it) ann(is) XVI s(emis?)*.

the husband as a doctor and the wife as a midwife.[26] Natalie Kampen notes that the images of the midwife and the doctor are given equal space and prominence in the tomb, suggesting equal respect for the male and female practitioners of medicine.[27] Midwives as well as doctors were respected professionals, though they were often freedmen and freedwomen, or slaves of foreign origin.

The Ostian reliefs depict, among other subjects, women as vendors of poultry and vegetables, wet-nurses and waitresses.[28] Two women appear in the epigraphic evidence among the owners of workshops making lead pipes.[29] Women could apparently also earn money by owning real estate. A woman named Junia Libertas left the use of and income from the gardens, buildings and shops in a block she owned to her freedmen and freedwomen in her will. Presumably this had been a profitable investment and her freedmen may already have taken care of the business when she was still alive.[30] Septimia Stratonice had an occupation that was less usual for women in antiquity: she was a shoemaker. The inscription is fragmentary, but the deceased woman is depicted holding a model of a foot or a shoe last in her hand. The interpretation is not wholly conclusive, but it is highly likely, considering also her garments, which imply her status as a working woman.[31] Ostian working women are not known only from epitaphs. A lead tablet, probably a curse tablet, of the Late Republican period lists female slaves who are described as *ornatrices*: hairdressers or lady's maids.[32] Nine women are mentioned in this text, seven of whom are slaves belonging to different owners. The wealthiest families thus had specialized slaves such as hairdressers, who also served as status symbols.[33]

It is obvious that there were working women and even some business-women in Ostia. Whether or not women were active in the city's numerous professional *collegia*, associations of people working in various commercial and productive sectors, is another question. Freedmen and immigrants could be members of these associations and there is some evidence for women being ordinary members of the *collegia*, albeit not from Ostia. However, women do appear as *patronae* and *matres* of *collegia* in Ostian inscriptions. The titles of *patrona* and *mater* of an association were honorary titles. According to Emily Hemelrijk, the *patronae* and *patroni* of *collegia* were usually recruited from among the local elite, members of the equestrian or senatorial class. The social standing of the *matres* of *collegia* was lower than that of the *patronae*, and usually identical to that of the ordinary members. Many were freedwomen or descendants of freedmen.[34] Women were typically appointed *matres* of *collegia* that already had female members and might be distinguished members of the association whereas *patronae* were higher-ranking women in the community but not members of the *collegia*. *Matres* usually also made donations to the *collegium*.[35]

The majority of Ostian *matres* and *patronae* of *collegia* are connected to religious associations. One woman, Maecia Menophile, is recorded as a *mater* in the official list of members of the guild of the *Fabri navales*, the important association of ship-builders in Portus. Her name appears in the membership list among the dignitaries of the *collegium*, after the presidents for the year and before the ex-officers. Since

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26 Helttula *et al.* 2007, 154-56.

27 Kampen 1981, 70.

28 For a comprehensive list, see Kampen 1981, 33-82.

29 Meiggs 1973, 229.

30 Meiggs 1973, 68-69; Mouritsen 2011, 222; see also Mustakallio in this volume, p. 418.

31 Kampen 1981, 64-69.

32 *CIL* XIV 5306. Meiggs 1973, 226.

33 Joshel 1992, 73-74.

34 Hemelrijk 2008, 120-21.

35 Hemelrijk 2008, 125-28, 137-38.

there is no male named Maecius on the list, Maecia Menophile's position cannot be explained by the role played by her male relatives in the association.[36] According to Hemelrijk, there is no evidence that women appointed as *matres* of *collegia* were primarily wives of the *patres*.[37] Merit, wealth and social activity seem to have opened up these honorary positions to women.

Religious *collegia* in particular seem to have honoured women with the title of *mater*.[38] In Ostia, women appear as *matres* and *patronae* of *collegia* in the cult complex of *Campus Magnae Matris*. Two *collegia* connected to the worship of Magna Mater and Attis, the *dendrophori* and *cannophori*, had female members. Inscriptions record donations made by women to these *collegia*.[39] Furthermore, two women, Domitia Civitas and Iunia Zosime, held the honorary title of *mater*, mother of the *collegium*,[40] which appear in dedicatory inscriptions recording donations made by these women. Both have a Greek *cognomen*, perhaps suggesting a status as freedwoman. Only one *patrona* of a *collegium* appears in the Ostian evidence: Iscantia Prima, who was patroness of the association of the *hastiferi*.[41] This *collegium* was connected with the worship of the goddess Bellona and its guild house was located in the *Campus Magnae Matris*, opposite the sanctuary of Bellona. Iscantia Prima is the only woman whose name is linked with the *hastiferi* in the surviving evidence from Ostia. Alongside two male patrons, she funded the restoration of the sanctuary of Bellona.[42] Unlike patronesses of *collegia* known from other cities, Iscantia does not seem to have belonged to the elite, and she is also exceptional among known patronesses because she contributed a substantial donation to the *collegium*.[43]

The *matres* and *patronae* of Ostian *collegia*, discussed above, could be described as members of the sub-elite: outside the traditional local elite, but probably relatively wealthy and well connected. This influential social group of freedmen and women was particularly active in Ostian associations, both those linked to trade and the religious *collegia*. It is very likely that the women discussed above were freedwomen. Donations, as well as honorary titles such as *mater* or *patrona*, enhanced their prestige and self-esteem. The *collegium* benefited from their wealth and possibly from their good social connections.[44] Wealthy freedmen may have been looked down on by the freeborn elite, but by using their wealth for euergetic purposes they could generate both public and personal standing.[45]

Euergetism was a socially acceptable way of using and displaying one's wealth, and elite families were expected to use their money for the common good. In the imperial period, elite women also participated in euergetic activities. More women owned property than ever before, and since most were in *sine manu* marriages, they were free to use their personal wealth as they pleased.[46] The euergetic activities of Livia, wife of the first emperor of Rome, may have acted as a model for the women of local elites.[47] There

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36 *CIL* XIV 256. Meiggs 1973, 318-19; Herzig 1983, 83-84.

37 Hemelrijk 2008, 137.

38 Hemelrijk 2008, 124-25.

39 Herzig 1983, 83; Hänninen 2019, 77-78.

40 *CIL* XIV 37, 69.

41 Vermaseren 1978 no. 391 (= *AE* 1948, 31): *C. Rubrius Fortunatus C. Rubrius [Iu]stus et / Iscantia Prima patroni astoforum Ostiensium/ edem vetustate collasa(m) sua pecunia fecerunt. / Dedicat(a) III n(onis) Aug(ustis) Geta et Antonino co(n)s(ulibus).*

42 Hänninen 2019, 78-79.

43 Hemelrijk 2008, 125; Hänninen 2019, 79.

44 Herzig 1983, 90; Hemelrijk 2008, 125-37.

45 Mouritsen 2011, 259.

46 See Hemelrijk 2015, 22-25.

47 Severy 2003, 134-35; Hemelrijk 2015, 169.

are examples of Ostian elite women who acted as civic benefactresses. In general, it was typical for women to invest in religious buildings. According to Hemelrijk, this reflected views on what was proper for women but on the other hand, as Hemelrijk also points out, sanctuaries were the most common public buildings in any city of the Roman empire.[48] One high-standing Ostian benefactress was Terentia, wife of Cluvius, who has even been compared to the famous Pompeian patron, Eumachia. Terentia first donated a well-head to the sanctuary of Bona Dea in Ostia and later sponsored a building (*crypta et chalcidicum*) in a central location. The restoration of this building is recorded in the official *fasti* of Ostia.[49]

The example of an empress may have influenced the euergetism of another Ostian lady, focused specifically on the well-being of young girls. A woman whose name is mostly lost left a capital sum for a fund intended to support young girls in her will. This benefaction might be related to the memory of Faustina, wife of the emperor Antoninus Pius, who established a similar fund (*Puellae alimentariae Faustinianae*) in honour of his deceased wife.[50] Antoninus Pius and Faustina were obviously very popular in Ostia. After Faustina's death, the council of Ostia erected an inscription to commemorate the harmonious marriage of the emperor and his wife and ordered that every bride and groom in Ostia should offer prayers at a public altar.[51]



Figure 3. A portrait statue of a freeborn *matrona*, possibly a priestess, found in the Sede degli Augustali, originally part of a funerary monument. The statue is dated to the Antonine period or the third century CE. Museo Ostiense, inv. 22. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Traditionally, religion was the one field in the public sphere in which women clearly had a role, even in the Republican period. In Ostia, however, the surviving evidence for women's participation in traditional local cults is fairly scarce. There were two temples to Bona Dea in Ostia.[52] All three inscriptions related to the Bona Dea sanctuary on Via degli Augustali are dedicated by women, thus apparently confirming the image of a matronal cult. Furthermore, the remote and secluded location of the sanctuary suggests that it was exclusive.[53] In the Imperial period, women of the local elite could act as priestesses of the deified empresses (**Fig. 3**). Plaria Vera, a woman of senatorial or equestrian status, is recorded as a priestess of Diva Augusta (*flaminica divae Augustae*), probably the deified Livia.[54] Plaria Vera married into one of the most prominent families of the Ostian elite, that of the Egrilii. Her husband A. Egrilius Rufus had an outstanding public career and was also a *flamen Romae et Augusti* after his term as *duovir*. Her prestigious

48 Hemelrijk 2015, 117-19.

49 Brouwer 1989, 68; Zevi 1997, 448-50; *AE* 2005, 301-03.

50 *CIL* XIV 4450. Meiggs 1973, 229.

51 *CIL* XIV 5326. Meiggs 1973, 233.

52 For the evidence of the cult of Bona Dea in Ostia, see Brouwer 1989, 63-70 and Mustakallio in this volume, pp. 337-38.

53 Hänninen 2019, 67.

54 *CIL* XIV 399, 5346. Hänninen 2019, 71.

female priesthood seems to have been connected to her husband's prominent public profile.[55] Egnatia Aescennia Procula, who was probably a member of the local decurial class, served as *flaminica divae Faustinae* in the second century AD.[56]

There is further evidence for the religious activities of sub-elite women in Ostia. The cults of Isis and Magna Mater seem to have been particularly popular among freedwomen and other non-elite women. Numerous inscriptions testify to women's dedications and donations to these goddesses, and their temples and cult communities.[57] Women who could play no official role in the traditional local cults, dominated by the local elite, found their religious home in the so-called mystery cults, in which they could act as priestesses and other officials and join the *collegia* linked to the cults. Participation in these cults was obviously an integral part of their identity, since it was sometimes mentioned in their epitaphs, textually or visually. This may, as Hemelrijk has pointed out, be due to the fact that elite women who had acted as priestesses or made public donations were often honoured with public statues and honorific inscriptions, unlike non-elite women.[58] A woman's religious activity might also be connected to the position of her husband. As for the local elite, both husband and wife may have sponsored Ostian sanctuaries. Couples of lower social standing may have followed this pattern, with the husband holding a leading position in a trade *collegium* while his wife was priestess of Magna Mater.[59]

Non-elite women rarely received public honours, but they may have been commemorated by the *collegium* in which they were active and their religious offices recorded in their epitaphs. Public honorary statues and inscriptions were usually reserved for women of the local elite.[60] Two Ostian women were honoured with public funerals. One was Voltidia Moschis, who was actually a freedwoman and was granted this honour by the council of Ostia as a tribute to her husband Quintus Vergilius Marianus.[61] A public funeral, a statue and incense were granted to Sergia Prisca in honour of her son L. Cacius Reburrus by the council and *duoviri* of Ostia. The funeral was, however, paid for by her husband.[62]

The majority of identifiable Ostian women are known from the various funerary monuments on which their names were inscribed. These women represent a wide range of social classes. Of course, we should bear in mind that erecting a grave with an inscribed epitaph required some wealth. The poorest members of the community remain anonymous. Families could show affection and respect to their female members in many ways, and some could even afford a statue of their loved one. One such example is a full-sized statue of a young woman, found in tomb number 106 in the necropolis of Isola Sacra. Her name was Julia Procula, she died at the age of 29, and she is depicted as the goddess Hygieia or as a priestess. Several other pieces of sculpture were also found in this tomb.[63] The tomb was erected by a physician, Q. Marcius Demetrius, and by Munatia Helpis. Munatia Helpis was Julia's mother, and Demetrius was probably her second husband and Julia's step-father.[64] The inscriptions do not explain why Julia Procula was depicted as the goddess of health or as a priestess, and we thus do not know if she was in fact a priestess in an Ostian cult or a medical

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55 Meiggs 1973, 192-93, 196-97, 354; Herzig 1983, 84; Hänninen 2019, 71-72.

56 *AE* 1988, 188.

57 See Hänninen 2019, 73-84.

58 Hemelrijk 2015, 102-03; Hänninen 2019, 77.

59 Hänninen 2019, 85-86.

60 Hemelrijk 2008, 126-28.

61 *AE* 1955, 187. Meiggs 1973, 229.

62 *CIL* XIV 413. Meiggs 1973, 229.

63 For the tomb and its inscriptions and statues, see Helttula *et al.* 2007, 172-75.

64 For a discussion of family relations, see Meiggs 1973, 563-64.

professional, or if her depiction reflects the profession of her step-father or the affection felt for her. What is evident, however, is that she is depicted in a highly respectful manner, immortalizing her as a pious and respectable woman.

The evidence from Ostia clearly reflects the range of social activities open to Roman women in the imperial period. Even though their roles as mothers and wives were always essential, women also made their mark in local business and religious life, and as benefactresses of the community. What makes Ostia special is the role played by freedwomen and women whose roots lay outside Ostia or Italy.

Children in the Roman World

Sanna Joska & Ville Vuolanto

Ancient Rome was a world of children: approximately one-third of the population was under fifteen years of age. Ancient communities were full of children, roaming the streets and fields, playing and working.[1] Contrary to claims in older research that childhood as such did not exist in the ancient world and that children were systematically neglected, more recent studies have shown that at all levels of ancient society children were welcome, valuable and visible. The Romans recognized childhood as an important stage of human life, separate from adulthood.[2] Nonetheless, we know most about childhood among the elites, whereas the experience of ordinary people is often obscure. Most sources represent the viewpoint of older elite men who used narratives about children, and possibly the recollection of their own childhoods, to advance their own agendas. There is also a gender divide, as Roman girlhood is generally rarely attested in the sources.[3] In elite ideology, children (especially sons) were needed above all in order to continue the lineage, honour, and renown of their parents, ancestors, and family line.[4] Fortunately, an alternate perspective is sometimes offered by papyri, and, as at Ostia, by archaeological materials and funerary inscriptions. However, there is an inevitable difference between ideological elite views on childhood, more down-to-earth attitudes, and actual childhood experiences.

At birth, the child was first welcomed by a midwife and female relatives, who cared for the mother and child. The new-born was bathed, swaddled and presented to the father, and laurel wreaths were hung on the front door to mark the birth and as a sign of joy. Sometimes a text announcing the news was inscribed on the wall of the house, and friends were invited. The first days of life were surrounded by rites and celebrations that welcomed children into the family and society at large. *Dies lustricus*, the purification day, took place on the eighth (for girls) or ninth (for boys) day after birth. On that day the child was also given a name, usually one that honoured dead or living relatives, highlighting the child's role in continuing the family lineage. This marked the child's full membership of the family and survival through the critical first days after birth. Freeborn boys received a necklace, *bulla*, to mark their status and protect them.[5] New-born babies could be abandoned before the name giving ceremony. In premodern contexts without access to reliable contraception, this was a relatively common and tolerated practice among the poorest. It was not always fatal, as children were generally left in well-frequented places, like dung heaps and roadsides, to be found by local residents.[6]

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1 Parkin 2013, 41-42.

2 Rawson 2003, 1, 136-38.

3 See, however, Mustakallio 2013 on girls' lives in antiquity.

4 See e.g. Vuolanto 2015, 34-40.

5 Rawson 2003, 108-10; Hänninen 2005, 49-57; Dasen 2011, 297-304.

6 Evans Grubbs 2013.

The birth of elite children could be officially registered at the temple of Saturn in Rome or, in the provinces, with the Roman governor.[7] However, not all children were eligible for the official registers. Ancient Rome was a strongly hierarchical society, and childhood was a very different experience for the members of wealthy upper-class families and, for example, those born into slavery.

In their earliest childhood, children were looked after by their mother. During their first days, children were regularly fed honey mixed with water; after this the mother was expected to breastfeed her children for at least two but often over three years. Special feeding bottles were designed to help in this task, and, for example, if it became necessary to give the infant goat's milk during the weaning period (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 70**). Among the upper levels of society, breastfeeding was usually done by wet-nurses, *nutrices*, who could be slaves or hired women.[8] Slaves and servants played significant roles in the lives of their owners' children, as did the *paedagogi*, tutors, who accompanied the child both at home and in public. If the child had no siblings of a similar age, the offspring of any household slaves might be potential playmates and form their peer group. The household might also raise foster children, *alumni*, who might be orphans, poor relations, foundlings, or children of slave origin. The epigraphic evidence reveals that families in Ostia had a particularly large number of foster children. All these people, along with the parents, would have played a role in the child's socialization and emotional attachments.[9]

Although the daily care of an elite child was in the hands of nurses and other caregivers, parents played a central role. Fathers took special responsibility for overseeing their sons' education and path to



Figure 1. This pitcher is one of the earliest ceramic finds from Ostia, from the 4th century BCE. It was found under the street level in the excavations of the Castrum area. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5795. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

7 Rawson 2003, 112.

8 Dasen 2011, 303; Parkin 2013, 50-57.

9 Rawson 2003, 251-52; McWilliam 2013, 274-75.

public life. Legally, children remained under the authority of their father until his death, though during the Roman empire it became increasingly common to release adult boys from this control when they came of age. If the father died when his children were underage, a male guardian was appointed for the children to take care of their financial and legal affairs. Mothers supervised their children's upbringing and education at home. Girls learned from their mothers how to manage a household and how to act as exemplary Roman *matronae*.[10] *Pietas*, a combination of dutifulness and devotion, was the guiding moral principle for Romans in their family relationships. It signified reciprocal duty and affection between parents and children, and was expected of Roman citizens. Proper familial behaviour included the nurture and support provided by parents to their underage children whilst, in turn, *pietas* obliged children to take care of their aging parents.[11]



Figure 2 (Cat. no. 71). The body of this pig has been made from light clay on a potter's wheel. The back of the animal features a floral pattern decoration with inlaid glass beads. The pig is likely to have been a toy rattle (see Dasen on p. 308). Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4649. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Overall, Roman families and households were multifaceted. Divorces, deaths and re-marriages meant the existence of half-siblings, much older or younger siblings; the likelihood of losing a parent, sibling or other member of the household was high.[12] Grandparents, if alive, often played an active role in a child's life, as did any other members of the extended family, such as aunts and uncles.[13]

The age of seven was symbolically important. Younger children might already have undertaken tasks at home, or received some rudimentary education, but at this age the boys and girls of wealthier families started their formal education. Children might attend school outside the home or be taught at home by pri-

10 McWilliam 2013, 269-72; Vuolanto 2016, 488-89.

11 Evans Grubbs 2011, 377, 382.

12 Parkin 2013, 43.

13 Rawson 2003, 239-43; Vuolanto 2017.

vate tutors. Elite girls were expected to be educated although they were not allowed a public career, which was the aim of the formal education of boys. Education was focused on teaching children to read, write and speak well, and was based on Greek and Latin literature. Children also learned philosophy, geometry, astronomy and music. There were no classes, or grades: pupils advanced at their own pace and discipline was harsh. The fear of violence during childhood and especially during schooling was a recurrent topic in depictions of youth. Some slave children also received a formal education if their owners thought it profitable. In general, however, non-elite children, both freeborn and slaves, were expected to work from the age of five or six, first with their parents, then more independently outside the household. Among artisan families, it was customary for children in their early teens to become apprentices or otherwise participate in training to teach them the skills needed in their future profession.[14]

Children were highly visible in the ancient cityscape. Not only did they play and run in the streets, they also attended public games, gladiator shows and other often violent entertainments as spectators, and they regularly participated in public religious festivals, funerals and other celebrations. Children had a role in the rites of Roman religion as assistants, singers in choruses and participants in processions. Some upper-class children even received priesthoods in public cults. An upper-class girl could become a Vestal Virgin, a much-respected priestess, at the age of only six. Children participated in the rituals of household cult as well.[15] The constant presence of children in public was reinforced by representations in different media: in literature, in both minor and monumental art, and in every-day items. For instance, images of children were used as symbols of the future and continuity by the Roman emperor.[16] Thus, children appeared on such grand monuments as the Ara Pacis in many roles: as 'real' children belonging to the Julio-Claudian imperial dynasty representing the continuity of the ruling family, as metaphorical children representing the continuity of Rome, and as the young vestal virgins and boy assistants in sacrifices (*camilli*) representing the continuity of religious traditions and the favour of the gods. The Dacian children depicted on Trajan's column in Rome, in turn, convey the message of a conquered and irremediably subjugated people. Images of young people were also used on tiny tokens (**Fig. 3; Cat. no. 134**), whose exact function can often only be guessed at. They might be used, for example, for the distribution of goods, as entrance tickets to theatre performances, citizen assemblies, the banquets of closed confraternities (as in the Syrian city of Palmyra), or as simple chips or pawns in games.[17]



Figure 3. This token may be a game counter decorated with a relief of a child. The object may also have been a lid of oil lamp's filling hole. In that case, the lid would depict the god Mercury, holding a staff in his left hand. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4752. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Prayers and rituals surrounded the lives of children from the moment of their birth, both in the non-Christian and Christian traditions. This reflects the worries of parents in a world with extremely high levels of infant and child mortality. Pregnancy, childbirth and the first years after a child's birth were a dangerous time. The poor health of the mother and various diseases caused

14 Rawson 2003, 136, 158-60, 168-69, 187, 191-92, 197-99; Laes 2005, 76-83: Laes 2011, esp. 107-13; 137-47; 155-65; 191-95; 218-21.

15 Rawson 2003, 207, 270, 315-16; McWilliam 2013, 278.

16 Rawson 2003, 22-69; Joska 2018.

17 Makrypodi 2016.

by everything from common infections to polluted water led to between one-third and one-half of children dying as new-borns or during their first five years. Medicine and magic, saints and gods were inseparable: protection and recovery from illness was sought from local healers or at temples of the healing gods; Christians travelled to the shrines of local saints.[18] One such god was Telesphorus, son of Asclepius. He was always depicted with a cloak, often as a child concealed under a hood, his very figure symbolizing recovery from illness (**Fig. 4; Cat. no. 77**).



Figure 4. A hooded child, interpreted as the child Telesphorus, the son of Asclepius, the god of healing. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3516. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Almost every family would have experienced the death of a child, and the ways in which the Romans dealt with this reveals much about society's attitude towards children. Dead children were carefully buried and deeply mourned, and lavish funerary monuments were built in their memory. These monuments recognize the dead child as an individual and express the hopes for a future now lost.[19] The death of infant children involved different rules and customs than that of older children. There was no official grieving period for infant children under one year of age. Unlike others, who were buried in cemeteries outside the city, infants could be buried within the walls and were only rarely commemorated in funerary monuments.[20] Older children of all ages were remembered with marble slabs, altars and sarcophagi. The inscriptions often give the exact age of the deceased child in years, months and days. They also frequently express the grief of the parents, or other mourners, and glorify the child's character. Children were represented using the rich

18 Dasen 2011, 303-05; Parkin 2013, 46-47; Holman 2015; Horn 2017, 301-02.

19 Rawson 2003, 340, 352.

20 Rawson 2003, 343; Dasen 2011, 305-07; Carroll 2012, 48.

imagery of life stages, motifs associated with childhood, or scenes alluding to their imagined future.[21] A funerary altar found in Ostia is a good example of this, showing a boy with a goat by his side, with the text "For the spirits of the dead. To Aulus Egrilius Magnus, a freeborn son of Aulus, from the Palatina *tribus*, who lived five years, nine months and nine days" (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 72**).[22] Animals were often associated with deceased children, as symbols of purity or as pets, like birds, dogs or cockerels, or as reference to sacrifices performed both in coming of age rituals and in connection with funerals, as is the case here with the goat.[23]



Figure 5. Aulus Egrilius Magnus with a goat by his side. Museo Ostiense, inv. 1375. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

The process which took an individual from childhood to adulthood differed for Roman boys and girls. Culturally, childhood ended with marriage and puberty, which commonly took place some years later than the legal lower limits for marriage: twelve for girls, fourteen for boys. Women, or girls, were usually married in their late teens, or some years earlier in their early or mid-teens among the elites. Before marriage, girls ritually gave away their childhood toys, such as dolls (**Fig. 6; Cat. nos. 73-74**), preparing for their role as a Roman *matrona*. Their first pregnancy definitively marked the end of childhood.

For Roman boys, the transition from childhood to adulthood was a longer process. Boys began this by changing their childhood toga to the men's toga, shaving their first beard and giving away their *bulla*. These ceremonies took place when the boy's family decided it was time, usually between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. Among the elites, these celebrations started the period of youth when the young man was educated and trained for his roles in the family and in public life. Men usually married some five to ten years later than women, but among the elites their age at first marriage varied, from the early teens to the early thirties.[24]

In conclusion, individual children's experiences varied enormously. Children were socialized into the roles proper to them according to their social status, gender and family situation. Among ordinary people, the lot of children was to contribute to the family finances early on, and for the most part, and especially for girls, there was no intervening time between childhood (with play), and adulthood (with work and marriage). Only elite males enjoyed the freedom of youth. Childhood was also characterized by vulnerability. Children were physically vulnerable to illnesses, accidents and even abuse; they were also vulnerable psychologically, as violence was a constant threat, and the death of family members was always a possibility

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21 Rawson 2003, 353; Larsson Lovén 2013, 309-10, 313-14.

22 "*Dis Manibus A·Egrilio·A·f·Pal·Magno·vix ann·v·meses·viiii·dies·viiii*". *CIL* XIV, 4899 (suppl.). Tribe names refer to the traditional division of Roman citizens, originally linked to voting districts.

23 Dasen 2011, 311.

24 Rawson 2003, 142-45; Mustakallio 2013, 21, 24-26; Laes – Strubbe 2014, 50-60; Vuolanto 2015, 96-97.



Figure 6. Many dolls carved of bone have been found in girls' graves. The dolls always depict adult women with hairstyles carefully made in the fashion of the time. The dolls have articulated legs and arms. The body of the figures, however, follows the ideals of the time. Some dolls were carved quite skilfully, but these Ostian dolls from the 2nd or 3rd century CE are relatively crude. The arms and legs are missing. One of the dolls has a bronze ring representing a necklace around its neck. The dolls have probably had clothes, but none have been preserved. Miniature-size beauty tools that may have belonged together with dolls have also been found in some graves. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5242, 5243. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

and all too often a reality. Nonetheless, children were highly valued in Roman society. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) encapsulates their significance when he claimed it to be a common sentiment that "[h]appy are those who leave behind children to succeed them and take over their possessions. He has had children, he is not dead". To die childless meant the loss of one's name and memory, and the resulting oblivion. Both for individuals and communities, children signified continuity and hope.[25]

25 Aug. *enarr. ps. 48*, 1, 14; Vuolanto 2015, 186-203.

Clothes and Dress in Roman Urban Life

Lena Larsson Lovén

Roman society was a clothed culture in which garments and other textiles were part of everyday life and were used by everyone: adult men and women, children, slaves and free people alike, of all social classes.[1] In a complex and hierarchical society like that of ancient Rome, clothes were also a means of visual communication that could be used to display various characteristics of the wearer such as gender, social and economic status, and ethnicity.

The most common, all-purpose Roman garment was the tunic, which was used by men and women of all social classes.[2] For some it could be an undergarment, worn beneath an outer garment but for some occupational groups it was standard work attire. The tunic regularly appears in the iconography in situations that reflect a range of occupational and everyday situations. Examples from Ostia show people dressed in tunics, such as the reliefs with the midwife and the doctor (figure on p. 228), with tradespeople such as the vegetable seller (figure on p. 290) and the scene of the poultry seller from Via della Foce (figure on p. 290). In the latter example, both the saleswoman and the three male customers to the left wear tunics. As the woman is standing behind a counter it is impossible to determine how long her tunic is, but those worn by the men are all knee-length; this appears to have been a standard length for a man who was neither a slave nor an individual of high status.

Tunics were made of wool and as a mark of gender women's tunics were normally longer than those worn by men. This can be seen on the sarcophagus front with the bar scene, where a woman serving a drinking cup wears a foot-length garment. (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 100**) Women who worked in bars had low social status and would very likely have worn an ankle-length tunic. The seated male customers also wear tunics.



Figure 1. A bar scene depicted on a sarcophagus, where the woman serving a drinking cup wears a foot-length garment. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3526. Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

1 See Croom 2010, 31-145 for an overview of Roman clothes for men, women, and children.

2 For an in-depth study of the Roman tunic, see Pausch 2003.

Men's tunics could be of any length from the thigh to the lower leg, depending on the status, and the social and professional role of its wearer. Adult male citizens with the right to wear a toga wore a tunic underneath.

A common street scene in a Roman city of the imperial period would have been full of people dressed in various types of tunics, but even this universal clothing item communicated gender and status through the quality of the fabric, and the details and colours of the garment. Tunics could be dyed in many different colours and hues, but in their simplest form these were undyed garments, perhaps made from a coarse woollen fabric.

The Roman toga

The toga, the most iconic of Roman garments, was made of wool and the ordinary plain and unadorned *toga virilis* was worn by adult men who were members of the citizen body. As such, it represents both the gender and legal status of the wearer. The many depictions in the visual arts of a man dressed in a toga, a *togatus*, illustrate the importance of this garment: since it was reserved for male citizens, it was a marker of both gender and status.[3] Representations of men dressed in togas exist in all sizes, from portrait busts and over life-size statues in stone to miniature figures made of less expensive materials. The latter category is represented in the exhibition by a small *togatus* in terracotta (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 78**). The right to wear the *toga virilis* could be inherited by a son from freeborn parents; it could also be an acquired right and as such was often attained through manumission from slavery.



Figure 2. A terracotta figurine representing a man dressed in a toga, a *togatus*. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3507. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

From late Republican times, slaves who became successful freedmen often commemorated themselves in stone memorials with family portraits.[4] The men in such images are commonly dressed in togas, as an important visual identity marker of their social success and newly acquired legal status as Roman citizens. The status and rank of men entitled to wear the toga varied widely, and details on the garment would further clarify the wearer's status. Roman senators, for instance, wore a toga with a purple stripe, a *toga praetexta*, to signal their position.

The toga was an outer garment and, as mentioned above, was worn over a tunic. In daily life togas were used increasingly seldom, especially in the imperial period, as they were considered uncomfortable and by this time were mostly reserved for formal occasions.[5] However, the symbolic significance of the

3 See Goette 1990 for a thorough study of visual representations of the toga worn by adult males.

4 Kockel 1993 for a detailed study of late Republican and early Imperial funerary portraits from the city of Rome.

5 See George 2009; Larsson Lovén 2018 for a discussion of the use of the adult male toga in everyday life. See Harlow 2018 for a view on togas, from Roman satire.

toga remained strong into Late Antiquity.[6] In everyday life, tunics and mantles of various types had largely replaced the toga; yet, on public occasions and in the visual media it remained important for a man to be portrayed as a *togatus* – it is this symbolic significance and frequent representation in art that makes it appear to be the normal or typical Roman male garment.[7]

Clothes for women and children

Women did not wear togas but other items of clothing that signalled femininity and indicated their status. In everyday life, many women wore draped clothes that covered most of their bodies. A married high-status



Figure 3 (Cat. no. 79). A terracotta figurine depicting a high-status woman, *matrona*. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3511. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 4 (Cat. no. 80). A terracotta figurine depicting a seated *matrona*. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 54580. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

woman was a *matrona*, and her dress consisted of several pieces of clothing of which the most significant were the *stola* and the *palla.* The *stola* was a sleeveless garment held in place over each shoulder by shoulder straps and worn over a tunic. The *palla* was an ample mantle, worn as an outer garment when a *matrona* appeared in public. Part of the *palla* could be used to cover her head in public, and it also concealed most of the female body. A combination of colours could be used for tunics and *stolae*; for a *matrona stolata*, the *stola* was a mark of gender, social class and identity as it could only be worn by women married to Roman

6 For a discussion of dress in Late Antiquity and the *Historia Augusta*, see Harlow 2005, 143-53.

7 See Davies 2005, 121-30, for a discussion of how the shape and volume of the adult toga developed over time.

citizens, particularly of the upper social classes (**Figs. 3-4**).[8] A typical representation of a woman wearing this combination of garments is the so-called Herculaneum woman, a sculptural type that appeared over time and with variations in much of the Roman Empire as a cultural code, and that was the female equivalent of the male *togatus*.[9]

Women who were not entitled to wear the combination of *stola* and *palla* still wore clothes that covered most of their bodies. In public, married Roman women of different social classes kept their heads covered as a sign both of their married status and of modesty, but there is no firm visual evidence that they covered their faces. In some statues of the so-called *Pudicitia* type, however, the gesture with one arm raised holding the mantle can be interpreted as readiness to pull the mantle over the face if necessary.[10]

Few clothes were designed specifically for children, who normally wore clothes similar to those of adults, but in smaller sizes. The best-known specific clothing item for children is the *toga praetexta*, the wearing of which was a privilege for children born to citizen families. The child's toga was decorated with purple borders, but appears to have been a more gender-neutral garment than the adult male toga as it was worn by the sons and daughters of citizens alike: it was thus a marker of status rather than gender. A boy dressed in a child's toga appears on the funerary altar of Aulus Egrilius Magnus accompanied by a goat (figure on p. 266). Freeborn boys had an additional symbol, the *bulla*, a protective pendant worn around the neck. In artistic representations, the *bulla* is worn only by boys and it was probably not used by girls. *Bullae* were made of various materials such as leather or metal, with the most expensive pieces being made of gold; boys wore them until their teens when they performed a rite of passage, donning the *toga virilis* to signal the transition from boyhood to adulthood.[11]

Like adults, children of all social classes wore tunics. Mantles and cloaks, with or without hoods, served as outer garments. An example of a hooded cloak used by a child can be seen in the small figurine (inv. 3516, figure on p. 265), a seated boy dressed in a child's cloak with a hood.[12] In addition to clothes, the Romans normally also wore shoes which could provide further information on the age and status of the wearer.[13]

Status, ethnicity and religion signalled through dress

The status was also marked by how much or little fabric a clothing item was made of: a garment consisting of a large piece of soft and luxurious cloth signalled higher status than items requiring only smaller pieces of fabric. This is illustrated by the shawls and mantles of the female figures in nos. 3511 and 54580: the seated woman (no. 54580) wears a more ample mantle than the standing woman, and is thus probably of higher status (**Figs. 3-4**).

Clothes made from smaller pieces of coarse fabric were commonly associated with hard work and lower status individuals. Two other pieces in the exhibition show the garments worn by people performing physically demanding and dirty tasks. The small terracotta statuettes of salt carriers (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 8**)

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8 For a more detailed description of the clothes of Roman women, see Olson 2008.

9 The sculptural type of the "Herculaneum woman" is named after a find in Herculaneum in the 18th century. For the development and regional variations of the motif, see Trimble 2011, 51-63, 116-78.

10 Harlow 2012, 40.

11 On the toga for children see Gabelmann 1985; Sebesta 2005, 113, 120; Dolansky 2009.

12 See Berg in this volume for another example of a boy wearing a hooded cloak, interpreted as Telephorus, the son of Asclepius.

13 For a recent study of children's shoes, see Backe-Dahmen 2019, 263-82.



Figure 5. Three terracotta statuettes of salt carriers dressed in short tunics with belts around the waist. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3261, 3262, 3512. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 6. A relief depicting men unloading amphorae from a ship anchored in the port of Ostia. Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3666 (original relief in Museo Torlonia). Photo: Museo della Civiltà Romana, Archivio Fotografico.

represent three men, all dressed in short tunics with belts around the waist, carrying their loads on their shoulders. A similar situation can be seen in the replica of a relief (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 7**) depicting men unloading amphorae from a ship anchored in the port of Ostia. The first man disembarking the ship is seen in full-length profile and appears to be dressed in only a loincloth that clearly implies he is carrying out hard, low status work. The man behind him is partly obscured but may be dressed in the same way. The difference compared to the men grouped around a desk to the right is obvious: the latter are dressed in tunics, marking their position in the occupational hierarchy and their relatively higher status compared to the men carrying goods off the ship. They are probably overseers or accountants.

Another aspect that could be expressed through Roman dress is ethnicity. In the exhibition this is illustrated by some statuettes of gods and goddesses related to various cults. The indigenous god Vulcan is depicted in a kind of belted tunic with one shoulder left bare, and wearing a Phrygian cap (figure on p. 337). Clothes that left one shoulder bare were used by some occupational categories that implied physically demanding and dirty tasks, such as fullers and smiths; indeed, Vulcan was the protector of metalworking and fire. Some imported deities can be easily identified through their outfits, like Serapis (figure on p. 351) and the eastern god Attis (figure on p. 349). The outfits worn by deities could be typical of a specific god/goddess, though individual items of clothing were not necessarily specific; instead, their identity was signalled by a particular combination of ordinary clothing items.[14]

Little of the artistic evidence for Roman clothing preserves the original colours, but it is well known that Romans used a large variety of colours and hues for their clothes and textiles. A painting (Musei Vaticani, inv. 79368; figure on p. 85) from Ostia depicts grain being transported by boat. The scene provides a glimpse of what ordinary, everyday clothes may have looked like: made from undyed wool, some were grey, brownish and dark-coloured, possibly reflecting the natural colour of the wool.[15] More elegant and costly clothing items existed in a wide range of colours, and the most attractive and expensive dyestuff was purple which could be used on clothing details, such as the border of the *toga praetexta*. An example of the colours used in Roman textiles is found in the partially preserved painting in exhibition item (figure on p. 120) from the Ostia Museum, showing a man dressed in a tunic with red *clavi* reclining on a couch. A woman wearing a green dress is sitting in an armchair in front of him. The couch has a green cover with dark red stripes, a blue-green textile at the back, and a yellow-brownish cushion at the right end. This is just one example of how colourful Roman textiles may originally have been.

14 Larsson Lovén 2017, 140.

15 The painting is in the Sala Nozze Aldobrandini, Biblioteca Apostolica in the Vatican Museums.

Jewellery in Ostia

Paola Germoni

Found in different contexts, one urban and one funerary, and made of different metals – bronze, silver and gold – the jewellery on display in the exhibition exemplifies the broad dissemination of types and motifs that originated in the Hellenistic world and endured until Late Antiquity.

A mark of distinction and social status, an expression of the *luxus* of the emerging classes from the Republican period onwards, jewellery often also holds an apotropaic significance connected to the incorruptibility of metals and precious stones, and to the forms given to the *ornamenta* intended to beautify and adorn men, women and children, in life and death.

The ancient sources, especially Cato and Florus, give expression to the strong aversion to *luxuria* of the conservative classes, thought to corrupt the Roman character.

Laws were passed to limit the ownership and use of luxury goods,[1] not just jewellery and table ware in gold and silver, but also purple dye, pearls, spices, perfumes and fabrics. In Latin literature we find unforgettable characters such as Petronius' Trimalchio (1st century CE), who fully encapsulates the provincialism of the *nouveaux riches*.[2]

The significant social and economic changes taking place between the Republic and the middle imperial period also saw a transition from a fundamentally agrarian and estate-based economy to one that relied on trade and large-scale entrepreneurial activities often managed by freedmen of foreign origin. As it became the capital of an empire, Rome became a city of consumers. The production and accumulation of goods took place elsewhere, in the wealthy provinces of Africa, Spain and the East. First Ostia and then Portus increasingly became urban spaces devoted to storage, the arrival point for commodities, foodstuffs, luxury goods and with them merchants, artisans and doctors, all individuals who brought with them their own cultures, knowledge, beliefs and religions, whose presence is attested in Ostia by the numerous cult buildings dedicated to foreign deities (Cybele, Mithras, Isis, Serapis) alongside the well-known Synagogue.

Unlike the Vesuvian towns such as Pompeii and Herculaneum, the city of Ostia and its territory have yielded only a limited number of *ornamenta*, many of which were "lost" during the Second World War.

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1 The legislative archetype for all subsequent sumptuary laws, aimed particularly at women, dates to mid-Republican Rome. This is the *lex Oppia*, passed in 215 BCE, which forbade the wearing of gold jewellery weighing over half an ounce (or less than 14 grams); the use of brightly-coloured garments, probably with particular reference to those dyed purple; the use in the city and its vicinity of two-horse carriages, with the sole exception of religious occasions. For the legal and social aspects aimed at control over the feminine sphere, see Vettori 2019, 51-84.

2 "On the little finger of his left hand he wore a heavy gilt ring and a smaller one on the last joint of the next finger, which looked like solid gold but studded with little iron stars. And to show off even more of his jewellery, his right arm was bare and set off by a gold armlet and an ivory circlet fastened with a gleaming metal plate. 33. As soon as he had finished picking his teeth with a silver toothpick, he exclaimed: 'My friends, I hadn't yet decided to come into the triclinium, but I forewent all my pleasures so my absence would not keep you waiting. However, you'll allow me to finish my game.' A boy was at his heels with a board of terebinth wood with glass squares, and I noticed the very last word in luxury – instead of white and black pieces he used gold and silver coins." (Petronius, *Satyricon*, 32).

Descriptions of these survive in the excavation journals together with some photographs. Artefacts of very high quality and tableware in valuable metals are in any case lacking. We do have incised gemstones, cornelians and numerous pieces of bronze jewellery of humble workmanship – rings, bracelets and armbands – often without decorations, testifying to the widespread use of these ornaments among the humblest classes of servile origin.

In this context, the ring with a snake's head (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 86**), the armband in the form of a snake (**Fig. 2,; Cat. no. 86**) and the open-work brooch (**Fig. 3; Cat. no. 83**) are representative of women's everyday personal adornments.

The ring with a cast hoop of circular section and open ends terminating in facing and parallel snakes' heads, replicates forms attested elsewhere in gold in a less valuable metal. The low economic value of the metal did not condition the rendering of the details, now clearly visible thanks to the recent cleaning. The animal is executed with a realistic head and the typical scales rendered with lines intersecting to form a V-shape. This is an extremely common type and our piece, in bronze (**Fig. 1**), has parallels with Hélène Guiraud's type 7.[3] Rings of this type were also made using a thicker hoop or in the form of a ribbon, wrapping once or several times around the finger.

The armilla is a bracelet that could be worn either around the arm or around the wrist. The most common type is that in the form of snakes (**Fig. 2**) with facing snake heads; the enormous popularity of this form of adornment was doubtless connected to the apotropaic significance of the snake and the shape of the animal's body, which was well suited to the roundness of the arm. The precedents date to the Hellenistic period and this type continues to be produced throughout the first and second century CE. Pieces in gold were made with a solid band onto which short V-shaped lines were incised to create a realistic impression of scaly skin.[4]

The brooch (**Fig. 3**) is of the circular open-work type. The decorative composition, taking the shape of three curved plant-like branches departing from a central element recalls the *triskeles* motif (from the Greek "tri"



Figure 1. A bronze ring with a snake's head. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4136. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 2. A bronze bracelet with a snake's head. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5200. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 3. A bronze brooch of the circular open-work type. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4198. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

3 Guiraud 1989, 195-96.

4 D'Ambrosio – De Carolis 1997, 18.



Figure 4. A golden seal ring. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 59959. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5. A golden ring with emeralds. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 59960. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

and "skelos"), a figure usually consisting of three legs departing from a shared centre. It has been suggested that this figurative composition expressed the idea of a perennial and cyclical movement. Our piece is comparable to a bronze fibula of the 3rd-4th century CE now in the Veliko Museum at Gradište in Serbia.[5]

The only gold jewels (**Figs. 4-5**) present in the exhibition come from a different context. These are two finger rings that, together with a bent iron nail and a bronze coin, formed the funerary goods of a subadult, placed inside a marble sarcophagus, the so-called Sarcophagus of the Muses, discovered intact in 2008 at Isola Sacra.[6]

Both the sarcophagus and the grave goods form an assemblage of special significance since they clearly belonged to a fairly exalted cultural and economic context, as demonstrated by the choice of figurative themes on the box and the lid, depicting the procession of the nine Muses in the presence of Athena and Apollo, and scenes of conversations among Philosophers respectively, and the grave goods with as many as two gold rings, one of which is set with precious stones.

The seal ring with a plaque in the form of a foot wearing a sandal (inv. 59959) preserves an inscription in Greek letters (**Fig. 4; Cat. no. 84**).The ring has a semi-circular section with a solid hoop to the upper part of which the small plaque in the shape of a slender female foot is attached; the word "μιστικ" has been inscribed on the latter using the stippling technique in cursive Greek script; it can be related to the term *mystikòs*, meaning initiated into the mysteries.

The second ring (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 85**) has a double setting with emeralds (inv. 59960). The stones, of identical size and shape, are set with the convex surface facing towards the inside of the rectangular compartments, placed above and parallel to the gold hoop. A tiny sphere connects the two settings.

Among precious stones, emeralds were particularly widespread, both for their colour, described by Pliny as "*iucundus*", and because their natural shape required less work than other stones such as garnets and sapphires. Again from Pliny, we learn information about where they were traded and mined. The Scythians acquired emeralds from the tribes living in the southern foothills of the Ural Mountains. The older mines

5 Sapienza 2016-2017, 82.

6 Germoni 2009; Germoni 2010; Bondioli – Germoni – Rossi 2018.

in Egypt, on the Red Sea coast, included both open air quarries and tunnels, intensively exploited in the Ptolemaic period.[7]

The ring presents similarities with Hélène Guiraud's type 3,[8] characterized by the greater development of the form above the shoulder. The importance and size of the upper part suggest that this was not a ring for everyday wear, but for use on special occasions. The form appears towards the end of the second century CE and endures throughout the third century, almost always made of gold and silver and connected to wealthy towns. This is a piece of jewellery of great value and, in our case, the small size of the finger ring shows that it was made purposely for the boy buried here.

When the grave was excavated, one of the stones in the ring with emeralds was found outside its setting. In the cavity a tiny fragment of gold leaf was discovered, folded several times, which probably allowed the stone to adhere better. Another theory is that this was the remains of a previous setting, inserted to indicate the transmission of the ring from one family member to another.[9]

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7 Bordenache Battaglia 1983, 54-55.

8 Guiraud 1989, 185-87, figs. 21-25.

9 Bordenache Battaglia 1983,19 and 47, fig. 6. The author describes the gifts in a funerary urn found in Torre Gaia (RM) at Via Casalina, a gold ring decorated with a reused portrait gem. Furthermore, the funerary gifts of a young girl from Mentana (RM), ancient *Nomentum,* include a ring where between the stone and its support there is a cavity where small amulets or family memorabilia were kept. From the same context derive also remains of gold threads that have been interpreted as remains of gold leaves that decorated the tunica of the girl, resembling the fragment that was found inside the ring with a double setting with emeralds from Isola Sacra.

Perfume Bottles, Hairpins and Mirrors: Evolutions of the *Mundus Muliebris* in Ostia

Ria Berg

Roman ideals of beauty and the material methods used to enhance it evolved radically during the long period of Ostia's existence. According to the Romans' view of their own history, their earliest, mythical past was characterized by a manifest simplicity of appearance, whereas elaborate fineries appeared from the second century BCE onwards, in the form of increasing quantities of luxury imports, especially from the conquered East. During the Imperial period, from the end of the first century BC, the elite's quest for exotic novelties from the provinces became increasingly fervent.[1] Subsequently, in later antiquity, Christianity brought new views, favouring inner spirituality over exterior beautification, though wealth and status continued to be expressed through sumptuous jewellery and coiffures.[2]

Throughout its existence, Ostia was certainly a privileged place for beauty products, exotic unguents, textiles, essences and pigments. In the pan-Mediterranean market, each substance had its own ideal place of production; distant local specialities such as Tyrian purple, Red Sea pearls, silk from Cos, myrrh from Arabia, nard from India, or iris perfume from Corinth became rhetorically attested luxuries.[3] Through its port city, Rome absorbed trends and materials from all over the Empire, consumed and processed them, and then exported new fashions back to the provinces.

Beauty in a bottle

Ostia was directly connected with the superpowers of cosmetic production, like Alexandria in Egypt, which had a long tradition of manufacturing perfumes and cosmetics, prepared from raw materials that arrived via long caravan routes from India, through eastern Africa and Arabia.[4] Just a single perfume bottle could contain a mixture of substances from all corners of the Empire, like the famous 'royal perfume' (*unguentum regale*) that according to Pliny the Elder was the 'most delicious of luxuries', originally developed for the Parthian kings. It was prepared from twenty-six ingredients, including cinnamon, cardamom, saffron, myrrh, lavender, laurel, cypress, lotus, honey and wine.[5]

Of these ephemeral products, only the containers survive in the archaeological record. For seaborne trade, perfumes and essences were transported in small amphorae or large glass bottles. In retail shops, perfumes were sold in small bottles – *unguentaria* or *ampulla* – characterized by a narrow neck and out-

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1 Sensi 1980/81; Virgili 1989; Castiglione Morelli del Franco 1992; Berg 2002; Olson 2008, 88 and passim; Michel 2016.

2 Raditsa 1985; Sernicola 1996.

3 Hildebrandt 2009; Totelin 2016, 152-53.

4 Cipollaro – Di Bernardo 1999; Regers 2005; Olson 2009, 62, 76-78; D'Acunto 2012; Berg 2017.

5 Virgili 1989; Regers 2005. Plin. *nat*. 13, 2, 18.

turned lip that made it possible to dole out the product slowly, drop by drop.[6] The spindle-shaped clay bottles of the Republican period were swiftly replaced by multiform glass containers in the Imperial period. Cosmetic substances could also travel and be sold as powders (*diapasmata*), bars or pills; these were only ground and mixed with oil, saliva, or honey during the domestic preparation process. In such operations, grinding palettes of stone, and small bone or bronze spoons and spatulas were needed (**Fig. 1**; **Cat. no. 93**, **Pl. 2**).



Figure 1. Bronze spoon with a pointed handle, perhaps used for cosmetic processing. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4239. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo archive.

Small glass bottles for perfumes and medicines (**Fig. 2**; **Cat. no. 91**, **Pl. 1**) may have been imported mainly from the large glass production centres of the Syro-Phoenician area, but they were also made locally in Ostia: numerous glass objects dating to the late 2nd – 3rd century CE have been found in Portus, and in Ostia, in particular in the Macellum area, there is evidence for the presence of local glass workshops.[7]

A cylindrical container, the *pyxis*, was the quintessential container for cosmetic creams and powders and was often the most valuable and elaborately decorated object in women's sets of toiletries. The well-preserved example found in Ostia, dating to the end of the 1st-2nd century CE, is decorated with amorous themes (**Fig. 3**; **Cat. no. 89**, **Pl. 1**).[8] A Cupid is shown in a dynamic running or flying pose, wings outspread, armed with a sword, or more accurately a knife, and a shield. He seems to be attacking a hare that is already half inside a cage or trap and eating a bunch of grapes, possibly used as bait. All these elements have a symbolic dimension, with the fighting Cupid alluding to the wounds of love and to love as allegorical warfare. It is also reminiscent of popular genre scenes with Cupids hunting or playing with the weapons of Mars. The hare is an animal attribute of Venus, and, in Greek culture, a typical gift from the lover to the beloved. The grapes may be an allusion to the union between Dionysus and Venus, or more generically to bounty, fertility and the pleasures of life.



Figure 2. 1) Drop-shaped glass bottle, inv. 5602 (first century CE). 2) A perfume bottle of the 'candlestick' type with a disc-shaped body of thick green glass, inv. 5158 (second century CE). 3) A 'candlestick' *unguentarium* with a bell-shaped body and tall conical neck, inv. 5161 (second century CE). 4) Glass bottle of rectangular shape, inv. 5162 (so-called Mercury bottle). Ostia Nuovi depositi. Photos: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 3. Bone pyxis with a relief decoration. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4306. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

6 Scatozza 1986; De Tommaso 1990; Squillace 2015.

7 Lepri – Saguì 2017, 169-70.

8 A close parallel is a *pyxis* with two Cupids playing flutes, from Pompeii, MANN, inv. 77589, Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 217, cat. 295.



Figure 4. Portable oil bottle in bronze (*aryballos*), with circular relief decorations. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3575. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5. Bronze strigils, scrapers used to clean the skin after athletic exercise. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4472, 4473. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Roman men groomed their hair and skin in a much simpler fashion; however, being a Roman male citizen by definition necessitated a certain amount of personal care.[9] Up to the Hadrianic era, razors were needed to shave the beard; afterwards, a Greek-style beard became fashionable. Basic male beauty ideals were, at all times, imported from Greece, implying athletic exercise and grooming routines in the *palaestra*. The basic set of bathing utensils used by Roman men, and probably also by women, in the baths and their sports grounds also had Greek origins: it comprised a rounded flask (**Fig. 4**; **Cat. no. 88**, **Pl. 1**) for applying oil to the skin (*aryballos*) and a *strigil* (**Fig. 5**; **Cat. no. 87**, **Pl. 1**) to remove excess oil and dirt after exercise, both suspended from a bronze ring for easy portability.

Hairdos and hairpins

Even in Republican times, the hairstyle was the fundamental aspect of Roman female grooming.[10] Whilst make-up and perfumes could be considered futile luxuries, hair care was a social necessity and also came to be a major arena of status display. Hairstyles were not just a private and aesthetic issue, but also constituted a moral statement that even came to be entangled with international politics.[11] Furthermore, hair was a central bodily locus of eroticism, as it symbolically represented the body as a whole; thus, binding, braiding and tying it signalled self-control and chastity.

The evolutionary stages of the hairstyles of Roman matrons can easily be traced through Ostian examples, both in the major and minor arts. In Republican Rome, all things Greek became beauty ideals early on: Hellenistic hairstyling models were imitated, with simple classical hairstyles parted at the centre and collected in a loose bun at the neck. For example, the women depicted on late 4th-century BCE *Genucilia* plates cover their hair with a Greek-style *saccos* hairnet, with just a curled lock emerging in front of the ear (**Fig. 6**; **Cat. no. 19**).



Figure 6. A so-called *Genucilia*-plate, showing a female head with an elaborate hairstyle. Ostia, area of the Castrum. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5207. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

In the early Augustan period, Roman women's hair fashions were revolutionized by the women of the Imperial court, Octavia and Livia, who wore the first distinctly Roman coiffure, the so-called *nodus* hairstyle. This consisted of a high roll of hair over the forehead, connected, at the back, with a sort of French plait gathered into a bun at the neck. This hairstyle has been interpreted as a signalling a deliberate political and personal competition between the Imperial ladies and Cleopatra and her Hellenistic-Egyptian hairstyles: according to Diane Kleiner, the *nodus*-roll over the forehead represented a conscious challenge to the

9 Wyke 1994, 135; Olson 2008, 78.

10 Bartman 2001, 4-5 and passim.

11 Berg 2002.



Figure 7. Portrait of a woman, Claudio-Neronian period. Ostia, West side of the Tavern of the Peacock (Caupona del Pavone, IV II 6). Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 59 (Calza 1964, 35, no. 38, pl. XXII). Photo: *SO* V, no. 38, pl. XXII.



Figure 8. Portrait of a woman from Ostia, dating to the Flavian period. Found along the Decumanus near the theatre (II, VII, 29). Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 60 (Calza 1964, 48-49, no. 67. pl. XXXIX). Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 9. Fragment of a terracotta statuette showing a female head with an elaborate hairstyle, end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd century CE. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3246. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

uraeus-snake on top of the Egyptian crown.[12] In Ostia, this hair style is represented by some funerary portraits. More generally, the constant emphasis in Roman women's hairstyles on the front part of the hair can be explained by the habit of wearing a mantle over the head in public: outdoors, the forehead would be the only visible part of the hairstyle.

However, throughout the Imperial period, the women of the Palatine court were the drivers of fashion innovation in Mediterranean hairstyles. In the mid-first century CE, new and innovative trends began to emerge in the coiffures of the Emperor Nero's mother Agrippina minor and his wife Poppaea: small snail-shaped curls at the front combined with a loose bun at the back (**Fig. 7**).

Under the Flavian dynasty (69-96 CE), these trends were accentuated. Curls above the forehead multiplied into a towering structure that could be compared to a beehive, or, as Juvenal did, a multi-storey building (**Fig. 8; Fig. 9**; **Cat. no. 94.1**).[13]

These somewhat exaggerated fashions might be explained by the influence of the world of theatre, more popular than ever before from the Neronian period onwards. Roman theatre had borrowed many stage conventions from the Greeks, like the mask with an exaggeratedly high frontal mound of artificial curls, the *onkos*. Theatrical masks must have influenced the wig-like and deliberately artificial-looking hairstyles of the end of the 1st century CE.

During the Trajanic period (98-117 CE), female coiffures evolved in more moderate directions: the high frontal part was flattened to resemble an artificial diadem (**Fig. 10**).[14] Such hairstyles were also "export-

12 Bartman 2001, 8; Kleiner 2005, 245-46. A funerary portrait: Calza 1964, no. 26. Museo Ostiense, inv. 460.

13 Juv. 6, 502. Bartman 2001, 8-9.

14 Bartman 2001, 10-12.

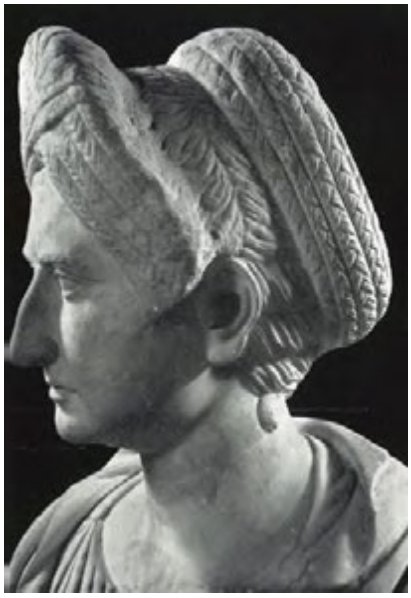


Figure 10. Portrait of a woman. Trajanic period. Found at Portus. Museo Torlonia, no. 544 (Calza 1964, 63-64, no. 95, pl. LVIho i). Photo: *SO* V, no. 95, pl. LVI.

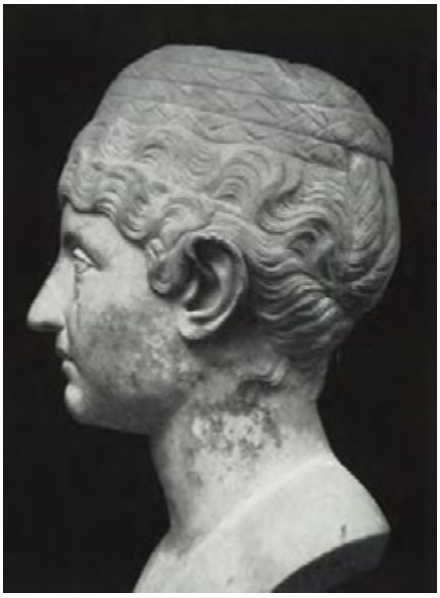


Figure 11. Portrait of Domitia Lucilla, mother of Marcus Aurelius. Ostia, found near the Forum. Vatican Museums, Sala a Croce Greca, inv. 570 (Calza 1964, 93-94, no. 149, pl. LXXXVIII). Photo: *SO* V, no. 149, pl. LXXXVIII.



Figure 12. Head of a woman, fragment of terracotta statuette, end of 2nd – beginning of 3rd century CE. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3247. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

ed" and widely imitated by women in the provinces, as attested for example by the lively Fayum mummy portraits of contemporary Egyptian women.

During Hadrian's reign (117-138 CE), the portraits of his wife Vibia Sabina present two completely different hairstyles. One continues the evolution of Roman fashions with the frontal curls in the form of a diadem. However, more often Sabina did not follow these contemporary fashions, but was shown with the simple centrally parted hair and loose bun of Hellenistic goddesses, interpreted as a political manifesto of Hadrian's phil-Hellenic court.

During the Antonine period, in the central decades of the 2nd century CE, Faustina the Elder, mother-in-law of Marcus Aurelius, and Domitia Lucilla, his mother, are good examples of the trends of the time. The centrepiece of the coiffure became a large braided bun on the top of the head (**Fig. 11**). This style could be seen as a reaction against foreign influences and novelties, reviving cultural memories of the iconic Etruscan-Italic matronly hairstyle, the towering bun known as the *tutulus*.[15] It thus alluded to the archaic virtues of the early Roman matrons.

During the Severan dynasty (193-235 CE), the empress Julia Domna, of Syrian origin, once again introduced new trends to Roman women's hairstyles. Her coiffure consists of thick wavy mats of hair falling almost to the shoulders, and then gathered at the back[16] (see figure on p. 196, and **Fig. 12**; **Cat. no. 94.2**). In this case, the stiff coiffure seems to be a wig, as is obvious from the presence of locks of the woman's own hair over the cheeks.[17] Syrian women are not known to have worn wigs, so this might be a cultural borrowing from nearby Egypt, playing on cultural memories of exotic royalty and spirituality. Wigs might also

15 Olson 2008, 39-40.

16 Portrait statue of the Severan Empress Julia Domna as Ceres. Ostia, found in the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Museo Ostiense, inv. 21. Calza 1978, 50-51, no. 63, pl. XLIX-L.

17 Bartman 2001, 14-19.

have been a practical way of keeping up appearances for an empress who often travelled with the imperial family, and therefore could not always expend much time and effort on her grooming routine. In the later 3rd-century portraits a parting braid, coiled up at the back of the head in a crest-like bun, reached from the nape to the forehead (the so-called Scheitelzopf hairdo).

In all periods, such elaborate hairstyles were obviously an elite privilege, as their creation required a great amount of time and a professional "glam team" of *ornatrices*. Janet Stephens has shown that these extremely intricate elite coiffures would have been very difficult to construct without the use of modern metal u-shaped pins, and therefore suggests that they were actually sewn in place with a needle and thread.[18] In this case, large perforated sewing needles might have been used to create such coiffures. However, long pins with decorated knobs instead of holes through the head (*acus crinalis*) were certainly important instruments for parting the hair.[19] While elite hair pins were made of silver and gold, the sub-elite used pins of carved bone. They were pointed, ca. 10 cm long and could end in a simple cone-shaped head or a more elaborate miniature figure, a Venus, or a bust of a fashionably-coiffed woman (**Fig. 13**; **Cat. no. 97**, **Pl. 1**).



Figure 13. Head of a hairpin or cosmetic spatula or knife, the shaft broken. The hairstyle with a large basket-like bun at the top of the head, and voluminous curls at the sides, dates the item to the latter part of the second century CE. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4316. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

It is unclear whether such hairpins would have been left in the finished coiffure as ornaments. In elite portrait sculptures, such adornments are hardly ever shown.[20] However, it is possible that hairpins as decorations would have been more common in sub-elite hairstyles, which are not often depicted in art. In this way, the images of Venus or other symbols decorating the pins could also have functioned as portable amulets.[21] In any case, hairpins, as utensils, would have been used by women as pointed multipurpose instruments, to extract unguents and make-up from small bottles and to apply them. If they were set into the hair-bun they would always have been at hand. Numerous relief decorated bone hairpins have been found in Ostia (**Fig. 14**; **Cat. nos. 95, 96**, **Pl. 1**).

All remaining body hair would ideally have been removed by epilation. That a hair removing paste known by the exotic Greek name *dropax* was used in Ostia is indirectly confirmed by a graffito mentioning (and insulting) an Eastern *dropacistes*, or professional hair-remover, named Herodes.[22] For smaller areas of skin, the common domestic remedy was to use bronze tweezers (**Fig**. **15**; **Cat. nos. 65, 92**, **Pl. 1-2**) to obtain the desired smooth and shiny appearance.

The final touches and checks were given to the hairstyle, grooming and make-up using a mirror. Ostian funerary contexts have yielded some Republican and Imperial period mirrors in the form of polished bronze discs, mostly with handles.[23] The most numerous surviving mirrors are, however, those of the later Imperial period, i.e. glass mirrors with mould-made lead-alloy frames.[24] Most examples date to the end of

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18 Stephens 2008, 112.

19 Bianchi 1995; Bartus 2003.

20 Bartman 2001, 12-14, fig. 10.

21 Ficheaux 2006.

22 *SEG* 45-1451.

23 Geneve catalogue (G.G.), 421, cat. X.13. inv. 57220, found in a tomb in Ponte Galeria, 3rd-2nd century BCE.

24 For lead frame mirrors in general, with further bibliography, see Bellelli – Messineo 1989; Buora – Magnani 2015, 15; Corti 2015, 189; for Roman mirrors in general, Lloyd-Morgan 1981.



Figure 14. At left, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4301. Hairpin ending in the bust of a young boy with short hair, wearing a tunic. At right, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4300. Bone hairpin, with the knob decorated with a roughly sculpted female bust. She wears a coiffure with a high frontal structure of curls, typical of the late 1st century CE. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 15. Bronze tweezers. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4245 (above), inv. 4246 (below). Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 16. On the left, rectangular bronze frame for a circular glass mirror decorated from four Dionysiac heads. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4182. On the right, circular lead mirror frame, decorated with a Christogram. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4180. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

the 2nd – 3rd century CE. The glass was prepared by applying a thin layer of melted lead to a convex glass lens to give to it a reflecting quality. The lens was then set into the bronze or lead frame. Pliny attributes the invention of such mirrors to the famous glass workers of the Phoenician city of Sidon.[25] The diameter of the mirrors is very small, but the convex shape ensured that the whole face would be visible.

The frames are generally decorated with geometric or floral ornaments, but a specific group, produced in various Pannonian workshops in the 2nd to 3rd centuries CE, common along the Crimean *Limes*, in the Danube area and Southern Gaul, was decorated with Dionysiac heads at the corners of the frame. In Italy, such mirrors, with heads of Silens, Pan and Dionysus himself, are most widespread in the eastern Po valley and the northern Adriatic area, but also in other regions, as the Ostian example shows (**Fig. 16**; **Cat. no. 98**, **Pl. 1**).[26] Besides divine figures, magical characters might also decorate mirrors, as they were perceived as potentially magical objects, used in divination.[27]

Another example of a lead mirror frame from Ostia is decorated with an olive wreath and, above, a Christogram (**Fig. 16**; **Cat. no. 99**, **Pl. 1**). It dates to the 3rd or 4th century CE, when Christian ideals were

25 Plin. *nat*. 36, 193.

26 Corti 2015, 191.

27 Baratta 2012.

also taking over the management of beauty and dress. The mirror is roughly contemporary with the church father Cyprian's powerful sermon of the 3rd century CE against the use of cosmetics by Christian women, perhaps borne in mind by the user of the mirror: "They [sinful and apostate angels] also taught how to paint the eyes by spreading a black substance around them, and to tinge the cheeks with a counterfeit blush, and to change hair by false colours ans to drive out all truth from the countenance and head by the assault of corruption."[28] However, despite this rhetoric, echoing moralistic attacks on the use of cosmetics and adornments, the mirror remained a primary symbol and instrument of female beauty from the Republican period until the end of Antiquity.

28 Cypr. *hab. virg.* 14. Raditsa 1985.

Shops and Shopping in Ancient Ostia

Mary Harlow and Ray Laurence

Walking through the streets of Ostia, we feel as though we are in a familiar urban environment of paved streets, sidewalks, and shops. Tourists walk down these preserved streets much as they do through the streets of a modern city in the search for opportunities to shop. Surprisingly, relatively little scholarly attention has been paid to the subject of shopping in antiquity.[1] We are only beginning to understand this subject and one factor is that we should not assume that shops and shopping had always existed – Ostia helps us to understand how shopping developed and the norms of practice associated with retailing.

There are more than 800 shops that can be investigated today and many more remain to be discovered.[2] Yet, streets with shops were not a phenomenon that had always existed in the ancient world and this form of urban architecture needed to be invented and adopted widely across towns of the Roman world. Shopping in Greek cities seems much more focussed on a central market-place – the *agora.*[3] The earliest reference to shops in ancient Rome takes us back to the first Etruscan king of Rome, Lucius Tarquinius Priscus (616-578 BCE), who erected shops and a porticus in the Forum (Liv. 1, 35). The forum itself was constructed on land drained under the auspices of the same king (Dion. *ant. Rom.* 3, 67). Unlike other structures in the new Forum that were in private hands (Liv. 39, 44, 7), the shops and the porticus were public property. Livy is careful to make this distinction both at their creation and later in 210 BCE in a discussion of their destruction by fire (Liv. 3, 5; 26, 27). Interestingly, it is only in the second century BCE that Pliny (*nat.* 18, 28) identifies the development of bakeries in Rome (171-168 BCE); previously bread-making was a domestic task. The shops in the Forum in Rome, although originally occupied by a variety of sellers (e.g. butchers, Liv. 3, 48, 5), became known as the shops of the bankers or money changers (*tabernas argentarias* – Liv. 26, 11, 7; Varro *frg. Non.* 532; *dig*. 18, 1, 32). The butchers were moved out of the Forum and occupied shops in neighbouring streets, such as the Vicus Tuscus or the Argiletum.

The original settlement of Ostia in the fifth century BCE was tiny a settlement for as few as 300 families in a rectangular fortified enclosure or *Castrum* of 2.2 hectares that acted as a coastal garrison to protect Rome (Liv. 1, 33; 36, 3).[4] It is debateable whether the earliest colony at Ostia had a Forum and the development of the Forum here remains less than clear, but its location at the very centre of the first settlement points to the centrality of trade to the colony and the need for a central place at which goods could be traded. The length of the final Forum constituted the width of the *Castrum* and it was located at the centre of the crossroads of the two streets leading through the settlement. It was here in the Forum that we may place the first traders and what we can describe as the development of shopping, in a similar manner to the development of

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1 Harlow – Laurence 2019 will address these issues with a full treatment of shopping in antiquity.

2 DeLaine 2005, 33.

3 Dickenson 2016 for full discussion of the *agora*.

4 Zevi 2002, 15-22.

shops and shopping in the Forum in Rome. As Ostia expanded in area and in urban density, so the number of shops in the streets increased. Moreover, topographical analysis shows that there were numerous piazzas or open enclosed spaces, leading off from the streets, also surrounded by shops. These locations, Janet DeLaine speculates,[5] were suitable for markets thus increasing the area devoted to shopping far beyond the streets to a series of squares and enclosed areas that also formed pedestrian routes through the city. Such spaces were also formed by the construction of storage buildings, such as the Horrea Epagathiana, and it was perhaps in locations such as these that auctions took place.[6]

The shop at Ostia was a quadrilateral or square structure with a doorway or opening right across its width, often onto the street, so that goods could be easily displayed to passers-by (**Figs. 1-3**). This opening was closed by a series of shutters and hinged doors to the right-side of the shop.[7] The thresholds of the shops show us how this system worked and similar thresholds have been found right across the Roman world. In Ostia, there is a fairly standard pattern to the architectural form of shops with a standard shuttered threshold. These shops were built around the edges of blocks of flats, often accessed from a courtyard or from staircases from the streets. It is a pattern that is also found on a third century marble plan of Rome. Fifty-eight percent of all the shops in Ostia follow this format.[8] These shops were much larger than those found, for example, in Pompeii. The relevant size on average for Ostia is 40 m^2 compared to 26 m^2 at Pompeii.[9] This difference is important, it shows that the retail space in Ostia is not only defined by a much larger number of shops than in other cities, the shops are also considerably larger. A further difference to Pompeii, is that the Ostian streets included porticoes in front of the shops. Thus, the shopper could be shaded from the sun and rain.



Figure 1. The shop entrances of the Casa di Diana opening onto the Via dei Balconi. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

5 DeLaine 2005, 36-39.

6 DeLaine 2005, 43-45.

7 Ellis 2018, 200-06.

8 Ellis 2018, 198.

9 Ellis 2018, 199.

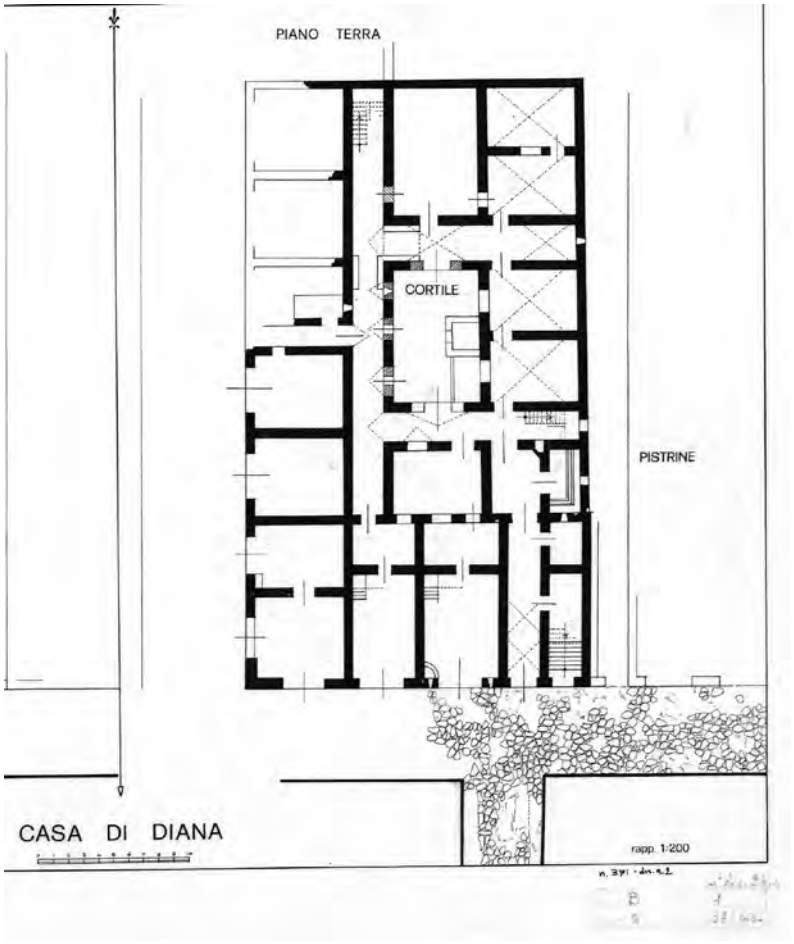


Figure 2. Casa di Diana, plan of the ground floor with the shops opening onto the street. Parco Archaeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.



Figure 3. Caseggiato del Larario, western part with two shops that could be entered from the courtyard. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

A vital part of shopping was display of what was for sale. Luckily, Ostia has produced the best examples of images of retailing from the ancient world. The relief of the poultry seller (**Fig. 4; Cat. no. 118**) in this exhibition was discovered in a street, Via della Foce, at an entrance to a shop, but was not found *in situ* – it appears to be a fallen shop-sign.[10] This sign shows a woman behind a counter serving customers buying eggs, while a man sells chickens to the side of the counter. There are also live animals in cages: chickens and rabbits, whilst on the counter to the right are two monkeys, imported animals that would, presumably, have attracted passers-by to the shop. This scene provides us with the means to understand how a shop might be used in Ostia. The key focus is to fill the width of an opening onto the street at the front of the shop with a counter for display, with enough room to the side for shoppers to enter and purchase goods.



Figure 4. The marble relief depicting a poultry seller. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 134. Photo: Parco Archaeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 5. The marble relief depicting a vegetable seller. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 198. Photo: Parco Archaeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

A different approach is found in the scene of the vegetable seller in this exhibition (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 117**), but the focus is again on the display of goods.[11] The seller is positioned below a lintel – thus at the edge of a shop facing onto the street. She is behind a trestle table on which produce is displayed. Natalie Kampen identified her wares as garlic in bundles, cabbages or cauliflowers on the table, and to the left a bundle of perhaps leeks or spring onions.[12] To the right, there is a set of shelves that display goods and to her left produce seems to hang down or is placed on shelving.

This form of stepped shelving can be found in the bars of Ostia (figure on p. 293) and in the scene on a sarcophagus from the exhibition that shows the serving of drink (figure on p. 225).[13] These scenes of shopping allow us to begin to understand the need to display goods and allow for the equivalent of what we call 'window-shopping' today. The gesturing seller, included as part of the display though, animates the scene.[14]

So far, the discussion has focussed on the architecture of shopping and the visual appearance of shops. The other human senses of smell and of sound need to be accounted for. To do so though, we need to acknowledge how the smell and soundscape of antiquity differs from that of the modern city. For example, the spaces outside temples in a Roman forum were places of animal sacrifice, with all the smells and sounds associated with their dismemberment and the examination of their entrails.[15] Scholars sometimes suggest

10 Kampen 1981, 52-59; Calza 1978, no. 48.

11 Kampen 1981, 59-64; Calza 1978, no. 48.

12 Kampen 1981, 60.

13 Kampen 1981, 44-52.

14 Kampen 1981, 63.

15 Betts 2017; Schultz 2016.

that butchers and fishmongers needed to be removed from the Forum because they smelt.[16] Seen in the light of animal sacrifice, the odour of butchers and fishmongers cannot be seen as an argument for the removal of their shops from the Forum. This illustrates the need to consider smell within its wider cultural context in antiquity, what we consider to be smelly and unpleasant was not seen in the same way in Roman Ostia.[17] Indeed, it can be argued that all animals killed for their meat needed to be shared with the gods, thus blurring the distinction between butchering and sacrifice.[18] It seems more likely that competition for space in Ostia's Forum, rather than smell pushed out the suppliers of provisions. (**Fig. 6**)

The green grocer and seller of poultry had shops that produced quite different smells and sounds. A recent study of the acoustics of shops and streets in Ostia, shows that sound would have travelled well-beyond the shop itself and helped define the dynamics of selling.[19] Estimates for sound levels of people in the street to the north of the Forum have been calibrated to 65 and 70 decibels.[20] This contrasts to the noise level within the adjacent apartment buildings of over 100 decibels. These are average figures and variation could occur, as Seneca (*epist.* 56, 2) observed the shouts of hawkers and street-traders were a characteristic of living close to a bath-building associated with shops. The itinerant peddlers were also famous for selling directly to homes, as can be seen in Plautus' play the *Aulularia* (505-19).[21] The list of specialist traders



Figure 6. Taberne dei Pescivendoli, The Shops of the Fishmongers, on the Decumanus Maximus. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

16 Lavan 2011, 686; Wilson 2000, 280 makes a similar proposition in relation to Timgad (Algeria).

17 Morley 2014, 116-119; Flohr 2017, 39 for critique.

18 Scheid 2012.

19 Veitch 2017 develops methodology for the study of acoustics in Ostia.

20 Veitch 2017, 68.

21 Holleran 2012, 195-231 for full discussion of this phenomenon.



Figure 7. Thermopolium of Via di Diana. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

satirised by Plautus point to a very sophisticated market-place, in which different types of goods were sold separately, and a terminology of traders and trades had developed. The list includes fullers to clean clothes; weavers to make cloth; specialists in lace-making; sellers of flounces and underclothes; sellers of bridal veils; jewellers; sellers of slippers and sandals; makers of belts; sellers of dyes – violet, yellow, saffron and, separately a dye made from mallow; and, finally, cabinet-makers to provide the furniture in which, presumably, to put the goods and to order and arrange all of these purchases.

Of Ostia's 800 shops from the second century CE, about 100 were abandoned by the middle of the third century.[22] This does not seem to be at a level of decline, but what we might expect in a pre-industrial city.[23] This included a fire that burnt down a bakery – Caseggiato dei Molini – at the end of the third century, a site that was never cleared nor rebuilt.[24] In fact, it has been argued that in Late Antiquity, there was an expansion of retailing into a series of public squares that may have acted as markets.[25] The difficulty we have with trying to understand phenomena in Late Antiquity is that we are uncertain of whether these phenomenon were normal forms of urban change, rather than unique to that period. In many ways, the city had always been associated with a level of change and dislocation. This would suggest that rather than seeing the locations of shops in streets and market-places as fixed over time, we should view them as dynamic and changing. Even in the fifth century CE, following an earthquake, considerable rebuilding work in the forum

22 Heinzelmann 2010, 7; Ellis 2018, 188.

23 Gering 2004 identifies changes in urban fabric.

24 Heres 1999, 32-33; compare Falzone – Montali – Treviso 2014.

25 Lavan 2011.



Figure 8. Marble table in the thermopolium of Via di Diana with three stepped shelves. Above the shelves a wall painting depicting food and other objects related to the bar. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

including that of colonnades of shops occurred,[26] pointing to the importance of maintaining shopping as a key urban function.

26 Gering 2014.

Theatre and Pantomime, Gladiatorial Games and *venationes* – Animal Hunts

Arja Karivieri

The theatre of Ostia was built on the northern edge of Decumanus Maximus, Ostia's main street, at the end of the first century BCE, to the east of the complex of four temples, Quattro tempietti. It was built of *opus reticulatum* and tuff. From the epigraphic evidence, we know that this monumental theatre was built by Agrippa, the son-in-law and a close friend of Augustus. Ostia's first theatre accommodated about 3,000 spectators. The theatre complex included a large area in front of it, the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, that was surrounded on three sides by a colonnade, and a temple was built in the centre of this open area.

As in other Roman cities, magistrates in Ostia were expected to organize festivals and games and to fund public spectacles. This tradition was also followed by the wealthy citizens of the city: Fabius Hermogenes, a priest of the cult of Emperor Hadrian, funded theatrical performances, *ludi scaenici*, and the wealthy Ostian matron Fabia Agrippina annually sponsored the games in memory of one of her family members.[1]

During the Late Republican period (133-31 BCE), local interpretations of Greek plays were popular, and Roman classics were also performed. Famous scenes from Greek plays were reproduced in Pompeian mural paintings, and in Ostia such scenes have survived in terracotta moulds found during the excavations of the early twentieth century (**Fig. 1**).[2] There is another interesting piece of evidence from Ostia, connected



Figure 1 (Cat. no. 121). Terracotta mould, theatre scene. Three actors. Crouching on the right, a woman crying, wearing a tragic mask, featuring a high theatrical coiffure or a so-called *onkos*; she has a wide tunic and a cloak. In the middle stands a woman in a tragic mask, and to the right is an overweight male figure who seems to be strangling himself with a scarf. The last one looks like a comic character. The scene has been interpreted as depicting the tragedy of Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Aulis*. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3532. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

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1 *CIL* XIV 4450. Meiggs 1973, 420. Cf. the latest interpretation of the inscription, Zevi 2014, 85-88.

2 Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3532. The scene has been interpreted as an illustration of Euripides' tragedy *Iphigeneia in Aulis*; Pasqui 1906, 368, fig. 10.

with the old comedy: according to a Greek inscription on a travertine block from the foundations of the so-called Tempio dell'Ara Rotonda found on the Via della Foce, Lysicles made a portrait of Plato, a writer of old comedy.[3] This portrait may have been imported from Greece in the first century BCE, and donated to a shrine in the area, and when the temple was rebuilt during the reign of the Emperor Augustus, the old pedestal of the portrait was used as the foundation for a new altar, and the statue of the comedian Plato was given a new marble base. Greek literature, art and architecture had gained popularity in Italy, Rome and Ostia during the Republic, and this is evident in archaeological material too.

As the Atellan farce, which featured a number of easily recognizable characters, became more prevalent during the Late Republic, it became more popular than traditional theatre forms, with its fast-paced humorous plot twists.[4] When *mimus*, mime, arrived in Rome from the Greek world, it soon surpassed the farce. Mime had a greater variety of roles and the possibility of having female actors for female roles. Mime provided the opportunity for actors to utilise facial expressions, since the mime actors did not wear masks.[5] Skilful mime actors gained fame for their ability to improvise, and references to current events and well-known figures also influenced the popularity of mime.

Dancers were often portrayed in Graeco-Roman art performing comic roles, and especially grotesque, erotic dances were combined with accentuated movements and a pair of long canes or sticks that the dancers wiggled. In Ostia, a dancing couple of this kind is depicted at the Porta Marina, in the floor mosaic of the so-called Alexander *caupona* (IV 7.4.) (**Fig. 2**). The dancer depicted on the left has an artificially large phallus, and both male dancers have two sticks in each hand. Katherine Dunbabin has suggested that in this mosaic,



Figure 2. Caupona di Alexander e Helix (IV 7.4), two pole dancers in a floor mosaic. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

3 Zevi 1969-1970, 110-16, nos. 1-3; Meiggs 1973, 581-82; Van Haeperen 2019, 86-87. See also fig. 3, p. 338.

4 Meiggs 1973, 421.

5 Meiggs 1973, 421.



Figure 3. Marble theatre masks decorating the Theatre of Ostia. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

either the dancers have a special headdress, or both have had their hair removed.[6] Often, stick dancers have a pointed headdress, which is depicted for example, on the central disk of oil lamps.

During the reign of the Emperor Augustus, Pylades and Bathyllus developed pantomime art to include dance, singing and recitation, and accurate hand-language; performers could wear several face masks and outfits during the same performance (**Fig. 3**). Pantomime artists performed famous stories of Greek tragedies about love and hate, the fates of gods, heroes and ordinary people in Greek and Roman mythology. These artists became very popular, and this is why the Emperor Tiberius issued an official statute limiting the interaction of senators and knights with pantomime artists.[7] One of Ostia's performers was officially honoured when the city government erected an honorific statue to praise the artist's great skill.[8] L. Aurelius Apolaustus Memphius, the freed slave of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, also received in the late second century CE a special tribute to his ability as a dancer.[9]

Seviri Augustales, officials of the Imperial cult, praised the performer, M. Aurelius Pylades, from Scythopolis, as the "best pantomime artist of his time", whom Emperors Valerian and Gallienus (i.e., 253-260 CE) also praised for his skill.[10] Two copies of this honorific inscription have survived. Pylades was promoted to the highest level of his profession and, apparently, he came from his Eastern home province to make appearances in Italy and Rome. Previously, he had performed in Ascalon and Damascus in the

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6 Dunbabin 2004, 163-65.

7 Meiggs 1973, 422.

8 *CIL* XIV 474 = *ILS* 5233: "*Huic primum spend^i^dissimus ordo decur(ionum) Ost(iensium) postul(ante) populo ob eximia[m i]psius peritiam obsequiaque in patria(m) m[axi]ma in colo(nia) sua publice statua(m) ponendam [decrevit]*." Meiggs 1973, 423; Caldelli 1998, 225-29; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 290, no. 85; Tedeschi 2017, 252.

9 *CIL* XIV 5375. Meiggs 1973, 423.

10 *CIL* XIV 4624. Meiggs 1973, 423; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 292-93, no. 88.

province of *Syria Palaestina*. The text is also a tribute to his late father, who had the Jewish name Iudas, as Fausto Zevi and Maria Letizia Caldelli have shown. The father of the pantomime artist was thus a member of Ostia's Jewish minority. What remains unclear, however, was the relationship between the officials of the Imperial cult and Pylades' father, Iudas. However, his son had adopted the generic name Pylades, which was usual for pantomime artists. If Pylades also was Jewish, it is not unusual, as official sources attest, that Jews participated in the activities of the theatres and also in the games.[11]

The theatre of Ostia was renovated during the reign of the Emperor Commodus and the rule of the Severans, increasing the theatre's auditorium capacity from 3,000 to 4,000 (**Fig. 4**). This demonstrates the popularity of theatre performances in the third century. The next stage in the history of the Ostian theatre was the modification of its structures in the late fourth century CE, so that water tanks built into the lower part of the theatre allowed the *orchestra* in front of the stage to be filled with water. This may have led the Ostians to admire nymphs, nereids, and other mythical marine figures in their water scenery. According to Russell Meiggs, we may thank Italo Gismondi for reconstructing the late history of the theatre, which Gismondi accomplished with the excavation report of Lanciani.[12]



Figure 4. Theatre of Ostia. Photo: Alen Plehandzic, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

11 Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 293, no. 88; Weiss 2010, 634-37.

12 Gismondi 1955; Meiggs 1973, 424-25.



Another question is where in the Ostia region the games and shows with wild animals, gladiator battles and horse racing were organised. No traces of an amphitheatre or a circus for racing have been found in Ostia. We know, however, that the Ostian people funded gladiator shows,[13] and graffiti depicting the gladiators were scratched on the walls of the House of Jupiter and Ganymede.[14] Oil lamps representing gladiators have been found in Ostia, as well as knife handles made of bone representing gladiators, illustrating their various roles and equipment.[15] The *secutor* (Hunter) was armed with a sword and a shield (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 127**). The *secutor* fought with a quick-footed *retiarius*, who in turn was armed with a trident, a dagger and a net. This meant that there were no sharp protrusions in the *secutor*'s helmet that could be caught by the net, and the eyeholes are small, in order to avoid the trident's blows. Other gladiators' helmet types had two feathers as decoration: for example, *samnites* (Samnites; the Samnite war helmet had also these feathers consecrated to the god Mars), *murmillo* and *thrax*. One knife handle (inv. no. 4302) found

Figure 5. The knife handle, below left, represents a gladiator protected behind a large rectangular shield. His shield is decorated with star patterns. He is wearing a helmet decorated with three protrusions. The middle one is perhaps a brush, and the extreme ones are two feathers dedicated to the god Mars. The left foot has a leather shin guard. The gladiator on the handle, top left, a *secutor* to judge by his helmet, has a sword in his right hand. The shield is decorated with engravings. A *secutor* fought with a high-speed *retiarius*, who in turn was armed with a trident, a dagger and a net. This is why there are no sharp protrusions on the *secutor*'s helmet that could have been caught by the net, and the eyeholes are small to prevent trident prongs. The right hand has an arm guard, the left leg has a thick padding. The gladiator on the handle, below right, is also a *secutor* with a helmet, a sword, a shield and a leg guard on the left leg (**Cat. no 128**). The handle, top right, depicts a resting male lion. Its bronze ring, which secured the iron blade, has also been preserved (**Cat. no 129**). The handles of the knives, top, have long notches to which the iron knife blade was attached, and the blades of the knives, below, are fastened with the bronze bolsters retained in the handle. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 4303, 50918, 4302 and 4632. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

13 Fasti, 146 and 152. Meiggs 1973, 425-26.

14 Calza 1920, 370.

15 These knife handles are described by Ria Berg.

in Ostia (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 126**) shows a gladiator protected behind a large rectangular shield. He wears a helmet with three protrusions, a central crest decorated with a plume, and the sides with feathers.



Figure 6. Terracotta mould, an animal fighter, *venator,* fights a bear. In this mould, the bear fights the *bestiarius*, the animal fighter. Animal battles or hunting shows, *venationes*, were often performed in the arena before the actual gladiatorial battles. The warrior wears a head and neck helmet, a leather tunic, arm and shin guards, and defends himself with a rectangular shield. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3531. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Approximately 400 terracotta moulds depicting *venatores* fighting with wild animals[16] (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 122**) and other moulds depicting exotic animals such as elephants,[17] giraffes and lions[18] have been found in the centre of Ostia (**Figs. 7-9; Cat. nos. 123, 124, 125**).[19] The moulds depict the views at the amphitheatre and the *circus*, but another question is what the moulds were used for. Maria Floriani Squarciapino has suggested that these moulds were used to make some products from easily degradable organic material, and according to Angiulo Pasqui, they were used to make cakes or bread for distribution to the public during the games.[20]

An inscription from Ostia, dating to the Severan era, has immortalized a donation of Hostilianus, *duumvir*, *quaestor*, and the priest of the Imperial cult, and his wife Sabina for the games, especially for female gladiators, *mulieres ad ferrum*.[21] However, Septimius Severus banned battle shows of female gladiators in 200 CE because they changed the behaviour of some upper-class women and seduced the audience.[22] The popularity of female athletes and female gladiators can also be seen in Roman literature. Suetonius and Cassius Dio are among the authors who write about women gladiators who attended festivals organized by Nero and Domitian,[23] and the inscription found in Ostia confirms their activities in the city.

According to the late antique legends of the martyrs, *Acta Sanctorum*, the Ostian martyr Asterius was sentenced to the amphitheatre that was located close to the enclosure of the wild animals.[24] However, no remains of an amphitheatre have been found in or near Ostia, nor of the racetrack, *circus*. We know that the wild animals that participated in the *venationes* organised at the Colosseum entered the amphitheatre via Ostia. Before the show, they were kept in *vivaria* owned by the emperor, enclosures where they were housed by species, such as elephants in a *vivarium* near Laurentum, herbivores in their enclosure, and dangerous

16 Ostia, Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3531. Pasqui 1906, 362-63, fig. 4.

17 Ostia, Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3761. Pasqui 1906, 369, fig. 12.

18 Ostia, Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3705. Pasqui 1906, 363-64, fig. 5.

19 Pasqui 1906.

20 Floriani Squarciapino 1954, 83.

21 *CIL* XIV 4616 + 5381 = *AE* 1977, 153. Pasqualini 2013, 13-14.

22 Gardner 1986, 248.

23 Murray 2003.

24 Meiggs 1973, 427.



Figure 7. Terracotta mould, elephant. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3761. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 8. Terracotta mould, fighting animals; a leopard and a giraffe, and an elephant, a bear and a leopard, and three leopards around them. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3714. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 9. Terracotta mould, fighting animals; a hippo, a male lion, a tiger, and a leopard that has attacked the zebra, and tigers above them. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 3705. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

predators in isolation.[25] *Saltus laurentinus*, a woodland where animals were raised for animal fighting, has been located to the area south of Ostia.[26]

Russell Meiggs believed that Stephanus, *praepositus camellorum*, the camel keeper mentioned in a tombstone found in Ostia's excavations, took care of the camels for the performances organised at the Colosseum[27] (see article by van der Ploeg, pp. 401-02, fig. 5; **Cat. no. 172**). Other possible interpretations

25 Lo Giudice 2008.

26 Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 293-94, no. 89.

27 Meiggs 1973, 302; De Grossi Mazzorin 2006, 233, fig. 2. This marble tombstone belonged to T. Flavius Stephanus, who was freed from slavery during the Flavian period (69-94 CE), during the reign of Vespasian, Titus, or Domitian. Stephanus was a camel attendant; two dromedaries and an elephant depicted in the lower part of the tombstone reveal his profession. The epitaph was found during excavations at the necropolis of the Via Laurentina. It was once attached to the front of the grave monument of Stephanus. Date: end of first century – the beginning of the second century CE. Ostia, Lapidario, inv. 7029. Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 293-94, no. 89.



Figure 10. Caupona di Alexander e Helix (IV 7.4), two boxers, Alexander and Helix, in the floor mosaic. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

are that he was responsible for the organization of camel caravans and camel rearing in Africa. If Stephanus took care of camels in the Laurentum area, his tomb in the necropolis of Via Laurentina was close to the same place where he cared for the camels.[28] The presence of camels in Ostia is also evidenced by the bone remains found in Ostia's new excavations in Regio III. The identification was made by Michael MacKinnon; interestingly enough, the context of this discovery is late, the sixth century CE.[29] In 2006, Jacopo De Grossi Mazzorin published statistics of the distribution of bone remains of Bactrian camels or dromedaries in Europe, according to which remains are attested in Ostia, and in Rome from the excavations of Crypta Balbi, Forum Pacis, and near the tomb of the *Valerii* on the Via Latina.[30] The find contexts of these camel bones are dated from the second to the seventh centuries, as is the case also generally in Italy, with an emphasis on the late antique period; the latest archaeological evidence is dated to the seventh century CE.[31] Camels had an important role in Africa and Asia as transport animals for the transport of water and food supplies of the Roman army from Asia and Africa to other Roman provinces.[32] In addition, we know from ancient literary sources that during the Imperial period and in Late Antiquity, many emperors organised *venationes*, large battles with wild animals and multi-day events in which exotic animals played a major role. Ancient authors mention races with camels and horses,[33] and according to the *Historia Augusta*, the Emperor Elagabalus harnessed four camels to a chariot at a private spectacle in the *Circus*.[34] This probably refers to the *circus* near the Sessorian palace in Rome.[35]

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28 Bedello Tata 2000, 476; Bedello Tata 2001, 414. Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 293-94, no. 89.

29 MacKinnon 2014, 184 (DAI/AAR, German-American excavations, Regio III, street, find context 6th century CE).

30 De Grossi Mazzorin 2006, 233-35, table 1, fig. 2-7.

31 De Grossi Mazzorin 2006, 239.

32 De Grossi Mazzorin 2006, 233.

33 De Grossi Mazzorin 2006, 239.

34 Hist. Aug. *Heliog.* 23, 1.

35 Humphrey 1986, 555.

Finally, the floor mosaics of Ostia's public buildings, such as baths, *tabernae* and *cauponae*, often depict athletes, wrestlers, and boxers,[36] such as in the *palaestra* of the Terme del Nettuno, the *apodyterium* of the Terme della Marciana, and the floor mosaic of the Caupona di Alexander e Helix (IV 7.4). The mosaic in the Caupona di Alexander e Helix depicts two apparently well-known professional boxers, Alexander and Helix, both of whom wear hand protectors (**Fig. 10**).[37]

36 Cf. Pavolini 1986, 244-45.

37 Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 291-92, no. 87.

Play and Games in Ostia

Véronique Dasen

A lost cultural heritage?[1]

Just as they are today, play and games were ubiquitous in Roman daily life, in both the private and public spheres. Many pieces of textual, archaeological, and visual evidence evoke ludic activities performed by both children and adults in Roman Ostia. Men and women, citizens, foreigners, and slaves, young and old: everybody played games, but the identity of the players and the type of games varied depending on social status, age, sex and ethnicity. Here we will consider games, *ludi* in Latin, *paidiai* in Greek, as a "voluntary recreational action for enjoyment",[2] defined by rules, as well as play more broadly involving physical exercise with balls or hoops, as well as ritual performances with dolls.

The reconstruction of ancient gaming rules is methodologically complex because most were never fully described. The main written source is the *Onomasticon* or dictionary of Julius Pollux (2nd century CE), who provides an extensive list of Greek and Roman games, especially in Book 9; each game is named and briefly described, including those with nuts, knucklebones (*omilla*, *pentelitha, pleistobolinda...)*, or balls (*episkuros, ourania, phaininda*...), but many practical details remain unclear.[3] Ancient authors also wrote books about dice, gambling and boardgames, but none is preserved.[4] The emperor Claudius was thus "fond of gaming, and published a book on the art of the dice, *alea*. He even used to play as he rode in his carriage, having the board so fitted, that the game was not disturbed by the motion of the carriage."[5] The regional, local, and even familial variants of games were seldom recorded, as most belonged to an intangible oral heritage. We can only guess that customs in Ostia as concerned play were probably similar to those of the nearby city of Rome.

Some games seem to have been passed down with minor changes through the centuries, such as the Roman *duodecim scripta* and *Alea* belonging to the Trictrac or Backgammon family. A good example of continuity is skimming stones or potsherds over water. Ostia's beach was a perfect place to enjoy this. Minucius Felix

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1 This chapter is part of the ERC project *Locus Ludi. The Cultural Fabric of Play and Games in Classical Antiquity* (no 741520) funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the research and innovation framework programme Horizon 2020: https://locusludi.ch/.

2 See Huizinga (1971[1938]), 35: "Alle Spel is allereerst en bovenal *een vrije handeling*" ("first and foremost a voluntary activity"). On ancient and modern definitions, see Kidd 2019, 1-9.

3 Poll. *onom.*; Costanza 2019.

4 Ov. *trist.* 2, 471: "Others have written of the arts of playing at dice."

5 Suet. *Claud.* 33 (transl. J. C. Rolfe, modified, Loeb).

(3rd cent. CE) reports that three friends enjoyed watching a group of boys playing on the beach at Ostia. Their game seems to follow timeless rules:[6]

> "And when we had reached the place where some boats, supported on oak planking, to save them from ground rot, were lying idle, we saw a party of boys competing eagerly in their game of throwing sherds into the sea. The game is to choose from the shore a flat sherd, one smoothed by the friction of the waves, to catch hold of the sherd by the flat side, and then bending forward and stooping, to send it spinning as far as one can on the top of the waves, so that the missile either skims the surface of the sea and swims on its way, gliding forward with a gentle impulse; or else shaves the tops of the waves, glancing and jumping as it takes its successive leaps. The boy won, whose sherd went furthest, and made most hops."

Many games disappeared over the course of the centuries as a result of changing social norms and expectations. Some games taught skills that were highly prized in antiquity, but less so in other times and places. Girls achieved extraordinary dexterity by playing with knucklebones, as in the *pentelitha* (or "five stones") game described by Pollux, in which five knucklebones were thrown into the air to be caught on the back of the hand; those that fell to the ground were picked up using the fingers of the same hand without dropping those already on its back.[7] This is the game played by Hilearia and Aglae, the two daughters of Leto, on the marble plaque signed by the painter Alexandros the Athenian, found in 1746 in Herculaneum (**Fig. 1**).[8]



Figure 1. Marble plaque (detail), from Herculaneum. Naples, MANN, inv. 9562. Photo: © Wikimedia Public Domain.

Visual representations of play to some extent compensate for the loss of evidence and provide precious information about the identity of the players and the ergonomics of the game. The marble plaque from Herculaneum confirms that *penthelitha* was a game specific to unmarried girls, *parthenoi*, as Pollux asserts. Other images convey the collective dimension of play as part of the socialization process of children.[9] A marble sarcophagus found in Ostia (3rd cent. CE) (**Fig. 2**)[10] belonged to the young Lucius Aemilius Daphnus who died at the age of four. The relief carved on its main side shows four groups of two to five boys interacting in a lively fashion in a variety of attitudes and gestures while playing with nuts, some sit-

6 Min. Fel. 3 (transl. G. H. Rendall, Loeb). Cf. Dasen 2019b.

7 Poll. *onom.* 9, 126.

8 Found on 24.5.1746, possibly in the Casa di Nettuno ed Anfitrite; Dardenay *et al*. 2016.

9 On the meaning of the famous inscription "Dum uixi lusi" of Geminia Agathè, Dasen – Mathieu 2020.

10 Marble sarcophagus, London, The British Museum, inv. 1865,0103.7. Inscription: "To the spirits of the departed and to Lucius Aemilius Daphnus of the Pomptine. He lived four years and six days. Livia Daphne (had this made) for her dearest son" (*CIL* XIV 532). See Huskinson 1996, cat. 1.12, Pl. 4.



Figure 2. Marble sarcophagus from Ostia. H. 30.5 cm. L.109.2 cm. London, The British Museum 1865,0103.7. Photo: © The Trustees of the British Museum.

ting, perhaps gambling, others standing in front of piles of four nuts (*nuces castellatae*), carrying them in their tunic.[11] The range of games depicted calls to mind the rules described in the poem *The Walnut-Tree*:

> "These, as they stand upright, a boy splits with certain aim, or, as they lie on their side, strikes with his finger once or twice. In four nuts, and no more, is all his hazard, when one is added to the three beneath it. Another bids them roll down a sloping board, and prays that one out of many, whichever it be, may touch his own. Then there is he who guesses whether the number be odd or even, that the augur may bear away the wealth he has divined. Then too there is drawn in chalk a shape such as a heavenly constellation or the fourth Greek letter bears. When this has been marked with degrees, the nut that stops within it gains itself as many nuts as it has touched lines. Often too a hollow vessel is placed at a distance, into which a nut flung by a skilful hand may fall."[12]

Archaeological traces of games also require careful consideration as they represent only a small proportion of the toys that once existed. Firstly, because of the materials used: the majority are in terracotta or metal, more rarely of wood, bone, ivory or amber, a misleading predominance as many toys have been lost due to their perishable nature. Numerous toys were made of organic materials, such as wicker rattles, leather balls or rag dolls, which do not survive, or out of reused materials, such as coins for "odd and even" games (*artiasmos, par/impar*), or hoops made of wheel rims that are impossible to identify as toys.[13] Secondly, many games did not use any physical objects, as in hide and seek, rhymes and riddles which were very popular pastimes.

Childhood

Rattles

Among the surviving objects, rattles (Greek *platagonion*, Latin *crepitaculum*) reflect the attention paid to babies in a society with a high mortality rate. Their function was to distract and calm young children, en-

11 Cf. Dolansky 2007; Toner 2017.

12 Ov. *Nux* 73-86 (transl. J.H. Mozley, revised by G. P. Goold, Loeb).

13 Crawford 2013; Dasen 2019b.

couraging a peaceful sleep that ensured harmonious growth.[14] Their noise also warded off malevolent influences. A terracotta piglet found in Ostia (see figure on p. 263; **Cat. no. 71**) could have served as a rattle if pebbles were put inside its body through the small opening on the top of the figurine.[15] The animal's back is decorated with fragments of glass paste in added clay 'barbotine', possibly to imitate the adornment of animals for sacrifice. Piglets were often presented to deities watching over fecundity and children's welfare.[16] Ovid tells the story of the nymph Cranae who wards off *striges*, monstrous greedy birds believed to devour new-born babies by night.[17] She offers them the entrails of a piglet as a substitute victim. Such stories may shed light on the prophylactic significance of piglet rattles.

Dolls

Nearly two hundred dolls with articulated limbs, made of bone or more rarely of ivory, are preserved in the western part of the Roman world.[18] The figurines represent an adult woman with marked sexual features, like a modern Barbie doll, introducing girls to their physical transformations at puberty. In the Roman imperial period, as in ancient Greece, they seem to have taken on a specific function in rites of passage to adulthood. Two commentators on the poet Persius (1st century CE) report that girls gave them as votive offerings on the eve of their wedding.[19] Most dolls come from the graves of young girls who died before marriage; they were buried with miniature accessories evoking the activities and seductiveness of the future bride (comb, mirror, gold or silver jewellery). Their attire may be lavish, with hairstyles imitating those of empresses, and garments sometimes interwoven with gold thread. The high cost of the more elaborate dolls, some of which are made of amber, suggests that they were not mere toys.

The specimens from Ostia (see figures on p. 267), with movable arms and legs, now lost, belong to the schematic type characteristic of Late Antiquity (4th-5th cent. CE). Similar dolls come from tombs of children, like those stuck on the plaque closing the *loculus* or niche in Roman catacombs. Their religious role seems to fade away in Christianized societies. In a letter from Jerome to Gaudentius (413 CE) on the education of the young Pacatula, the doll is no longer used in a ritual but represents a pleasurable reward among others.[20]

Games in urban spaces

Many ludic activities took place in Roman towns – in the open air in the forum, in porticoes, theatres, as well as inside baths, taverns, palaestra... Athletic training comprised hoop rolling, reserved for young men,

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14 On rattles, babies' health and sleep, Dasen 2017. Cf. Poll. *onom.* 9, 127.

15 The mouth is also pierced, as is the case with similar piglets found in children's tombs near Rome. See Messineo 1991-1992, on the piglet from a tomb in Settecamini (148-149 CE) as a possible souvenir of pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Hercules Victor in the Forum Boarium.

16 In ancient Sparta, nurses sacrificed piglets at the feast of Tithenidia or "feast of nannies" to Artemis Corythalia, for the protection of their nurslings; Ath. 4, 139a.

17 Ov. *fast.* 6, 156-164: "She held the raw inwards of a sow just two months old. And thus she spoke: 'Ye birds of night, spare the child's inwards: a small victim falls for a small child. Take, I pray ye, a heart for a heart, entrails for entrails. This life we give you for a better life' " (transl. James G. Frazer, revised by G. P. Goold, Loeb).

18 Pizzamiglio 2008; Bianchi 2019. The research of Ch. Bianchi is funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (2020-2024, PI V. Dasen).

19 Schol. Pers. 2, 69-70.

20 "She will do her work quickly if she is going to receive as reward some sweetmeat, or bright flower, or glittering bauble, or pretty doll, *pupa*" (transl. F.A. Wright, Loeb).



Figure 3. Mosaic floor of the *apodyterium*, Baths of Porta Marina, Ostia IV, X, 1-2, *in situ* (120-130 CE). Photo: J.-P. Thuillier.

and various sorts of ball games (*episkuros, ourania, phaininda*...). Galen and Antyllus, two medical doctors (2nd cent. CE), recommended such games for honing a balanced, agile, body, as well as encouraging moral virtues.[21] Galen adds that balls are suitable for all ages, and that "even the poorest person is not without the means for it".[22] The mosaic floor of the changing room in the bath complex of Porta Marina in Ostia depicts the standard range of physical activities in the palaestra: wrestling, boxing, discus throwing, and weight lifting. A hoop is placed against a herm (**Fig. 3**), near a large ball with a hexagonal pattern resembling our modern ones.[23] Young men also trained in the open air, as in the Campus Martius in Rome, attracting spectators, as Gaius Calpurnius Piso allegedly did: "No less is your nimbleness, if mayhap it is your pleasure to return the flying ball, or recover it when falling to the ground, and by a surprising movement get it within bounds again in its flight. To watch such play the populace remains stockstill, and the whole crowd, sweating with exertion, suddenly abandons its own games".[24]

Gambling and boardgames were another familiar part of the urban landscape. Besides bone counters, cubic dice (**Fig. 4; Cat. nos. 130-133, 135**),[25] and marbles in clay, stone or glass, boards carved into stone

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21 On the small ball, Galen. γαληνου περι του δια της σμικρας σφαιρας γυμνασιου (Kühn V 901). On the hoop, Antyllus ap. Oribasius, *Collectiones medicae*, 6, 26 (ed. J. Raeder, *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* VI.1.1, Leipzig/Berlin, Teubner, 1928); Dasen 2019c; Pietrobelli 2020.

22 Transl. I. Johnston, Loeb.

23 Newby 2005, 51-56, fig. 3.3.

24 *Laus Pis.* 185-187 (transl. J. Wight Duff, Loeb).

25 On dice, e.g. Manniez 2019. On *tesserae lusoriae*, Baratta 2019.



Figure 4. Bone items. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4308, 4309, 4310, 4324, 4326, 4320, 4327. Photos: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo archive. Bone dice. Bone counter (?) in the shape of a plucked chicken l. 5.9, w. 1.6, d. 0.7 cm. On the back: XV. Bone counter (?) in the shape of a fish l. 3.7, w. 0.9. On the back: no number. Bone tessera. l. 6.3, w. 1.5. Inscription: Tertullis. On the back: no number. Bone disk with theatrical mask. On the back: no number.

floors are evidence of play in open spaces. They preserve the structure of the boardgames made of wood which do not survive.[26] About 150 boards engraved with the *duodecim scripta* game (or game of the Twelve lines or Twelve inscriptions), the ancestor of our backgammon, played with two or three dice, are recorded in the Roman west.[27] The board has three rows of twelve cells (**Fig. 5**), often replaced by letters forming hexagrams that make up sentences referring to play.[28] A board found in Ostia thus mocks the loser: "Idiot, withdraw. You don't know how to play, Loser, get up !" (*idiota recede / ludere nescis / victus lebate*).[29] The *ludus latrunculorum*, a famous game of capture, has a different structure consisting of a grid, usually 8 × 8 squares, on which counters symbolise two "armies" whose aim is to capture the opponent's "mercenaries", *latrones*.[30] Various depictions in wall paintings and mosaics suggest that these games were mostly played by men in public spaces.[31] Rectangular marble plaques carved with uneven rows of cavities are found in Ostia, for example on the staircase of a nymphaeum (**Fig. 6**). These may have been used as marble runs.[32] A few texts mention this game; according to Suetonius, the emperor Augustus "sometimes



Figure 5. Marble table with *XII Scripta* board (48 × 39.5 cm). Ephesus, House of the Peristyle 38b, *in situ*. Photo: Ulrich Schädler.

26 Schädler 2013, fig. on p. 39; Schädler 2016, pl. 251.

27 See *Ludus. A database of Ancient Boardgames*: https://elearning.unifr.ch/ludus/.

28 See Purcell 2007. On the inscriptions referring to luck, circus, gambling attitudes, see Ferrua 2001; Schambler 2009.

29 Ferrua 2001, 77, no. 51. Schambler 2009, 34, Appendix B79.

30 Schädler 1994.

31 Schädler 2013.

32 Some plaques carved for a marble run also bear inscriptions relating to play, Schädler 2019 (Baths of Caracalla: *vincis gaudes, perdis ploras*, "If you lose, you cry").



Figure 6. Marble run, steps of the Aula del Gruppo di Marte e Venere (*nymphaeum*), Ostia, Regio II, insula IX. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

played at dice, marbles, and nuts with little boys" as a diversion.[33] Other designs are currently being reconsidered, such as the "roundmerel" carved on the floor of Ostia's Forum Baths, which may not be a boardgame, as long assumed, but may have served a different ludic purposes, such as shoving counters, pucks or coins.[34]

The ludic use of small bone or ivory objects is still much debated. Were the *tesserae* in the shape of chickens (**Fig. 4**) or fish (**Fig. 4**) counters belonging to a lost game? A number is often engraved on the reverse, ranging between I and XVI; these might be countermarks, like the rectangular pierced bone devices with ludic inscriptions or names (**Fig. 4**).[35] These items may be *pittacia* or tickets used in lotteries, such as that organized by Trimalchio to entertain his guests,[36] symbolically representing a gift, or like the *missilia* or *symbola* offered by the emperor to the crowd at festivals.[37] The function of the small bone or ivory disks with theatrical masks (**Fig. 4**) or the terracotta disk with the face of a child (see figure on p. 264), is similarly debated. The counters carved with fingers showing numbers (I-XV), or with the monuments of Alexandria and portraits of deities or emperors, also with numbers on the back (I-XV), seem to make up coherent series which may have been part of a game.[38]

The variety of Ostia's play and games thus mirrors the social dynamics of an urban culture shared by children and adults, ordinary people and the élite. Their wealth suggests the importance of further research on the distribution of games in public or private spaces, as well as on game devices revealing the different ethnic origins of the population who lived in the port of Rome.

33 Suet. *Aug.* 83 (transl. J. C. Rolfe, Loeb).

34 Stöger 2016, fig. 2.5. For a reconsideration, see Schädler 2018.

35 Lambrugo 2015; Baratta 2019.

36 Petron. 56.

37 Suet. *Cal.* 18, 2; Cass. Dio 49, 43, 4.

38 Bianchi 2015; Gavin – Schärlig 2019.

Hic Amor Habitat
Sex and the Harbour City

Ria Berg

Apotropaic charms

Venus, the goddess of sexual charms but also a protectress of sailors and navigation, had a small temple in Ostia among the four Republican temples, but does not seem to have been a particularly central figure in the Ostian pantheon.[1] Priapus, the other major divinity supervising the sexual sphere, must have enjoyed a degree of popularity in the city, as he, too, had a special connection with ships and seaborne trade.[2] Evidence for the presence of this ithyphallic god, however, is limited to small bronze figurines (**Fig. 1**), and one larger marble statue found in the Terme del Foro (inv. 976). One of these seems to underline his connection with seaborne prosperity, showing Priapus not in his habitual eastern headdress, but wearing a grain *modius* on his head, and carrying fruit in his lap.[3]

The images of phalluses decorating streets and building in ancient cities have been interpreted in various ways, from purely apotropaic good-luck charms to actual shop signs signalling brothels.[4] Some examples also appear in the Ostian cityscape. A mosaic phallus guards the door to the domestic space of the Domus of Jupiter Fulminator (IV, IV, 3) on the floor of its entrance *fauces*.[5] Baths, and particularly their hot rooms, sometimes had phallic images to protect nude visitors from the evil eye and other dangers.[6] In Ostia, one such image appears on the South wall of the Baths of Invidiosus (V, V, 2), in the form of a terracotta plate representing a phallus.[7] In the Baths of Buticosus (I, IV, 8), the named figure in the mosaic in the entrance hall (3) is a male carrying a water-bucket and a strigil, his erect penis pointing towards the entrance of the heated rooms.[8]



Figure 1. A bronze statuette of Priapus, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3543. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

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1 The Ostian temple of Venus is one of the four small Republican temples near the theatre.

2 For the nautical aspects of Priapus, and the statuette found in Pisa ship E, see Neilson 2002.

3 Images of Priapus appear as small bronzes, for example inv. 3543 in the deposits of the Ostia Antiquarium.

4 Clarke 2007, 69 et passim; Whitmore 2018, 17.

5 The house has several building phases, but was probably decorated in the 1st century CE.

6 Clarke 2007, 63-67.

7 Now a plaster cast repositioned upside-down can be seen on the wall. A mosaic depicting an apotropaic hand gesture against the evil eye gave the baths their name. See Becatti 1961, 219-20, pl. CLXIII.

8 Designed in the reign of Trajan, between the years 112 and 115 CE, Becatti 1961, 29-30, pl. CIX. Clarke 1998, 303.

Phallic images, as apotropaic charms, were also placed in tombs as the living needed protection from potentially dangerous spirits when they visited these liminal spaces. In the Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb no. 16 has an entrance space decorated with a Nile mosaic, including pygmies having intercourse in a boat, while one of the male partners is also fighting a crocodile. This scene has been discussed at length by John Clarke, who sees it primarily as intended to induce apotropaic laughter.[9] According to Meyboom and Versluys, such images of Pygmies make fairly precise reference to the exotic fertility feasts celebrated during the flooding of Nile.[10] Another mosaic image of Egyptian Pygmies having sex was found near the S-W fountain of the Garden Houses, near the main entrance to the complex, and also connected with water, perhaps associated with Nile.

Small phallic amulets, described by Varro as "indecent objects" (*res turpicula*), were, according to his account, worn by small infants to protect them from the evil eye and various maladies. Pliny also associated this type of protective *fascinum* with the chariots of triumphant generals, subject to envy during the parade.[11] The archaeological evidence for phallic amulets in the Roman world has recently been analysed by Alissa Whitmore, who notes that children and animal-driven vehicles are indeed the two categories most frequently connected with them.[12] However, her study, and other recent research, confirms that the public display of phallic images in ancient cities was in general not as common or ubiquitous, as visible to everyone everywhere, as previously thought.[13]

Two bronze phallic amulets found in Ostia are examples of the most common types in the Imperial period. One presents the non-erect phallus pierced with three rings, within which bells were probably hung. The other, also pierced by rings, is a combination fist-and-phallus type, a particularly common amulet in the areas of the northern *limes* but present throughout the Empire.[14] Given their robustness, large size and the rings above and below, these two items must have been either pieces for animal harnesses, or, most likely, elements for hanging lamp-and-bell combinations, *tintinnabula* (**Figs. 2-3**; **Cat. nos. 137, 138**). Evidence from Pompeii suggests that such *tintinnabula* lamps were connected with taverns and plausibly with establishments whose hospitality services included sex.[15]

Ostian brothels

Harbour towns – like Amsterdam with its red light district, Hamburg and Shanghai – have often been seen as places of dubious reputation, packed with smoky taverns, tattoo shops, lusty sailors and brothels.[16] In this respect Ostia does not, perhaps surprisingly, stand out as a particular hotspot among ancient Mediterranean

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9 Clarke 1998, 134, fig. 47; Clarke 2003, 212.

10 Meyboom – Versluys 2007.

11 Varro *ling*. 7, 96-97; Plin. *nat*. 28, 39. Clarke 2003, 95-114.

12 Whitmore 2017; Whitmore 2018, 21-24.

13 Sanja Vucetic 2014, has shown that in various early Imperial sites the percentage of lamps with erotic images is very low: she calculated the percentages of erotic lamps in various ancient cities: Ampurias 2.13%, Vindonissa 4.14%, Carthage 4.5%, Salamis 6.10%. Similarly small percentages resulted from Whitmore's comparison of phallic amulets: Whitmore 2018, 26. T.D. McClain and N.K. Rauh (2011, 156-57) also counter the widely accepted view that sees phallus images as merely apotropaic, suggesting that, in the Delian context, they are indeed often markers of sexual activities.

14 Parker 2015.

15 Berg 2018.

16 For the theoretical framework of harbours in archaeology, as liminal places of displacement and hybridity, see Falck 2003, 112: "Sailors, criminals, corrupt officers, prostitutes and pimps inhabit the scene, people located both socially and physically on the fringes, situated 'out of place'."



Figure 2. A phallic bronze pendent with a large suspension ring above. Below, the tip of the penis and the area with curls above were originally pierced by three fine rings, of which two are still extant. The suspension rings and the relatively large size of the object (w. 6.6, h. 6.5 cm) make it likely that this is a pendent for a phallic lamp with bells. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4159. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 3. A fist-and-phallus amulet that combines three talismanic images. To the left, a hand in the aggressive or averting gesture of "*manus impudica*", with the thumb between the index and middle fingers; on the right, an erect phallus, and at the centre, a non-erect one. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3958. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

cities, and is overshadowed in its notoriety in the sexual sphere by, for example, Corinth and Delos.[17] It is also overshadowed by the erotic finds of Pompeii, which boasts the only known purpose-built brothel of the Roman world, rich series of erotic paintings, graffiti and objects decorated with sexual images.

Obviously, this can to a certain extent be explained by the fact that fewer material finds and wall-paintings have survived from Ostia. Yet it remains to be explained why no brothels or even cribs – single rooms with masonry beds opening onto the street (*cellae meretriciae*) – can be identified among its architectural features.[18] Putatively, this might be the result of a slight change in sexual mores between the *floruit* of Pompeii in the 1st century CE, and that of Ostia in the 2nd-3rd centuries. However, in this busy harbour town full of travellers and other temporary residents, commercial sex must have been a constant presence, perhaps subtly merging with the activities of bars, restaurants, hotels and baths.

Indeed, Roman law treated tavern-keepers and bar maids with the same reservations as sex workers, though acknowledging that these two categories overlapped but did not coincide.[19] Three Ostian locations, in particular, have generally been proposed as possible venues for sex work.[20]

The first is the large tavern of Alexander Helix (IV, VII, 4), situated in a busy spot just inside the Marine Gate; its front room is covered with black and white mosaics probably dating to the beginning of the 3rd century CE.[21] The floor next to the sales counter shows two nude male dancers with double sticks in their hands in the middle of a grotesque dance commonly performed by Egyptian pygmies, with comic and

17 McClain – Rauh 2011, 148 and passim.

18 On recognizing brothels, Wallace-Hadrill 1995, 52; McClain – Rauh 2011, 147-48.

19 Hermansen 1981, 197; McGinn 2004; Guzzo – Scarano-Ussani 2009.

20 Hermansen 1981, 147-50 *et passim*. McGinn 2004, 230 for earlier discussion.

21 Hermansen 1981, 173-75.

erotic connotations. In front of the backroom door, a mosaic figure of Venus, holding a mirror, is flanked by Cupid holding a wreath or a girdle. This may be an allusion to the practice of sex work in the back room of the establishment.

A further candidate for an Ostian *lupanar* is the House of the Painted Vaults (III, V, 1), with rows of single rooms opening onto the corridor, on two stories. In one corner of the building is a *thermopolium*.[22] One bedroom (5) on the ground floor had two erotic *symplegma* paintings with couples in bed on two walls, belonging to the decoration phase of c. 250 CE. In Pompeii, where such images are more common, Pier Giovanni Guzzo has concluded that explicit sex scenes were not exhibited in the more public areas of *domus*; instead they have a close connection with *loci* of prostitution.[23] However, there are no grounds to label this building a brothel; rather, it was a hotel (*deversorium*, *hospitium*) in which sexual services may also have been offered.

The third instance is the House of Jupiter and Ganymede (I, IV, 2), identified already by the excavator, Guido Calza, as a hotel serving *cinaedi* on the basis of its graffiti.[24] John Clarke has more explicitly proposed that the establishment may have employed male sex workers.[25] The graffiti, which also tell us the name of the hotel, "ad Callinicum", range from the milder *Hermadion cinaedus* to more explicit "Cepholus and Musice came together" and "Agathopus and Prima and Epaphroditus came together here", using the verb *convenire* referring to sexual intercourse.[26] As female participants were also clearly involved in sexual activities, the house may in its later phases have housed a wider array of entertainment services ranging from dining to erotic encounters.

A fourth site that should be considered on the basis of a concentration of erotic graffiti is the *insula* of the Caseggiato degli Aurighi (III, X, 1). On the ground floor, room 17 is a narrow space under the stairs, notable for its graffiti with amorous rather than explicitly sexual contents, starting with a simple greeting to a 'babe', *pupa v(ale) sal(utem)*. Other persons mentioned include the "frivolous Ianuaria", "beautiful Lucila", "Cryseros who loves Adama" and "Apella who loves Chrysis".[27] In the same house, a room (30) decorated with a painting depicting Cupids playing with the weapons of Mars has a graffito that states, more sweetly: *Hic amor habitat* – "love lives here".[28] In this case, however, we have no evidence to connect this location with commercial sex.

Other locations putatively connected with prostitution in ancient cities are baths. In Ostia, the vague evidence for such activities is limited to the two images mentioned above, the cases of the Baths of Buticosus and Invidiosus that should, however, be interpreted as generic apotropaic signs. However, in the Baths of Trinacria, a floor mosaic inscription with the text *statio cunnilingiorum* has also been proposed as evidence for sex work, i.e. men offering their services to women.[29] This evidence can more plausibly be interpreted as grotesque comedy, comparing a disparaged sexual practice to the stations of the official guilds and *collegia*.

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22 McGinn 2004, 230. Clarke 1998, 265-74 rejects the identification as a *lupanar* for various reasons, such as the high quality of the pictorial decorations.

23 Guzzo – Scarano Ussani 2009.

24 Calza 1920, 370-72; McGinn 2004, 229-30.

25 Clarke 1991; Clarke 1998, 265.

26 Van Buren 1923, 164; Solin 1967, Pl. 56b, 3-4; Clarke 1991, 324-25. *CIL* XIV S, 5291.3c (1-2): *Hic ad Callin[i]cum | futui orem anum* (palma) *amicom [---] re nolite r…| in aedi [---]*. *CIL* XIV S, 5291, e: *Cepholus et Musice duo conve | nientes*. CIL XIV S, 5291, d: *Agathopus et Prima et Epaphroditus tres convenientes*;

27 Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, 332, no. 36 *Ianuaria nugas*; 333, no. 40: *Lucila formosa*; 333, no. 42.

28 Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, 326, no. 5; Solin 1967, pl. 58c.

29 For the Baths of Trinacria, see Clarke 2007, 200-201, fig. 100.

Veneris figurae on lamps and amulets

Lamps are a category of objects that has multiple connections with the sexual sphere. Besides the aforementioned hanging ithyphallic bronze lamps in front of the door, the discovery of numerous terracotta lamps may also be a material indicator of *lupanars*, as suggested by Thomas McGinn, who notes that Roman brothels would have had lamps lit at the door and in the *cubicula*, day and night.[30] The bedroom lamp (*lucerna cubicularis*) is also an object often cited by Roman love poets, and lamps with erotic scenes, *Veneris figurae*, would have been particularly well-suited to such contexts. As the contextual information does not allow us to reconstruct the original use contexts of Ostian lamps, some considerations will be offered on the iconography of two exemplary items. One is a fragment of the disc of a lamp, of simple workmanship, made from a rather worn mould and with a reddish slip (**Fig. 4**; **Cat. no. 141**). The woman is sitting on top in the *Venus pendula* or *mulier equitans* position and seems to be wearing bracelets and anklets; her left hand is raised to touch her hair. The man lies on his back, leaning on his left elbow and raising his right hand in a gesture of salute or surrender.[31]



Figure 4. Fragment of a terracotta lamp, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4739. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 5. A carved stone object in the form of a nutshell, with an engraved *symplegma* on the interior, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4329. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Another lamp is nearly intact, fragmented along the edge, with the nozzle missing (**Fig. 6**; **Cat. no. 140**); the relief shows an erotic scene of accurate workmanship involving a male-female couple. The man is reclining on a bed, covered with an abundance of bedclothes and pillows, suggesting an elite house. Under the bed is a footstool with slippers. The woman is seen in active movement, positioning herself on top. Both figures are nude, with no visible body jewellery, but the man is wearing a wreath. Wreaths hung from the ceiling above the bed explicitly state that the scene is taking place after a banquet.



Figure 6. Terracotta lamp with an erotic scene, Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2707. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Arguably, rather than depicting elite married couples, the women represented on lamps with elaborate hairstyles, jewellery and elegant furniture might be the Roman counterparts of Greek *hetairai*.[32] Such escorts of higher social status did exist in the Roman world, and were most often freedwomen and foreigners; however, their exis-

30 McGinn 2004, 203; Berg 2018.

31 On the interpretations of the *mulier equitans* position, see Clarke 1998, 217, 258.

32 Berg 2018. Several scholars have also interpreted such scenes as representing liberated well-to-do matrons, see Clarke 1998, 103; 168-69; Jacobelli 2012 with discussion and further bibliography.

tence is concealed by the Latin language as no explicit term for the category exists, resorting instead to the euphemistic "*puella*" or "*amica*".[33]

Finally, besides these standard types of objects, the Ostian Antiquarium also holds a rarer erotic amulet: a carved stone object in the form of a nutshell, with an engraved *symplegma* on the interior (**Fig. 5**; **Cat. no. 139**).[34] Seen from one side it realistically reproduces the shape and colour of a walnut shell and could be mistaken for a real one by the viewer. When turned around, a miniature relief on the interior shows an amorous encounter between a couple, with the woman on top in the *Venus pendula aversa* position. Amulets in the form of a walnut, in rock-crystal and amber, are known from the 79 CE contexts of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and can be interpreted as positive symbols of fertility and bounty. One almond-shaped amulet from Herculaneum also contains a relief *symplegma*.[35] In this case, the surprising erotic image on the interior instead suggests a ludic object of play or jest, rather than an amulet. On the one hand, it is reminiscent of the *spintriae*, coins or medallions with erotic images and numerals that were quite probably gaming counters. On the other, the walnut was a topical symbol of childhood games, played especially by throwing them at a target.[36] The object, which could be covered to show only a nutshell, or revealed, may also refer to the play of covering and revealing erotic images on the walls, often provided with wooden shutters.[37] The object is thus a good illustration of the typical nexus between sex, humour and propitious magic present in ancient erotic imagery.

In conclusion, sexual images in Ostia are not numerous, but they are significant. Phallic amulets were not merely protective and decorative ornaments – they derived their magical and communicative force from their rarity, producing an effect of surprise, arousal and amusement, distracting and confusing even the evil eye to make it miss its target. The tendency to decrease erotic imagery seems to have been accentuated in the later Imperial period, and thus, in the city of Ostia too, such images are not very numerous. This means, however, that they were all the more meaningful and powerful, culturally marking and channelling the powerful and potentially dangerous forces of sexuality in the right directions.

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33 Berg 2018.

34 Three similar nuts, with different sexual positions, can be seen in the Christie's New York (17 December 1998) auction catalogue, nos. 76-78, dating to the 1st – 2nd century CE, but without information about the provenance. I thank Luciana Jacobelli for this parallel. Two of the objects are now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, inv. L 2000.1.5.1-2.

35 See d'Ambrosio – De Carolis 1997, 54-55, cat. 153, cat. 157, pl. XIV, for walnut-shaped amulets carved in rock crystal, from Pompeii, with further bibliography on nut-shaped amulets in Roman funerary contexts. Two amulets in the form of an almond, carved in bone, were found in Herculaneum, inv. 2584, 2587: one has a *symplegma* with a *mulier equitans* on the inside, the other shows the exterior shell of the almond, with the engraved numeral XII, perforated for suspension. Their exact find spot is unclear, possibly along the Decumanus Maximus, 1960, see Scatozza 1989, 78-79, cat. 162, 165; Varone 2000, 37, figs. 33-34.

36 *nuces relinquere*, 'leave the nuts', meaning of leave childhood behind, Persius, *sat.* 1, 9. In Catullus' *Carmen* 61, walnuts given to children are connected with the wedding ritual.

37 Clarke 1998, 95; 169; Varone 2000, 68-73.

The Wall Inscriptions of Ostia

Heikki Solin

This chapter discusses the wall inscriptions, or graffiti, of Ostia, including the few surviving *dipinti*, depicted inscriptions, in other words inscriptions made with a brush. I will leave out here the graffiti consisting only of drawings.

There has long been a need for a new and complete edition of the scratched and painted wall inscriptions brought to light during excavations at Ostia. The history of research on this material is short and can be summarized in a few words. Some inscriptions were published in the excavation reports, like the graffiti in the Casa di Bacco Fanciullo, in that of Giove e Ganimede, in the Caserma dei Vigili or the central corridor of the complex of four temples, the Quattro Tempietti, excavated towards the end of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century by, among others, Vaglieri, Lanciani, Paribeni and Calza. These were later included in the Ostian supplement to *CIL* XIV, where the graffiti and dipinti were republished more accurately by Lothar Wickert in 1930 (*CIL* XIV 4509-4530, 5289-5296). Few other sets of graffiti were published after Wickert's supplement, like those of the Terme dei Sette Sapienti edited by Guido Calza.[1]

The first to deal somewhat more extensively with this material was Matteo Della Corte, who in 1937 transcribed a quantity of wall graffiti at Ostia, later published with Pio Ciprotti in 1961.[2] Unfortunately, the result is a confused and unscholarly publication, full of serious reading errors that provides for each graffito only a transcription in capital letters followed by a few modest observations by Ciprotti. The most serious issue is the total lack of topographical information, not to mention the exact positions on the walls; during the 1960s and 70s I was forced to waste days at a time attempting to find the graffiti transcribed by Della Corte, a very tiring and distressing process.

After the Second World War, in 1946, the Istituto di Paleografia of Rome University, now La Sapienza, began work to prepare a long-awaited edition of the wall inscriptions of Ostia, entrusting the task to a young collaborator of the Istituto, Giovanni Muzzioli, who was sadly prevented from completing his studies and the Ostian edition by his untimely death. After Muzzioli's death it was passed on to Armando Petrucci, whom I joined in 1966 as a partner and collaborator. Following the withdrawal of Petrucci, who later became a famous palaeographer, the whole edition was entrusted to me. I began work in earnest in 1966, continuing the recording and research *in situ* on various occasions in the 1970s. Subsequently, due to other pressing tasks, I was unable to work on the project for a long time; it is now awakening from its long sleep. A fine scholar, my former student and current collaborator Pekka Tuomisto, who already knows the material, has declared his willingness to take on the task. If the edition is published during my lifetime, it will be dedicated to the memory of my dear friend Armando Petrucci, who died on 23 April, 2018.

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1 Calza 1939.

2 Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961.

Of the subsequent publications it is worth recalling the graffiti in the Insula delle Ierodule expertly published by Carlo Molle in 2014;[3] these include some very interesting texts.

Hitherto over 1000 graffiti have been found at Ostia. Chronologically they date from the proto-Augustan period to the end of the 3rd century CE, but most belong to the first three centuries. The oldest graffito that can be dated with precision is of 23 BCE (*CIL* XIV 5289, 1), from the central corridor of the Quattro Tempietti. Some other graffiti from the same room may be somewhat older, some even from the late Republican period. As concerns the language in which the graffiti were written, there is a significant number of Greek texts, unsurprising in a port city. Many of these are of interest from various points of view. I discussed some of the most important unpublished ones in *Arctos* 1972 in the framework of the *Analecta epigraphica*;[4] others followed in 2008.[5] Unfortunately I cannot dwell on this interesting group here. As concerns the contents and substance of the graffiti, they do not differ significantly from the graffiti of Pompeii; however, the exuberance of Pompeii's revellers, filling the walls of the Vesuvian town, is more restrained at Ostia; for example, the erotic texts characteristic of Pompeiian graffiti are certainly not lacking at Ostia, but are less obscene.

Though they are often of great interest and enormous importance, this chapter focuses not on the well-known graffiti, but instead on some that have already been published and discussed by various scholars, but that have been wrongly read or interpreted, to show that a new *Bestandaufnahme* might be useful to promote their understanding; I will then briefly present some unpublished graffiti.

I will start with the graffiti and depicted inscriptions from the Caserma dei Vigili (II 5, 1). Our future edition comprises 127 texts. The majority came to light during the great excavations of Lanciani in 1888-1889 and Vaglieri in 1909-1912, and were published in the respective excavation reports. All the inscriptions published by Lanciani and Vaglieri were reprinted, in part on the basis of first-hand examinations, in a considerably improved form by L. Wickert, *CIL* XIV 4509-4529. It is worth noting only that Wickert failed to find some of the graffiti published by Lanciani or Vaglieri, though they were still clearly visible. Wickert's work on site must therefore have been brief and somewhat hurried.

All these collections present gaps and so only our future corpus will offer a complete overall edition of the graffiti and dipinti. I studied the inscriptions in November 1967 and reviewed some texts in December 1978. Unfortunately, some of the inscriptions have been destroyed and many of those that survive are in such appalling conditions that only some letters remain. It is also certain that even when they were excavated many inscriptions had become illegible or were already destroyed. Indeed, the conservation of the wall inscriptions of the barracks is worse than average; this is mainly because the whole lower part of the walls is covered with a coarse layer of *cocciopesto*; this material is unsuited to the scratching and conservation of graffiti. Equally, the fine plaster running from the *cocciopesto* socle to the ceiling has generally fallen off and the few remaining patches are so ruined and corroded by salts and damp that the strokes of the letters have become more or less illegible. I will briefly discuss two inscriptions. The first is very interesting.

1 = *CIL* XIV 4509, with previous bibliography. Painted in red on a whitened *tabula ansata*. Auxiliary lines. 64 × 24; letter height 2 (line 1), 1 (remainder). Room 2, NW wall. Now in the storerooms, inv. no. 10956.

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3 Molle 2014.

4 Solin 1972, 190-98 = Solin 1998, 32-39.

5 Solin 2008, 117-21.

F( ) bri( ) coh. III v(igilum) (centuria) Max[i]mi:
se(cutor) Iulius Baccius, m<i>les coh(ortis) III v(igilum), (centuria) Maximi,
frumentu accipit; Titus Aelius Sara-
pio mile(s) coh(ortis) III v(igilum), (centuria) Maximi, miles factus VII
Idus Iuaelias pre(fecto) Aemiliano, supprefecto Sene(cione);
M. Atteius Primit[ivu]s miles factus VII Iulias
Umbricio Emil[ia]no pref(ecto), supprefecto Seneci-
one, accipit frum[e]ntu accipit die primo ostio XVI.
Descidimus contibernales su(b) cura tribuni
Vari Flori tri(buni) coh(ortis) pri(mae) v(igilum), <i>dem Cassio Longino tri(buno)
coh(ortis) VII, Aurelio Senecione tribuno coh(ortis) IIII v(igilum),
(centurione) coh(ortis) III Iulio Maximu, teserario Iuli-
o Proculo.

The letters seen by Vaglieri, but now vanished, are underlined. – 3 *Aelius: Afrius* Vaglieri, Wickert, but our reading is certain: the third letter is an L whose second stroke is detached and in an inclined position, and thus represents the normal form for L in this painting; there is no trace of the loop of the R. As for the preceding letter, the last cross-stroke of the E cannot be made out, but is concealed beneath the auxiliary line. – 4 MILES Vaglieri. – 5 IVLELEAS Vaglieri, but the third letter looks to me like an A without the cross-stroke (and this is also the opinion of Wickert); an irregular spelling *Iuaelias* cannot be ruled out. – SIIN Vaglieri. – 10 *V[.]ri* Wickert, but the A, of which the feet of the two verticals remain, is certain. – 11 SENIXIONE Vaglieri.

A recollection of three *vigiles* – probably all from the century of Maximus of the third cohort (for M. Atteius Primitivus this is not explicitly stated) – who had descended (*descidimus* 9) from Rome to Ostia to serve for four months. The company to which they belonged was under the command of Varius Florus, tribune of the I cohort, whilst the other commanders of the whole detachment were the tribunes of the VII and of the IV cohort – this is how I would explain the ablatives at the end of the inscription. Like other Ostian inscriptions by *vigiles*, it also shows that there is no trace of a central command and that the centuries of Ostia were forces made up of various Roman units. The inscription indicates, albeit somewhat clumsily, when those receiving grain were made soldiers, as in the Roman laterculus *CIL* VI 220, where, however, consuls are named rather than prefect and subprefect of the *vigiles*.

Some details. 1 A. von Domaszewski proposed (see *CIL*) expanding *f(eliciter) pri(dianum)*, but Vaglieri states that the B is certain. – 2 *se(cutor)* explains Vaglieri, rightly it seems. – 3 the space after *frumentu accipit* has been left blank, perhaps so that the day could be added later as below in line 8 and in other Ostian inscriptions; if this is the case, the writer did not have exact information on this event, which had probably already happened in Rome. – 8 *ostio*, in other words in the Porticus Minucia in Rome. – 9 *descidimus* is clearly the perfect of *descendo* and represents an interesting morphological change. – 10 DEM is certainly *idem* (perhaps the dot preceding the D may stand for I, as may also be the case in *miles* in line 2); it stands for *item*. This *idem* = *item* connects what precedes to the ablative absolutes indicating the other tribunes of the whole detachment. Given that three tribunes are named, von Domaszewski assumed that during their time the command of this detachment was changed three times, but judging from what is said on the wall all three tribunes seem to have arrived together: after the name of Varius Florus, the tribune of their own company, the other two tribunes, their centurion and the *tesserarius* are named. Given the lack of a general command, I do not know if we can rule out the possibility that there were simultaneously three *tribuni cohortis* in the detachment sent to Ostia.

2[6] = *CIL* XIV 4521, with preceding bibliography. North entrance, right-hand post, row 25. Graffito. 26 × 2,7-3.

Mani Murrius(?)

The interpretation of this graffito, which has been read in various ways by previous editors, is difficult, and our reading is also far from certain. The greatest difficulty lies in the fact that next to the regularly incised letters there are numerous finer irregular signs whose meaning is unclear. The problems begin already with the first letter. The others have read V, but to judge from Wickert's transcription he seems to have thought it was an M (or perhaps a combination of V and A). The decision is not easy: the fourth stroke of the presumed M is finer, but this may be due to the slight depression in the surface of the tile exactly in the groove of the stroke. On the other hand, the space for the first upright of the M seems insufficient for a normal shape (cf. the certain M that follows); if this is an M, the first upright must be located exactly on the edge of the tile and is straight and not oblique. The problems continue: the next upright has a cross-stroke at the top that would make it a T, but there is also the lower part of the loop of a P (indeed the letter was interpreted by Wickert as a P, judging from his transcription). The line of the presumed loop and the following oblique stroke are finer and incised with a more uncertain hand. I would propose reading the whole, very hesitantly, as an A, the first stroke of which is vertical and not oblique, the middle stroke is oblique (as is usual in cursive scripts), whilst the presumed cross-stroke of a T is a more or less extraneous sign or a continuation of the right-hand stroke of the A (a first-hand examination confirmed that no stroke remains in the crack of the tile). This would give us *Mani.*

The second name seems to be *Murrius.* The different execution of the two Rs poses no difficulty in the writing of someone semi-literate. However, the negligent execution in the central part of this word raises some questions; furthermore, the strokes of the first R are very unclear. We could suggest, instead of RRI, something else such as SCRI, SCN, SIN, SEN, etc. but the other readings do not provide positive results.

In any case, we must say that even our reading *Mani Murrius,* though it does provide a meaning, does not really satisfy the needs of a genuine interpretation. In addition to the difficulties relating to the writing (which seem unsurmountable), there are obstacles relating to the contents. Both *Manius* and *Murrius* are names known mostly in the earliest period (but a Q. Murrius Sabinus does appear in the laterculus of the *vigiles CIL* VI 1058 VI, 61 of the year 210). Above all, a *Mani(us) Murrius* lacking a *cognomen* would be chronologically problematic. *Mani* could also be a genitive, in which case it might be the name of the centurion to whose century Murrius belonged. But *Manius* as a *cognomen* is not particularly common and in addition, based on a quick survey, it seems to have fallen into disuse already in the 1st century. For its part *Murrius* is a known *gentilicium* that in and by itself could be used as a *cognomen*, but I do not particularly like even this solution. In short, we can say that the graffito is the writing of a semi-literate person who was clearly unable to concentrate sufficiently to obtain a good result. It is thus pointless to prolong our conjectures. Videant fortunatiores.

3. We will end with an unpublished example. It is found on the south entrance, on the left post as you enter, row 17. Graffito. 7 × 0.8-1.2.

Comin(i) Alexandri.

The *gens Cominia* is well attested at Ostia.

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6 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio2/caserma-dei-vigili/caserma-dei-vigili.htm, G0089, for drawing and photographs (2020, July 8).

As regards the dating of the inscriptions in the Caserma dei Vigili, the majority seem to belong to the first half of the 3rd century. The only precisely dated text, *CIL* XIV 4526*c*,[7] is from the period of Severus Alexander. This date should be ascribed at least to the inscriptions in the rooms to the right and left of the main entrance and the rooms surrounding the Augusteum. In addition to internal criteria (inconstant use of the *praenomen* which is mostly omitted; the cohort's nickname *Severiana* in *CIL* XIV 4526*c*; an *Aurelius* in no. 1 above also lacking the *praenomen* [in this inscription the use of the *praenomen* oscillates as in other similar documents of the Severan period: the 'protagonists' generally have a *praenomen* whilst the various commanders of the detachment who appear either in the genitive after *sub cura* or in the ablative absolute do not]). Also supporting this date are the wall paintings in the room to the right of the entrance, which are of the Severan period; since the rooms surrounding the main entrance are symmetrical, we can assume that their wall paintings were executed contemporaneously; this would give us a *terminus post quem* for the graffiti of rooms 2 and 3. [I will deal with the dating of the first inscription more thoroughly elsewhere.]

The graffiti written on the tiles of the barracks' doors also seem to date mainly to the first half of the 3rd century, as suggested for example by the rarity of the *praenomen*, the presence of Aurelii, the sometimes alarming decline of the writing etc. Unfortunately, we cannot identify with certainty any individual with those attested in the urban inscriptions of *vigiles*: there are some identical names in the laterculi *CIL* VI 1056-1058 of the years 205-210, but they are too common to allow a certain identification.

For the graffiti on the posts of the north entrance we have a *terminus ante quem*. The entrance was closed at the time of Septimius Severus, and its graffiti must therefore date to the period before this; obviously the *vigiles* did not come to draw their names on the posts after making a long detour to a place where no-one spent time any more.

The inscriptions tell us little about the purpose of the various rooms in the barracks. We can assume that a large majority of those who wrote them were soldiers and their contents are generally restricted to the sphere of the life of the *vigiles*. A pair of women's names (*Primigenia* in *CIL* XIV 4526*b*[8]; *Bull. com*. 23 [1895] 211 no. 343; the very uncertain *Matusa* in *CIL* XIV 4528[9] and *Monna* in *CIL* XIV 4527*a*[10]) do not change the overall impression. Despite their restricted nature the inscriptions are of interest for the establishment of the unit. Above all, the depicted laterculi provide a window into the mindset of the *vigiles*. Thus, for example, they very carefully record the most tangible mark of their full citizen rights, the concession of grain. They also clearly demonstrate – as do the inscriptions on stone – that the detachment of *vigiles* in Ostia did not have a central command and that the centuries of this city were made up of various Roman units.

Let us leave the Caserma dei Vigili to examine an important graffito from the Mithraeum of the Casa di Diana (I 3, 3) hitherto wrongly read in several editions:

4[11] = *CIL* XIV 5293, with previous bibliography (add Diehl, *PWV*[2] 1008). On the outer face of the base of the shrine, above the little Bacchic herm to the left of the lip of the altar. 18 × 17; letter height 0.8-2.

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7 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio2/caserma-dei-vigili/caserma-dei-vigili.htm, G0097, for drawing (2020, July 8).

8 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio2/caserma-dei-vigili/caserma-dei-vigili.htm, G0096 (2020, July 8).

9 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio2/caserma-dei-vigili/caserma-dei-vigili.htm, G0108, for drawing (2020, July 8).

10 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio2/caserma-dei-vigili/caserma-dei-vigili.htm, G0101, for drawing and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

11 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/casa-di-diana/casa-di-diana.htm, G0015, for photos and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

Calza/Wickert:


IIE M
VLAS M⁑V
BABENVS SMAXS
BECTON BINVXII
PROCLVS BINV⁑II
ЄRMES DVX⁑III
FORTVNIV ADA NDA
MAXIMVS BINV⁑II

Solin:

[A]cilleus
Ulas carne ⁑ V
Baberius sam(psam?) X S
Bictor binu X II
Proclus binu ⁑ II
Ermes binu ⁑ III
Fortunius ADA
Maximus binu ⁑ II

The *mithraeum* is of the late 2nd century, which thus represents the *terminus post quem* for the graffito. Probably it is somewhat later, of the first half of the 3rd century. It is a list of people's names, apparently followed by the names of foodstuffs and by numbers probably preceded by the sign for a *denarius*. The structure of the graffito is unique of its kind; in the similar graffito lists of Pompeii, reported below, each name of a foodstuff is not preceded by a personal name as it is here; the Pompeian lists must be accounts by a single individual on the ration of a *familia.* This list, by contrast, seems to record the ration of each individual separately, which might appear strange. However, it might be a list of foods for a single day, and the servants would not have received the same ration every day. The names are all individual, and the majority – if not all – of those who bore them must have been slaves. It is true that from the 3rd century onwards the *gentilicium* lost its significance to such an extent that its absence does not compromise the free status of the person in question, but in any case, a large proportion of these names are clearly of servile origin, and even *Baberius,* the only *gentilicium* in the list, could suggest a slave when used on its own since at the time *gentilicia* were often used as slave names. But what kind of document is this? According to Calza, the names are followed by those of the offerings made by worshippers, the names of foodstuffs with their prices. By contrast, Wickert thinks that this is a list of household slaves and the rations to be distributed to each. If this is the case, this humble graffito would represent a valuable document on the rations of slaves in the early 3rd century, and should be read alongside the similar lists from Pompeii already mentioned, like *CIL* IV 4422; 5380;[12] 8566.[13] Another possibility, modifying Calza's hypothesis, is to interpret this as a banqueting inscription, listing the foods offered by worshippers for the shared banquet and their prices. In this case a

12 On this long list of foodstuffs, see Solin – Caruso 2016.

13 These instances should be added to those reported by Mrozek 1975, 15 ff.

comparable instance would be the two graffiti from the Mithraeum of Dura Europos,[14] also with the names of foods and their prices, but without the names of people.

The foodstuffs consist mostly of wine, usually written *binu* in the accusative (as is also the case in line 6, where Calza read DVX, explained by Diehl as *du(pondium)* or *du(plum)*). – 2 In line 2 I have proposed *carne* (= *carnem*), whose reading is uncertain but probable and which I have checked several times on the wall. The C is very fine, like the preceding S (perhaps due to wear on the surface), whilst the other letters are clear even in the photograph. Diehl proposes *Hylas m(odios)* based on the reading given by Calza. – 3 *sampsa* was olive pulp (cfr. Colum. 12, 51, 2), a rustic foodstuff; however, we know from Diphilus (Ath. 55d) that merchants sold it on the streets of Athens. Therefore, it might well have been the ration of a servant in Ostia. It is true that the reading remains uncertain, but I cannot think of a better interpretation. Another expansion as *Sam(iam),* a sort of flat bread (Tert. *adv. Marc.* 3, 5) is certainly less credible. – 7 the letters ADA seem certain, but I have found no trace of the subsequent NDA seen by Calza. Diehl expands *a(s) danda.* Non liquet. – It is difficult to say to what monetary units the numerals refer; at a first glance we could suggest the sign for the *denarius*, since the X has the horizontal central stroke (described by Calza as vertical; only in line 6 is it vertical and in line 8 there are both short vertical and horizontal strokes). Wickert has doubts and proposes a number X written in an unusual way (and in this case we must be dealing with asses). Indeed, we can ask how a wine ration for one person could be so expensive, given that up to the early 3rd century mediocre wine does not seem to have cost more than 7 asses per litre (*CIL* VIII 4508, of 202 CE, gives the price of 3.3 asses for a *sextarius*). But we may already be in the mid-3rd century and we may also be dealing with a ration for several days.

Some details on the names. *Achilleus* is a common name, still well-documented in the 3rd century and not typically servile. *Ulas* must stand for *Hylas* (as already noted by Wickert), also well documented in the 3rd century, clearly servile, but not exclusively so. *Babenus* does not exist. *Baberius* is a fairly well documented *gentilicium* at Ostia as well, probably used here as a slave name. I read the following name as *Bictor* (instead of BECTON), not *Bictori:* the fine stroke after the R continues further down and is therefore extraneous. *Hermes* is common everywhere, particularly among the lower classes, though its use drops noticeably in the 3rd century. By contrast, *Fortunius* first appears in the 3rd century; the earliest precisely dated attestation is of 251 CE (*CIL* X 3699, 2, 28), but the epigraphic documentation may begin even earlier, in the early 3rd century (e.g. *CIL* VI 15902; 26921; X 2535; 2561a; V 3172; 7751; VIII 26735; 26795 are not thought to date, or at least not all of them, to after mid-century; of these, *CIL* VI 26921 seems fairly old, perhaps even of the 2nd century). The name is thus an example of the development of the new suffix *-ius* for *cognomina*, which becomes more common at the start of the 3rd century.

5[15] = *CIL* XIV 4530. Graffito in a *tabula ansata*. 11 × 5; letter height 0.5 - 1. From the shrine of Silvanus (I 3, 2), SW wall, left corner, in the fresco with the figure of Silvanus. Now in the Ostia Museum, room XI 16. First-hand examination 1966.

coh(ortis) VI (centuria) Ost(iensis) imp(erante)
An(tonino), co(n)s(ulibus) Leto et Ce-
riale sebarius
Calpurnius.

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14 Vermaseren 1956, 64-65.

15 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/sacello-del-silvano/sacello-del-silvano.htm, G0011, for a photograph and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

In the right-hand handle of the tabula:

x = votis decennalibus.

Of the year 215 CE. Graffito inexpertly drawn by a *vigil*, with numerous abbreviations not in keeping with the epigraphic style. Calpurnius (it is unclear whether *Calpurnius* here is a *gentilicium* used on its own or if it is acting as a *cognomen*) was a *sebarius*, a soldier who made night inspection rounds with tallow torches. The word *sebarius* is a unique occurrence; hitherto the category of soldiers destined for this purpose was known only from the graffiti of the guard chamber of the VII cohort of the *vigiles* in Rome, in the form *sebaciarius* (cfr. *CIL* VI 2998-3091; 32751). Despite the lack of further documentation and the type of testimony, there is no doubt as to the duties they performed. *Sebarius* must be an independent form, derived directly from *sebum* 'tallow', and not a spelling mistake for *sebaciarius,* as stated by Wickert;[16] the latter is derived from *sebacii* 'tallow candles' (Apul. *Met.* 4,19). *Sebarius* is also known as a personal name, probably a *cognomen* (*AE* 1999, 1153 from Germania Superior: *Cerecotes Sebari*). Perhaps the term *sebaciarius* was used in Trastevere and the shorter word *sebarius* at Ostia. In any case *sebarius* should not be considered an error, nor a variant, but simply another word with the same meaning (that *sebarius* was a possible form is conclusively demonstrated by the anthroponym *Sebarius* that can only be derived from *sebarius*). COH VI is certain: Wickert suggests COH VII as an alternative, but the line after V is just a wrinkle. *Ostiensis* is probably the *cognomen* of the centurion, if not the *gentilicium*. For *votis decennalibus* cfr. *CIL* VI 428; 2999; 3012.

In the same room, on the NE wall, are two unpublished graffiti: *Scamandri*[17] and *Ceriale*[18]; these are two names well attested in Roman onomastics; the latter is found at Ostia (*CIL* XIV 329; 4141; 4565 II, 13; 4569 dec. VIII, 17; X, 10; *EpOst* 247; *LatSignOstienses* App. 1). Slightly to the right of the signature of Scamander is a modern graffito MARIUS / E ANNA / VII KAL MAIAS.[19] The two unpublished graffiti may also arouse suspicion for the way they are drawn; however, they seem ancient to me despite the 'Italian' form *Ceriale*, which could be explained as an accusative written without the final *m*; alternatively, it is a repetition of the name of the consul in **5**.

6[20] = *CIL* XIV 5291, 3*c*, *1*, with drawing and with previous bibliography (add Diehl, *PWV*[2] 1095*a*). Graffito executed with a forked object. 67 × 35; letter height 4-6. Casa di Giove e Ganimede (I 4, 2), room at the back of the ambulatory, E wall, on the left. First-hand examination 1978.

Hic ad Callinicum
futui orem, anum.
amice mi, amari noli ter;
inde n[on] vene [---]
5 *donor[---]*

16 Similarly Sablayrolles 1996, 384.

17 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/sacello-del-silvano/sacello-del-silvano.htm, G0014, for photographs and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

18 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/sacello-del-silvano/sacello-del-silvano.htm, G0013, for photographs and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

19 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/sacello-del-silvano/sacello-del-silvano.htm, G0012, for photographs and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

20 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/casa-di-giove-e-ganimede/casa-di-giove-e-ganimede.htm, G0033 [1], for drawings, photographs, and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

The previous editors have read wrongly in more than one place (see the critical apparatus in *CIL*). Our new reading, at least for the first three lines, is certain. The first sentence (l. 1-2) poses no difficulties. Wickert rightly noted that *ad Callinicum* refers to the place where the author of the graffito had sex. There may thus have been a statue of *Hercules invictus*, of whom καλλίνικος was an epithet, in this place (cf. the well-known epigram from Pompeii *CIL* IV 733 and further evidence from the Greek and Roman worlds).[21] The accusative *orem* of *os* is attested in late Latin: Ps. Theod. *Prisc. simpl. med.* 80. Visio Pauli 28 rec. Sang. p. 140, 14 S; see also the acc. *ore*: Chiron 354. Diosc. 1, 50 p. 28, 17 M. Oribas *eup. syn.* 3 add. p. 908,38. *os* 'opening' used in an obscene sense to mean vulva as in *cunni os* Mart. 3, 72, 6. It may also refer to the mouth, in the obscene sense, as illustrated forcefully by Horace *Epod.* 8, 20. *anus* may be either *anus* 'old woman' or ānus 'anus'; both meanings may be present here. The third line is more problematic, but I will not abandon the new reading. The author may have wished to give advice to a friend (*amice* is thus a vocative, not an adverb, and *amari* a secondary spelling for *amare*, not the passive infinitive) of the dangers of too much sex. This context would also be in keeping with *inde* and our completion of the lacuna. *vene* for *bene* also appears elsewhere at Ostia.

7[22] = *CIL* XIV 5291, 3*c, 2*; with previous bibliography (add Diehl, *PWV*[2] 1095*b*). Graffito superimposed on the first two lines of the preceding graffito. 46 × 16; letter height 3-9.

Livius Mercurius (palm)
lincet Tertulle cunnu quam

The previous editors have read wrongly in several places (see the critical apparatus in *CIL*). Our new reading does not present doubts (note for example RI instead of N: the N in this graffito is not written with the cross-stroke rising to the left, like the loop of the R) and eliminates the problematic *me cunus.*

After *quam* there follows, written in another hand (the M is also larger than the first three letters of the word and may therefore not belong to the graffito), something, perhaps *Ursus*; were this the case *quam* might refer to *Tertulle*: Tertulla whom Ursus loves, for example. Perhaps Livius Mercurius and Ursus were rivals. Or *quam* was used to strengthen a superlative, as in *quam avidissime, quam cupidissime, quam libentissime*. – *lincet* stands for *lingit*.

I will conclude with some unpublished graffiti.

8. Thermopolium (I 2, 5), to the left of the right-hand entrance. On the fragment of plaster that became detached and was replaced, on the top left. 3.5 × 1. First-hand examination 1967 and 1978.

ne fuge.

If the reading is correct and nothing is missing, we can ask what is meant by *ne fuge*. In the absence of any context, the meaning must be left open. Either *ne* is affirmative (*ThLL* IX 1, 279-282), 'truly' so 'you are truly fleeing', or it is an adverb of negation in an independent proposition, a prohibition with the imperative (*ThLL* IX 1, 285-287), 'do not flee'.

9. The Casa di Giove e Ganimede (I 4, 2) has provided us with a quantity of graffiti, some of which are of great interest. A selection is in *CIL* XIV 5291; two graffiti listed there are republished here, above nos.

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21 Cf. Solin 2017, 250, with a collection of examples both from Pompeii and from Thasos, Kios, Erythrai, Mylasa, Bottiaia, Odessos, Salamis, Smyrna, Koptos.

22 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio1/casa-di-giove-e-ganimede/casa-di-giove-e-ganimede.htm, G0033 [2], for drawings, photographs, and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

6-7. Here I will add two unpublished examples. The first is in the same room as graffiti nos. 6-7, on the E wall, to the left. 33 × 5; letter height 1-1.5. First-hand examination 1978; but the graffito is easier to read in the photo taken in 1966, when the text was less ruined.

[Al?]cimede Nico e(t) Proclion.

The reading is very uncertain, not just due to the constant wear on the plaster but also the writer's habit of inclining the strokes towards the right. The advantage of my proposed reading is that it least provides a meaning.

As concerns the names: the completion of the first name seems certain, since there are no other ancient personal names in *-cimedes* -κιμέδης -κιμήδης. *Alcimedes*, a regular Greek name, though rarely attested (Ἀλκιμήδης),[23] is found once in the West, in Hispania Citerior, at Palma (*CIBal* 9, c. 2nd century). As for the letter before M, I had considered an I, since the remains visible in the photo lead us first of all to an I, for which reason I had ruled out the common *Nicomedes*. Given the writer's aforementioned habit, the preceding letter, which at first sight looks like a C, might be various others. We could therefore have, for example, *Antimedes* (in *CIL* VI 23375, 27953; XII 4595) or *Archimedes* (in *CIL* VI 19851, 35279; *NSA* 1992, 412 no. 14), both known in Rome. Nor is *Nico* particularly certain, but it is in any case a common name in the West and well known at Ostia too (five times in *CIL* XIV, and also the unpublished inv. 6113). As for *Proclion,* the reading is very uncertain; the ending *-on* suggests the Greek Προκλίων rather than the Latin *Proc(u)lio*. *Proclion* is known in Rome (*CIL* VI 13194) and in the Greek world. – *Alcimede* (if this is the correct reading) is a dative (datives in *-e* are not particularly rare in Greek words with the ending *-es*). The meaning would thus be: Nico and Proclion greet Alcimedes.

10. Scratched above nos. 6-7. Graffito. 27 × 3-6. First-hand examination 1978.

Ecxire mone[o?]

The reading remains somewhat uncertain. The spelling *cx* instead of *x* is not very common in inscriptions, but it is nonetheless attested.

11. To the right of the above. Graffito. 23 × 4-6. First-hand examination 1978.

Habbebat.

The spelling *habb-* is found in many instances of the *instrumentum inscriptum*, but reproducing the same text; cfr. *ThLL* VI 2395, 40-42.

12. Insula del Soffitto Dipinto (II 6, 6), room 2, NE wall, on the left, under the window. Graffito. 37 × 3-10. First-hand examination 1973.

[---]+urius, M[-]risca.

The V remains very uncertain, but despite this I venture to propose *[Merc]urius*, which is in any case not contradicted by the rest of the letters. The second name is more problematic. If we read *[P]risca* the preceding M would be impossible to explain. A cognomen *Mariscus* is known,[24] with the female counterpart *Marisca*;[25] however, their diffusion is very limited. A third possibility would be to read *Mercurius Mari Sca*[---] (sc. *servus*). But this is unsatisfying, in part because the marks after SCA do not provide any positive results. Non liquet.

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23 *ARV*2 p. 1563 (Attica, 5th century BCE); *SNG München Jonien* 755 (Miletus, c. 200 BCE).

24 Kajanto 1965, 334 with two attestations; further attestations in Solin 2009, 169.

25 Of the female name only a fairly uncertain attestation is currently known: *IG* XIV 2450 (Massilia); cf. Solin 2009, 169.

13. Foro delle Corporazioni (II 7). Fragment of plaster with a graffito, found in the test excavation on the NW side, beneath the mosaic, in 1966. Plaster 9 × 7; graffito 6 × 5; letter height 0.5 - 4. Brought to my attention by Fausto Zevi.

Carm[---]
campo ins[---].

The two lines may have been written by two different hands. – 1 might conceal a form of *carmen*, perhaps referring to a quotation from Virgil, so fashionable in the graffiti of Pompeii, or of *Carminius* or of some other name. – 2 it is difficult to imagine the meaning: what could *campus insulae* be? – A coin of Claudius was found with the graffito. Therefore, the graffito could be of the Claudian period or slightly later. In any case the mosaics, of the late 2nd century, represent the *terminus ante quem*.

14. Shrine (III 2, 11). Graffito written on the N wall of the left-hand room of the shrine, on the right part of the wall. 25 × 17; letter height 3-10. First-hand examination 1967.

Pri(die) Non(as)
Novenb(res).

It is worth noting the secondary spelling *Novenb-*, common in vulgar inscriptions. The shrine is of the period of Antoninus Pius, which thus represents the *terminus post quem* for the graffito. There are no other elements for a more precise dating.

15. Insula delle Volte Dipinte (III 5, 1) In addition to the numerous depicted writings in room 10 (*thermopolium*) and in part already published by Felletti Maj 1961 and Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961 (but in an acritical fashion) I will publish here two graffiti which I read in room 11. The first is on the E wall, on the left. 20 × 6; letter height 1.3 - 2.3. First-hand examination 1967.

φησὶ(?) τεσσάρων ἡ
μετάβασις.

With the exception of the first words, the reading of the graffito seems fairly certain. But the meaning remains very obscure. μετάβασις must have the concrete meaning here of 'move, transfer' known from the Egyptian papyri (I think a personal name *Μετάβασις can be absolutely ruled out). But τεσσάρων? The move of four friends to Ostia from the east? But in that case who is the subject of φησί? Or "one of the four says: 'the transfer'". The word order militates against the first alternative, unless the author was being deliberately obscure.

16. On the right-hand part of the same E wall. 13 × 0.7 - 3.8. First-hand examination 1967.

Vitalis ic fuit.

The spelling *ic* for per *hic* is common. *Vitalis* is a popular *cognomen* both as a masculine and as a feminine and is also common at Ostia (in *CIL* XIV alone it is attested 35 times).

17. Terme Marittime (III 8, 2). Room 5, SE wall, on the right. Graffito, appears scratched onto the fresh plaster. 26 × 1.5 - 4. First-hand examination 1971.

Omnibus vene.

We have already seen the spelling *vene* for *bene* at Ostia, above no. 6.

18.[26] To the right of the preceding graffito. 39,5 × 2,5 - 5. First-hand examination 1971.

cinedus pedicatur.

'The *cinaedus* is sodomized'. Both terms are common in erotic-obscene language; for example, on the walls of Pompeii they are found countless times. In the first word we have the secondary spelling for *cinaedus*,[27] whilst *pedicatur* is the correct and official form (in the scientific literature it is often assumed that *paed-* is the original spelling); cfr. *ThLL* X 1, 974, 62-67.

19. Beneath the preceding graffito. 23 × 6; letter height 1-2.5. First-hand examination 1971.

Cεκυώνδα+ οἰφ[---]

KAT

Of somewhat uncertain reading. What does seem clear is that the graffito begins with the name *Secunda* (whose normal Greek transcription is Σεκόνδα), though the tangle at the start of the name is unclear, as is the letter after the final A. After the name I have identified ΟΙΦ; if I have read correctly, we would probably have the verb οἴφω 'to fuck' here. – The significance of the KAT in the second line is impossible to determine.

20.[28] Near the preceding graffito. 39 × 3-7. First-hand examination 1971.

Cesar, ecrota.

Of uncertain reading and interpretation. The first two letters are finer than the others, and the S is also uncertain. However, this does not prevent us from considering CE to belong to the rest; the writer may also have changed instrument and incised the rest onto the fresh plaster (as it seems) with a thicker groove. After the graffito are the letters PV, whose attribution is not certain. *Aegrota* and *aegrotes* in acclamations are common in Pompeian graffiti (*CIL* IV 762; 2960; 3775; 4507; 5339), but refer to intimates, whilst here *aegrota* must refer to *Caesar.* But an insult such as *Caesar, aegrota* cannot be ruled out.

21-23. The walls of the Casa degli Aurighi (III 10, 1) contain a quantity of graffiti, of which only a few have been published in a satisfactory manner;[29] unfortunately the aforementioned publication by Della Corte and Ciprotti of 1961 includes numerous graffiti with unprecedentedly corrupt transcriptions.[30] Here I will publish two of those that do not seem to have been published previously:

21. Room 2, right wall, on the far right (at the same height as graffito no. 2 of Della Corte – Ciprotti) Graffito. 9 × 1 - 9. First-hand examination 1966.

Quinque irru[matores?].

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26 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/terme-marittime/terme-marittime.htm, G0445, for photograph (2020, July 8).

27 For *cinaedus*, see also Williams 2010, 191-218, 230-39; Kamen – Levin-Richardson 2015, 453-55.

28 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/terme-marittime/terme-marittime.htm, G 0445, in the lower part of the photograph representing no. 18 (G0445) (2020, July 8).

29 Solin 1972, 193-97 = Solin 1998, 35-38. Cf. also Guarducci 1965, 255, who improves the reading and interpretation of Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, no. 14; Solin 1977, 166, who corrects Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, no. 1 *lubet* to *iubet*, followed by Lebek 1981, 59-61, who in turn emends *quarta dolet* to *quarta docet*; but on the wall we clearly read DOLIIT; the possible reasons why the writer might have scratched L instead of C are set out by Lebek.

30 Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, n. 1-19, 62, 63, 71-74.

The last three letters RRV remain uncertain but are possible; the Rs have a cursive form and R and V may be linked. The noun *irrumator*,[31] 'oral rapist', coined by Catullus (10, 12), also appears in Pompeii (*CIL* IV 1529; 8790). [This may be the same as Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, 6 VITIA SVA.]

22. Fragment of plaster, from the Caseggiato degli Aurighi, now in the storerooms (inv. no. 10017). Graffiti, repeated on the same wall 5 times:

recte futui.

'I fucked well'. One specimen adds *X V[---]* after *futui*, that is to say *denariis V[---]*. In an other it is written *fitui* which should be judged a writing mistake and not a secondary spelling.

We publish another text already published, but erroneously, in Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, no. 74, as it is of great interest from the onomastic point of view:

23.[32] Corridor, left-hand room. Graffito. 97 × 32; letter height 5-18. First-hand examination 1966.

Colonio
lingit, set quit
lingit? nesscio; cunnu[m sc. *lingit?]*.

'Colonio licks, but what does he lick? I don't know; perhaps he licks a cunt'. Alongside the overall form of the erotic text the principal interest of this graffito lies in the name *Colonio*, which in Della Corte – Ciprotti is read COLONIA, but a personal name **Colonia* was not in use. *Colonio* is a new suffix derivative from the well-known *cognomen Colonus* (Kajanto 1965, 321), and a plausible name alongside other suffix derivatives such as *Colonianus, Colonicus, Colonilla* (Kajanto, *ibid*.) and Κολωνίς *IGLS* 1331 (Apamea). – 2-3 *set, quit = sed, quid*: in such proclitic words the final voiced dental stops are often rendered with *t*, like *ad, sed, quid*; this is discussed by Roman grammarians and the phenomenon can be observed in Pompeian inscriptions (Väänänen 1966, 70). – 3 *nesscio*: the doubling of the *s* after a short vowel is found on other occasions in vulgar texts (see for example Väänänen 1966, 60).

24. The Caseggiato degli Aurighi has an under-stair space full of interesting graffiti often with an obscene content, some of which are published in an acritical and corrupt fashion in Della Corte – Ciprotti.[33] Many noteworthy graffiti remain unpublished. They will not be discussed here; instead I will provide only the improved form of some of the published graffiti. I collated these in 1966 and 1972.

a) Della Corte – Ciprotti no. 22 QV SECVNDA FORMOSA / BINII QVII BIN*T*VA / FACIIS AGITANTI PRASINI / CRIS*P*I.[34] Must be read *Secunda formosa / qui libenter prasino(?) / agitante crisas*. The only problematic point in the reading is the end of line 2. Della Corte – Ciprotti give PRASINI, but the last letter remains very uncertain, since the plaster is extremely worn; what we see now does appear to be an I, but the syntax requires *prasino*. – QV given by the first editors in front of the rest of the text exists, but is in another hand and is a separate graffito; BINII FACIIS (*bene facis* or *facies*) is an independent graffito. – The principal interest of the graffito lies in the final verb. *Criso*, 'to waggle one's hips', used of women, belongs

31 For the verb *irrumare*, see also Adams 1982, 125-30; Kamen – Levin-Richardson 2015, 450-51.

32 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/caseggiato-degli-aurighi/caseggiato-degli-aurighi.htm, G0313, for drawing, photographs, and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

33 Della Corte – Ciprotti 1961, nos 20-24, 26-29, 34, 36, 40-61. Some revisions in Solin 1972, 195-96 = Solin 1998, 36-37.

34 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17.htm, G0270, for photographs and previous interpretations (2020, July 8).

to the obscene vocabulary,[35] already attested at Ostia, at Portus, in a distich of the pseudo-sepulchral genre (*IPO* A 348), known with variants in other epigraphic poems (*CLE* 1810 [Roma], *Suppl. It*. 25 Brixia 66). Also worth noting is a sort of etymological figure in *prasino agitante*, since *prasinus* is the charioteer, *agitator*, of the Greens. Finally, note the gender synesis in *qui* for *quae*, common in Late Antiquity starting from the 4th century but rarely attested in the Principate (though it is present at Pompeii: *CIL* IV 1806; *AE* 1992, 280).

b) Della Corte – Ciprotti no. 49 CRVSEROS AMAS ADAMA / APELLA CRVSIDE. IVSTVS IANVAR...VS / PLVRIMA,[36] which should be *C(h)ryseros amas adama(s)* | *Apella C(h)ryside(m). Iustus Ianuar[i]us* | *plurima(m) (salutem?)*. In fact we are dealing with three different graffiti, two of which may have been written by a single hand but which in any case contain two different greetings: *Cryseros,*[37] *amas Adama[---]* and *Crusides, Iustus Ianuar[i]ae suae / plurima salutem*. The APELLA of the previous editors is clearly by another hand, but the reading remains uncertain and is definitely not *Apella*. Standing out in the first graffito is the last word, interpreted by the first editors as the verb form *adamas*. This cannot be ruled out, in which case it would intensify the message of the preceding *amas*: 'Chryseros loves, loves passionately'. Equally acceptable would be the accusative of the name of the person loved by Chryseros. Of names beginning in *Adama- Adamas* and *Adamastus* are attested, both known in the Greek world, at Rome and in the provinces; *Adamatus* also recently appeared at Corduba (*CIL* II² 7, 631).[38] Only male names are attested, but a woman's name *Adamata* is not impossible; it is therefore not certain that we are dealing with a homosexual situation. In the second graffito it is worth noting the name *Chrysides*, new for ancient naming conventions but easy to postulate alongside the popular women's name *Chrysis*. Chrysides and Iustus must be two rival lovers of Ianuaria (*Iustus* need not to be the second *cognomen* of Chrysides).

c) Della Corte – Ciprotti no. 52 *AVE* AV*L*O SQUILLA GALLICANO / XXI ANNO VII*NI*RII,[39] with an imprudent note. In fact, we read *AV(?) Cavio Squilla Gallicano, / Sex. Carminio Vetere* on the wall, and thus the names of the ordinary consuls of 150 CE. – It is uncertain what AV(?) at the start of the graffito means; the writer might have had in mind the *praenomen* of the first consul, *Marcus*, but became confused when writing the M.

d) Della Corte – Ciprotti no. 58 MVLVS AMET PATICAM should be read *cum laxsam et paticam*. If I have read the beginning correctly (C and M are somewhat uncertain), we have *cum* governing the accusative, a phenomenon well known in popular and late texts (present already at Pompeii: Väänänen 1966, 121). The attributes *laxus* and *pathicus* are often found on the walls of Pompeii in obscene contexts (*CIL* IV 9120; 10004 *laxa*; 2360 and 4008 [reproducing the same verse] *pat(h)icus*).

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35 Cf. Adams 1982, 136-37.

36 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17.htm, G0293, for the previous interpretation (2020, July 8).

37 The lower part of the third letter is damaged, making it hard to decide if it is a Y or a V. I believe I have identified a small remnant of the vertical line of the Y.

38 *Adamatus* is also known as a name for racehorses: *DefTab* 275, 276, 278, 282-84 from Hadrumetum.

39 Cf. https://www.ostia-antica.org/graffiti/regio3/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17/caseggiato-degli-aurighi-17.htm, G0296, for the previous interpretation (2020, July 8).

IV

Religion and cults

RELIGIONS AND CULTS

The Cultic Landscape in Ostia

Katariina Mustakallio

In many ways, Ostia is a unique place in which to study religious cults in the Roman world. The inhabitants of Ostia were traders and travellers from across the Mediterranean, and even the important families known to us from the Republican period often had their origins outside the town.[1] The vicinity of Rome along the river Tiber and the strong impact of Roman imperial power dominated the city, which was first a military base and then a centre for the import of grain.

The cultic landscape of the city was hierarchical. From a topographical point of view, central state cults were located in the Forum area whilst other cult places were scattered throughout the city. Along the south *Decumanus*, near Ostia's city centre, was a Temple of Rome and Augustus founded at the time of Tiberius, while major sanctuaries not dedicated to state cults, such as the sacred precinct of *Magna Mater*, the Jewish Synagogue and the temple complex of *Bona Dea* were all located on the outskirts of the city, near the city gates. Furthermore, various street corners and guilds had their own shrines.

The study of religious life in Ostia is problematic: many important cults are known to us from the literary, epigraphic, and material evidence, and various cult places and temples have been identified inside and outside the city gates, but the connection between specific central cults and archaeological sites remains highly speculative. The identification of one of the city's most central monuments, the temple of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni dating to the reign of Domitian, is a typical Ostian "case study". It has been identified as a temple of *Pater Tiberinus*, given its vicinity to the port.[2] At the same time, it has also been interpreted as home to a cult shared by the *collegia* represented in the *stationes* around the piazza;[3] according to yet other scholars, it was devoted to the imperial cult.[4] Even when we know from the literary and epigraphic sources that certain cults were of great importance to the city, their topographical location often remains unclear and hotly debated.

This paper focuses on the traditional Republican cults, and in particular on the role played by the public cults of Vulcan, Hercules, Castor and Pollux, and the four goddesses, Venus, Ceres, Spes, and Fortuna, in the Ostian context.

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1 The gens *Cartilii* was originally Etruscan and the *Lucilii Gamalae* originally came from the eastern part of the Empire, see Pensabene – Lazzarini 2007, 10, n. 28.

2 See Pavolini 2016, 210, citing Rieger 2004. For the earlier history of Ostia, see Adembri 1996, 39-68 and Zevi 1996, 69-90.

3 See Pavolini 2016, 210, citing Steuernagel 2004.

4 Van Haeperen 2005, 233-42 and van der Meer 2005, 91-111; Pavolini 2016, 210.

Vulcan and Bona Dea

It is widely agreed that the most important cult in Ostia was that of Vulcan, an early Roman god of fire and volcanos. Inscriptions indicate that he was the city's patron god. In Rome, Vulcan had his own priesthood, the *flamen Volcanalis*, from an early period.[5] At Ostia, the cult and its high priest, the *pontifex Volkani et aedium sacrarum,* were much appreciated. The high priest was selected among men who had already held public office in Ostia or in the imperial administration. The *pontifex Vulcani* was responsible for the town's sacred buildings and in charge of deciding on the erection of new statues to eastern divinities. He played a peculiarly dominant role in Ostia's cultic life. The *Fasti Ostienses*, a calendar recording the Roman magistrates and significant events, were under his care. He was appointed for life, and his position was equivalent to that of Rome's high priest, the *pontifex maximus.* This was the most important religious position in the town of Ostia.[6]

Given the close relationship between the two cities, Rome and Ostia, along the Tiber, it is essential to compare the contexts of the cults in each. In Rome, the most ancient sanctuary of Vulcan, the *Volcanal*, was located in the *area Volcani*, an open-air space at the foot of the Capitolium in the northwestern corner of the Roman Forum. Here, there was a sacred area dedicated to Vulcan by the legendary founder of Rome, Romulus. The same area also hosted the symbolic centre of the city, the *Umbilicus Urbis*, or *Mundus*, dating to the Archaic period.[7]



Figure 1. Relief depicting the myth of Minerva and Vulcan, showing Vulcan being thrown down from Mount Olympus as a child, detail. Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, inv. SK 912 (deposited in Museo Ostiense). Photo: Arja Karivieri.

5 Vanggaard 1988, 110.

6 For the *Fasti Ostienses* (49 BCE to 175 CE): Pavolini 1996, 140-42; Bruun 2009, 134-36.

7 Coarelli, 1997, 72: *Volcanal*; another temple to Vulcan: 264.



Figure 2. The statue of Vulcan was found in the basement of the Terme del Mitra during the 1938 excavations. The sculpture is a Roman replica of the famous cult image in the Temple of Hephaestus in Athens, which had been made by Alcamenes around 421-415 BCE. Museo Ostiense, inv. 152. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

As Lena Larsson Lovén shows in her article in this volume, the god Vulcan had a special character, and was usually depicted wearing a Phrygian cap and belted tunic that left one shoulder bare (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 144**). This type of attire implied the hard and dirty work of a smith, as Vulcan was the protector of metalworking. On occasion he was even given the epithet *Mulciber*, smelter of metals.[8]

Rome played a key role in the administration of the Ostian community.[9] Based on our current knowledge, the early citizens of Ostia originated from Rome, where they were inscribed in the *Voturia* voting tribe. In Ostia, the cult of Vulcan was initially a family cult of the *Voturii* and became public only by a decision of the Senate. According to Fausto Zevi (and contrary to the common assumption), the public cult of Vulcan as we know it in Ostia was of relatively 'recent' origin (first half of the second century BCE), though its roots and background as a private cult of the *Voturii* lie in a far earlier period.[10]

The location of Vulcan's cult place in Ostia has long been debated and no definitive identification has been made. In his most recent articles, Fausto Zevi attributes the temple of the round altar, the Tempio dell'Ara Rotonda (**Fig. 3**) near the Republican cult area, to Vulcan, and not to Apollo, as previously suggested.[11] By contrast, Rieger identifies the place where a part of the *Fasti Ostienses* was found in the *Forum* as a space connected to Vulcan.[12] The most recent study on Ostian cults by Françoise Van Haeperen places it at the small Republican temple on the east side of the *Castrum*.[13]

According to myth, Vulcan was the husband of *Maia*, sometimes identified with *Bona Dea*, the Good Goddess. The latter was a Roman earth and fertility goddess who, according to the literary sources, was worshipped exclusively by elite women. She was popular throughout Italy and one of her festivals was held in the home of the chief magistrate with only women present. Nonetheless, numerous votives and inscriptions were dedicated to *Bona Dea* by both men and women of different social classes.[14]

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8 See Larsson-Lovén in this volume.

9 Meiggs 1973, 16-24.

10 According to Zevi 2012, the form of the cult of Vulcan familiar to us from the literary sources in fact dates to the first half of the second century BCE. The cult of Vulcan in Ostia is reminiscent of that of Hercules in Rome, where the *Potitii* and *Pinarii* originally took care of his shrine. Macr. *Sat*. 1, 12, 28.

11 Zevi 2012, 537-63 and Zevi 2018, 239-46. Carini identifies it as a temple to Apollo, Carini 2012, 565-71. For the discussion in general, see Pavolini 2016, 212.

12 Rieger 2004, 220-25; Pavolini 2006, 172-74.

13 Van Haeperen 2019, 228-30, 251-52.

14 Brouwer 1989, 268-79.



Figure 3. Tempio dell'Ara Rotonda. The original round altar of the Republican period in volcanic stone visible under the Augustan rebuilding of the temple porch. The three marble blocks surrounding the altar document the dedications, written in Greek, of three bronze statues that were brought to Ostia from Delphi. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

In Rome, her temple was on the Aventine Hill. In Ostia, two sanctuaries of the *Bona Dea* have been identified: one outside the Foro di Porta Marina in the vicinity of the *Domus Fulminata*, and another on the opposite side of the city, on Via degli Augustali near the Mithraeum of *Felicissimus.*[15] *The so-called Domus Fulminata* was, according to Bouke van der Meer, a sort of *domus publica* at the disposal of the *pontifex Vulcani* during the Flavian period, when members of the famous Ostian *Gamala* family were priests of Vulcan.[16]

Interestingly, we know that one member of the *Gamala* family, Octavia, made donations to the cult place of *Bona Dea* in Ostia even earlier than this; an inscription informs us that: "Octavia, daughter of Marcus and wife of Gamala, had the portico plastered, benches made, and the kitchen roofed, in honour of *Bona Dea*."[17] This inscription reveals an important aspect of the cult of *Bona Dea*: there was a kitchen in her sacred place, so worshippers prepared meals and presumably dined together.

The *Gamala* family may have had connections with both cults: male members with Vulcan and female members with *Bona Dea*. The topographical vicinity between Vulcan and *Bona Dea/Maia* may also indicate the closeness of these two divine forces (husband and wife).[18]

15 Van Haeperen 2019, 204-10.

16 Van der Meer 2005, 101-05.

17 Brouwer 1989, 69. See also Hänninen 2019, 67.

18 Van der Meer 2005, 103-05; Brouwer 1989, 244 and 352.

The cult of Castor and Pollux

One of Ostia's early cults was that of Castor and Pollux, originally the Greek twins Castor and Polydeuces, sons of Zeus and Leda. From the time of the cult's introduction to Rome in the early fifth century BCE, they were associated with the *equites*, or cavalry.[19] In Ostia, the cult was connected to the sea and sailing, and to the god Neptune. According to Zevi, the cult was brought to Ostia as early as the third century BCE. As patrons and protectors of sailors and merchants, the Divine Twins were associated with the central power of Rome, which dominated the grain markets.[20] Every year, on the 27th of January, the *praetor urbanus*, a high-ranking magistrate of Rome, travelled to Ostia to sacrifice to the *Dioscuri* in their temple and hold games in their honour (*Ludi Castrorum Ostiae*). This is indicative of the strong bond created between Rome and Ostia through this cult. The tradition was long-lived, and we find a mention of the celebration being held as late as 449 CE at Ostia.[21]

Scholars have recently devoted much attention to the cult of the Dioscuri in the attempt to identify their cult place in Ostia. Steuernagel and Rieger identify the so-called Tempietto Repubblicano in the corner of the *Decumanus* and Via dei Molini as that dedicated to Castor and Pollux and to Neptune, based on the inscription found there. Other scholars like Pensabene and Van Haeperen are less convinced by this argument, given the uncertain provenance of the inscription found nearby.[22]

During a geophysical survey and test excavations, American and German scholars found a large complex identified by the excavators as a temple of the *Dioscuri* on the banks of the Tiber between the Palazzo Imperiale and Tor Boacciana, probably established in the Julio-Claudian period with a set of substructures identified by the archaeologists as *navalia*.[23] The interpretation of this monument as a temple of Castor and Pollux – and the whole debate over the cult places of the twin gods in Ostia – is linked to the interpretation of a well-known passage of Ammianus Marcellinus which speaks of a sacrifice *apud Ostia* made in 359 CE by the *praefectus urbi* Tertullus, who thus ended a famine afflicting the Roman people.[24]

The cult of Castor and Pollux was extremely popular in Ostia. The connection between the divine twins and Neptune underlines their 'Ostian' role as protectors of navigation and trade, especially that in grain, which was usually under the strict control of the central Roman power.

Hercules, protector of people and trade, and other divinities

Hercules was the Roman equivalent of the Greek hero Heracles, worshipped as a god of commercial enterprise and victory. In Rome we find numerous temples to Hercules, one of the most popular of which was the altar of *Hercules Invictus* (unconquered Hercules) and his *ara maxima*, where oaths were often sworn and business deals agreed. The god's relationship with Ostia is among the principal issues in Ostian religion debated in recent years.[25]

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19 Coarelli 1997, 89-90.

20 Zevi 1996, 77-78.

21 Pensabene – Lazzarini 2007, 5, note 3, citing *Gregorovius*.

22 Rieger 2004, 259; Steuernagel 2004, 65 and 167-68; Pensabene 2005, 504; van Haeperen 2005, 240; for the discussion in general, see Pavolini, 2016, 199-236, esp. 215. The younger *Gamala* who lived in the second century CE also held several offices and offered various benefactions to his fellow citizens, including the restoration of several buildings, such as the temples of Castor and Pollux and Venus, etc.

23 Van Haeperen 2019, 242-45.

24 For this complex issue, see Pavolini 2016, 215 and his notes 142-50.

25 Pavolini 2016, 214.

The cult of Hercules was in many ways central to Ostia's social life. Inside the temple, a heroic statue of one of Ostia's most famous men, *C. Cartilius Poplicola*, was found. Cartilius was a *duovir*, a high magistrate of Ostia. The head of the naked statue in the Hellenistic style has unfortunately been lost. We know that Cartilius was a supporter of the victorious Octavian during the Civil War, and the inscription on his tomb outside Porta Marina relates that Cartilius averted an attack by sea pirates through diplomacy.[26] The temple of Hercules was restored as late as the period of Maximian by Hostilius Antipater, a magistrate in charge of the grain supply to Rome (*praefectus annonae*).

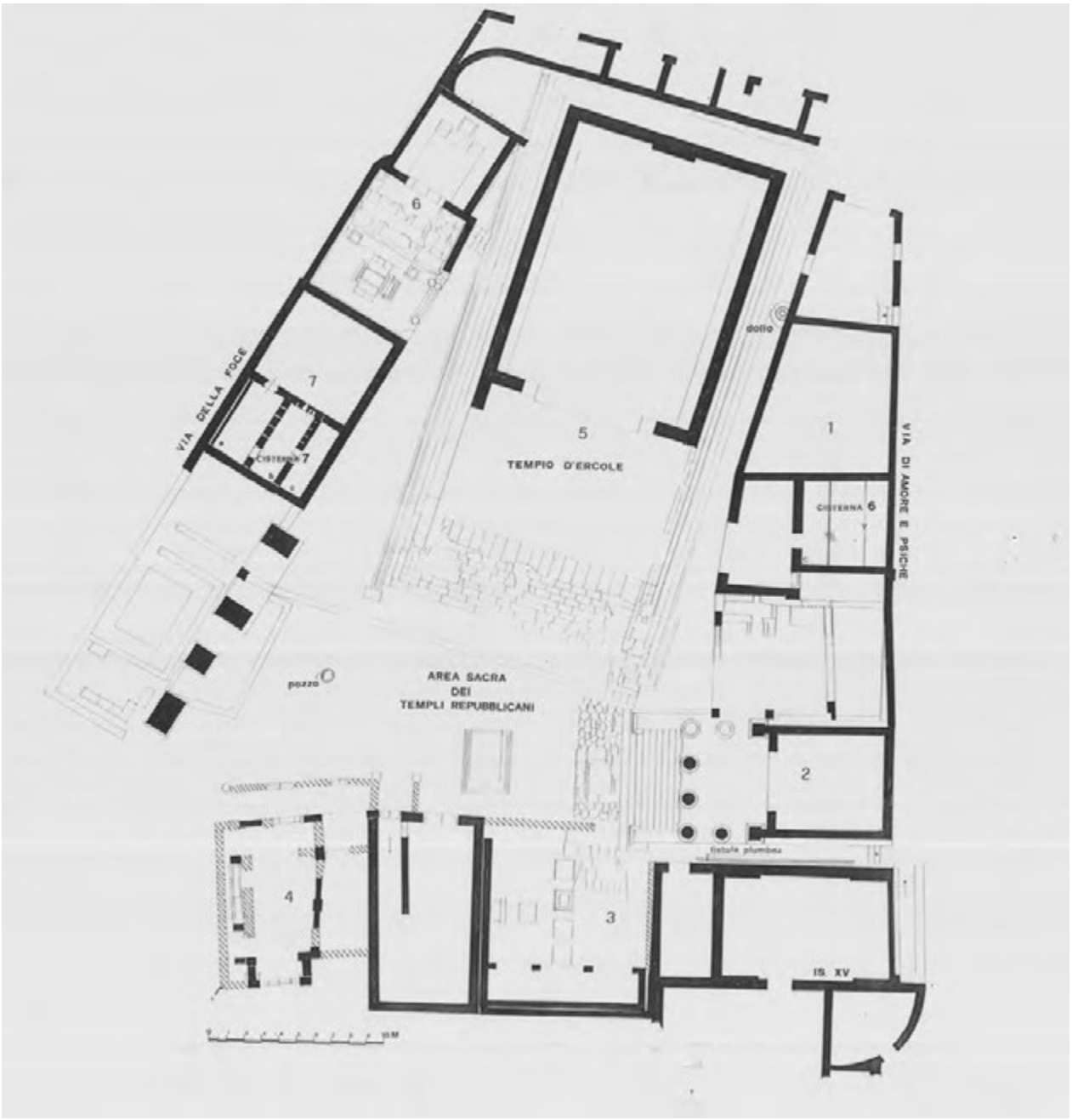


Figure 4. The area of the Republican temples north of Via della Foce. In the centre, the Temple of Hercules (no. 5), to the south the Tempio dell'Ara Rotonda (no. 6), and to the northeast the Tempio Repubblicano, possibly dedicated to Asclepius (no. 2). In the eastern part of the area is a row of four Republican altars (no. 3). Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

26 Pavolini 2006, 178-79; van der Meer 2012, 82.



Figure 5. The Temple of Hercules, Tempio di Ercole. To the left, a copy of the relief found near the temple (see figure 6) attached on the wall, above the temple stairs, a copy of the statue of C. Cartilius Poplicola found inside the temple; in the centre the altar dedicated to *Deus Invictus Hercules* by Hostilius Antipater. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The temple of *Hercules Invictus* in the western area of the city of Ostia (Via della Foce), also hosted an *oraculum* or *sortilegium* which offered consultations to generals before going to war and later to merchants before leaving the port of Ostia.[27] The relief found in the temple, dated 90-65 BCE, depicts a peculiar scene in which a statue of Hercules is found in a net drawn from the sea by fishermen. There is also a scene in which Hercules gives *sortes*, or oracular tablets, to a boy, a reference to the oracular aspects of the cult. The inscription names a donor, *C. Fulvius Salvis*, who was a *haruspex*, a priest in charge of divination.[28]

The cult of Hercules was very popular in the Roman world (**Fig. 7**). In most religious ceremonies only those actually performing the cultic rituals took part in the communal meal that followed a sacrifice, but all male citizens were invited at the *Ara Maxima* in Rome, dedicated to Hercules. None of the sacrificial meat could be removed from the precinct after the ritual, so all the food had to be eaten on the same day.[29] Women were excluded from this rite, but not necessarily from the worship of Hercules more generally, as Celia Schultz has noted.[30]

One of the interesting questions here is the date of the cult. Zevi ascribes the establishment of an oracular cult of Hercules to an early period (third century BCE, perhaps in connection with the Punic Wars) based on the archaeological evidence. He argues that there was originally a (lost) temple far older than that now visible.[31]

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27 Zevi 2012, 547-63 argues that the oracular cult of Hercules was of the third century BC.

28 Pavolini 2006, 119.

29 Scheid 2007, 268.

30 For the modern prejudice that the cult was forbidden to women, see Schultz 2000, 291-97, esp. 296.

31 Zevi 2012, 547-63.

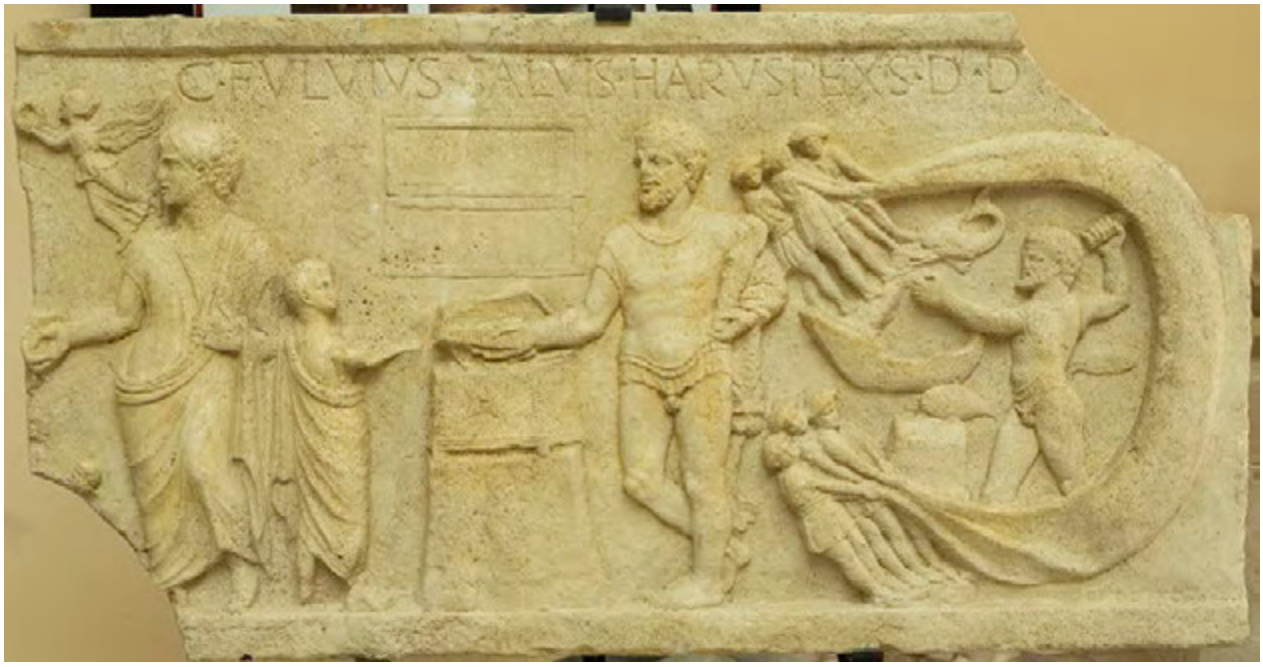


Figure 6. The relief of the first century BCE found in the temple, with a scene in which a statue of Hercules found in the sea is drawn up in a net by fishermen. Museo Ostiense, inv. 157. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

In Rome, Hercules was also honoured together with a group of other gods: the aforementioned *Bona Dea*, the Good Goddess, as well as the wild Silvanus, a god of uncultivated and cultivated land and hunting, who also was very popular in Ostia.[32] They were worshipped jointly with Hercules with a shrine and an altar in Rome.[33]

Vulcan and Hercules also had something in common in the mythical sphere. The story of Hercules and the monster Cacus, a son of Vulcan, is related by Augustan writers: the monster terrorized the top of the Aventine hill. When Hercules was passing through Rome, Cacus stole some of his cattle and, after a struggle, Hercules killed him and liberated the inhabitants from this terrible creature.[34] One of the peculiarities of Ostia is that its inhabitants worshipped both gods, Vulcan and Hercules, as their main protectors. In Ostia,



Figure 7 (Cat. no. 147). A bronze statuette representing Hercules. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3538. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

32 Brouwer 1989, 72-74, especially note 140.

33 "The "Good Goddess" is identifiable with several goddesses, and in this instance her enmity towards Hercules recalls that of Juno. She also shared some characteristics with Ceres, with whom Hercules was honoured jointly on December 21 with the sacrifice of a pregnant sow, loaves of bread, and *mulsum*, sweet wine, see Brouwer 1989, 244, 352.

34 See e.g. Verg. *Aen*. 8, 192-261.

Hercules was primarily an oracular and warrior deity, hero of the people but also associated with the central power of Rome.[35]

The zone surrounding the cult area connected to Hercules in Ostia hosts several Republican temples of the second and first centuries BCE. Statues of Asclepius/Aesculapius and his daughter Hygieia were found in the northern area of the temple, making it very likely that it was dedicated to these healing divinities. The cult place in Ostia was connected to the river Tiber, reminiscent of the cult place of Aesculapius in Rome (*Isola Tiberina*).[36]

Four good luck divinities

Near the Tiber river port, in a public area, are the surviving remains of four little temples, the Quattro Tempietti dating to the years 90-60 BCE. (see Figs. 4-5 on p. 106) These four temples, built on a shared podium, have been identified thanks to an inscription found at the port as belonging to Venus, Fortuna, Ceres, and Spes. Venus was a goddess of love, Fortuna a goddess of fate and good luck, Ceres of the regenerative power of nature and cereal crops, and Spes a goddess of hope. Their cult place was closely connected to the harbour and its merchants. The fact that these temples were topographically located in the central area of the city underlines their importance. Their identification, alongside their function in Ostia's social and religious life, has led to much discussion.[37]

Anna-Katharina Rieger has noted the interesting intermediary function of these cults: they formed an intersection between the local people and newcomers, and in her interpretation, created a sort of secure space that encouraged exchange between people arriving from the river port and the inhabitants of the colony. The construction dates of the temples are also hotly debated. Dirk Steuernagel connects them with the euergetism of *Publius Lucius Gamala*, the town's most prominent inhabitant in the first century BCE. Fausto Zevi dates the Quattro Tempietti to roughly the same time as the city-walls of Ostia, in the mid-first century BCE. In his view, Gamala the Elder not only intended to benefit the community but actually turned the place into a sort of family *monumentum* though it was on public land, with his own house on the corner.[38] These four gods, Venus, Fortuna, Ceres and Spes, were associated with hope, good luck and prosperity and connected to navigation and commerce.[39]

Conclusion

Ostia's religious topography during the Republican and early imperial period does not form a hierarchical cityscape but presents a multitude of cult sites that differ considerably in their function and appearance.[40] The issue of public or private space is also extremely complex. As Marlis Arnhold puts it: "Analysing the functions of cult sites within broader spatial context demands an alternative definition of public,

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35 "the good Hercules thus parallels the good Aeneas and of course the good Augustus"
Especially in the epic context "the Good Hercules …parallels to…Good Augustus": Morgan 1998, 176-77.

36 Pensabene – Lazzarini 2007, 5.

37 Cuyler 2019, 127-146, esp. 140-141, has argued in her interesting article that there is no evident connection between the four temples and the inscriptions *CIL* XIV 375 and 376. In any case, most researchers connect them.

38 Pavolini 2016, 210 citing Rieger and Steuernagel. Zevi 1973, 555-81; Zevi 2004, 47-67.

39 For the four temples, see van Haeperen 2019, 68-79. Cf. Cuyler 2019, 127-46, according to her the four temples were attributed to Venus, Fortuna, Ceres, and Spes.

40 Arnhold 2016, 298.

which draws attention not on the legal status and its implications but on the activities taking place in the sanctuaries."[41]

Cult sites in antiquity were not museums or cathedrals, but colourful centres of everyday life within cities. Topographical maps shed little light on the life unfolding there. Outside the shrines and in the streets were shops and workshops, and the precincts of sacred places were a hive of lively secular activity. If we wish to imagine the city of Ostia we should picture people – men, women and children – of different origins and social classes, sacrificing in front of the temples and shrines, walking in ritual processions to honour their deities or praying before a shrine or a cult statue, and thus attempt to see, hear and smell the real life of its inhabitants.

41 Arnhold 2016, 293-303.

Religious Life in Ostia in the Imperial Period

Marja-Leena Hänninen

In the early Imperial period, the religious landscape of Ostia became more multifaceted than ever before.[1] Ancient local cults of the Republican period, like those of Vulcan, Hercules and Bona Dea, were still important. Even insula blocks and commercial edifices built in the second century CE had traditional domestic shrines for the private worship of deities. However, many new elements emerged in the religious practices of Ostia. The religious worship of emperors, both dead and living, as well as their families, was practiced not only in specific imperial cults but infiltrated all of the city's religious and public activities. The existence of immigrant communities in Ostia seems to be reflected in the greater diversity of deities worshipped in the Imperial period. For example, the presence of Alexandrian merchants is especially conspicuous in the harbour area, and Ostia also had a Jewish community.[2]

Many cults originating from the southern and eastern parts of the Roman empire also gained popularity in Ostia. They are often grouped together under the somewhat misleading title of oriental cults or oriental mystery cults. Associations whose members did not belong to Ostia's traditional local elite developed within these cults, which include those of Magna Mater, Attis and Bellona, Egyptian deities and Mithras.[3] The term mystery cult refers to secret rituals in which only specifically initiated persons could participate. The initiation rites were probably based on Greek rituals, such as the mysteries of Eleusis. The earliest evidence for the ritual systems that the Greeks called *mysteria* appears in a fragment of Heraclitus dating to the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century BCE.[4] Not everything was secret in these cults, and they actually included wholly public festivals. The deities may have had their roots as far afield as the Middle East or Persia, but the cults practiced in Rome and Ostia did not necessarily have much in common with Egyptian or Persian traditions and instead present a mingling of various traditions.[5]

The official emperor cult involved worshipping deceased and deified emperors and their family members, as well as the domestic deities (*Lares Augusti*) and the *genius* of the reigning emperor. The official emperor cult was launched by Augustus, who allowed the Roman senate to deify his adoptive father Caesar, known as the Divus Julius, in 42 BCE.[6] The oldest inscription referring to the imperial cult in Ostia, mentioning a priest of the *Augustales* and Tiberius' son Drusus, dates to shortly before 11 CE.[7] In Italy, a living emperor was not worshipped as a god, but his domestic deities and *genius* were the objects of public ven-

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1 For the latest synthesis of the religious landscape in Ostia, see Van Haeperen 2020.

2 Judaism and Christianity are discussed elsewhere in this volume.

3 The cult of Mithras in Ostia will be discussed separately in another article in this volume. See also Van Haeperen 2020, 64-68, 123-32, 143-49, 153-56, 161-63.

4 For the concept of *mysteria*, see Sfameni Gasparro 2011, 281-89.

5 For the problems of the concept of "oriental mystery cults", see Beard – North – Price 1998, 246-47.

6 For the development of the imperial cult, see Beard – North – Price 1998, 206-09. Van Haeperen 2020, 68-72.

7 Meiggs 1973, 353; *CIL* XIV 5322.

eration. Sacrifices were performed at shrines located at crossroads in the neighbourhoods of Rome;[8] one shrine of this kind still stands *in situ* in Ostia.[9] (**Fig. 1**) The *Seviri Augustales*, priests recruited mainly among the freedmen, were responsible for the cult of the domestic deities and genius of the emperor in Ostia. For them, belonging to the association of the *Seviri Augustales* represented a public recognition of their social advancement. *Seviri augustales* priests of Ostia are known from numerous inscriptions.[10] Membership lists of the *seviri* survive and, based on the amount of donations documented in inscriptions, their association was fairly wealthy.[11] *Magistri vici*, in charge of rituals at neighbourhood altars, were usually also recruited among the freedmen.[12]



Figure 1. Piazzetta dei Lari, a round marble altar for the *Lares*. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

The temple of Roma and Augustus was built on the southern side of the Forum of Ostia soon after the death of Augustus. Thus, a new public cult was introduced to the city, supervised by a priest with the title of *flamen Romae et Augusti*. This priesthood did not enjoy quite the same prestige as the *pontifex Vulcani*, the highest-ranking priesthood in Ostia, but it was nonetheless the prerogative of high-ranking local men nearing the end of their public career. Presumably, the priesthood of Roma and Augustus was held for life.[13] Over time, the cult of each deified emperor was incorporated into the cult of Roma and Augustus. The *flamines* of the deified Vespasian, Titus, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Pertinax and Septimius Severus are known from Ostian inscriptions. Vespasianus is the first deified emperor whose priest is known in Ostia. It may be simply coincidental that no inscription mentioning a priest of the deified Trajan survives, as the absence of the cult of an emperor who had such a fundamental impact on Ostia's development makes little sense.[14] A statue of the goddess Roma, her left foot resting on a globe, stood in the temple of Roma and Augustus. Thus, the worship of the imperial family was linked with the manifestation of the greatness and power of the Roman empire.[15]

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8 Beard – North – Price 1998, 184-86; Van Haeperen 2020, 73-76.

9 Meiggs 1973, 222; Pavolini 2006 (1983), 86-87; Van Haeperen 2020, 74-75, fig. 18.

10 For the Augustales in Ostia, see Meiggs 1973, 217-22; Bruun 2014.

11 Meiggs 1973, 219-20.

12 Meiggs 1973, 222; Van Haeperen 2020, 73, 82-83.

13 Meiggs 1973, 353-54.

14 Meiggs 1973, 178, 378.

15 Meiggs 1973, 354.

There are numerous traces of private worship in Ostia, especially niches for domestic shrines in the walls of buildings. Painted domestic shrines or statuettes intended for shrines have not been found in Ostia. It is also possible that some families used portable altars in their domestic worship.[16] In principle, the spirits of the family's deceased ancestors were venerated in every home alongside the guardian deities of home and family, in other words the *lares* and *penates* and the *genius* of the *paterfamilias*. Domestic shrines have also been identified in Ostia's commercial buildings, sometimes consisting of no more than a simple niche in the wall. For example, in the bakery next to the House of Diana, there was a small sanctuary dedicated to Silvanus. Several other deities, such as Isis, Harpocrates and the Dioscuri are depicted in the wall paintings of this tiny sanctuary.[17] Some insula blocks in Ostia had their own small sanctuaries. A cult room dedicated to Egyptian deities was situated in the inner courtyard of the Caseggiato del Serapide; a stucco relief of Serapis seated on a throne is the central figure in its decoration. Immediately adjacent to this insula, next to the Caseggiato degli Aurighi, is a shrine with three halls. (**Fig. 2**) The ground plan of this sanctuary resembles that of a *mithraeum*, but no decorations, artefacts or inscriptions explicitly referring to a specific cult have been found here. There is also a kitchen next to the shrine, used for one of the essential social events of small private cult associations: shared meals.[18]

Religious activities were also an important part of social life in the numerous *collegia* of merchants and artisans in Ostia. Many professional associations in Ostia had a sanctuary next to their club houses. One of the most significant of these shrines is the temple built on a podium by the guild of the *Fabri Navales*,



Figure 2. The Shrine of the Three Naves, Sacello delle Tre Navate, III, II, 12. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

16 Bakker 1994, 8-15. For private cult, see also Van Haeperen 2020, 163-64.

17 Bakker 1994, 65-66; Van Haeperen 2020, 149-53.

18 Pavolini 2006, 139, 143-44; Meiggs 1973, 377; Van Haeperen 2019, 118-20. For the religious functions of associations and their connections to various social functions, see Harland 2003, 55-63, and Van Haeperen 2020, 103-63.

the shipbuilders.[19] Sacrifices for the health and well-being of the emperor were part of the religious activities of the *collegia*, and their banquets also had a ritual dimension. The barracks of the fire brigade had a shrine (*Augusteum, Caesareum*) dedicated to the imperial cult. Dedicatory inscriptions to the emperors of the Antonine and Severan dynasties, including Septimius Severus' wife Julia Domna, were found *in situ*. One peculiarity of the barracks is a small altar dedicated to Fortuna in the firemen's latrine.[20]



Figure 3. A terracotta antefix depicting the goddess Cybele, the Magna Mater. The goddess is sitting on her throne in the ship that is just arriving in Ostia. The sails have already been reefed. There are two lions, the symbols of Cybele, next to the goddess, who is holding a sceptre in her hand. The antefix was found in 1912 during the exacavtions of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3423. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The cults of Magna Mater and Attis, the Egyptian deities and Mithras increased in popularity during the Flavian period, with an apparent peak during the second century CE when Ostia became the most important port city in Italy.[21] The cult of Magna Mater (Cybele) is exceptional among the aforementioned cults, as it was officially introduced to Rome by the Roman authorities already in the Republican period, during the Second Punic War. Indeed, the sacred black stone of the goddess was brought to Rome via Ostia, and the historian Livy provides a detailed description of the solemn ceremony to receive the goddess at Ostia.[22] The goddess, between two lions, is also depicted arriving on a ship on an antefix found at Ostia (**Fig. 3; Cat. no. 1**). However, though the city plays an essential role in the early history and introduction of the cult of Magna Mater to Rome, no evidence for her worship in Ostia before the Imperial period has yet been found.[23] Surviving archaeological finds and inscriptions date mainly to the second and first half of the third century CE; however, it would be surprising if Magna Mater had not been venerated in Ostia before this period.

The most important cult site of Magna Mater in Ostia, the *Campus Magnae Matris*, where Attis and Bellona also were worshipped, was located on the southern edge of the city. The sacred area bordered the Sullan city wall on one side and the *Cardo*, one of the city's main streets, on another. One of the city gates, the Porta Laurentina, stood at the end of the *Cardo*, next to the sacred area.[24] The location is marginal in relation to the

19 Pavolini 2006, 149-50; Van Haeperen 2019, 231-33.

20 Meiggs 1973, 305-06; Pavolini 2006, 62-63; Van Haeperen 2019, 112-16, 128-30.

21 Meiggs 1973, 354-55.

22 Liv. 29, 10.

23 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 2; Van Haeperen 2020, 64-67.

24 Meiggs 1973, 357-58; Van Haeperen 2019, 32-67.



Figure 4. Attis as a child, statuette. Attis is depicted as a child, wearing a red Phrygian cap, the eastern *mitra*. The open-fronted trousers he is wearing are also exotic; they are called the *anaksyrides* and were common among the Persians, Scythians and Amazons. As a child, Attis was a shepherd boy wandering the slopes of Mount Ida. References to this include the panpipes (*syrinx*) in his right hand and the curved shepherd's crook (*pedum*) in his left. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3265. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Forum of Ostia but, equally, life along the *Cardo* must have been busy. The location next to the gate is also remarkable and may reflect the role of the goddess, who is often depicted with a mural crown as the protectress of cities. People came and went through the gate, worked or did business in the workshops along the street, and the baths built next to the northwestern edge of the sacred area in the second century CE presumably also drew numerous people to the neighbourhood of the sanctuary. Nonetheless, the sanctuary retained its peaceful atmosphere inside the walls of the sacred area; there was only one entrance from the *Cardo*.

A large number of votive offerings and inscriptions connected to the worship of Magna Mater and Attis have been found inside the sacred area.[25] The little statuette of Attis on display in the exhibition was among them (**Fig. 4; Cat. no. 153**). Attis is depicted as a shepherd in Phrygian garments. The inscriptions reflect the social backgrounds and sometimes even the origins of the worshippers. For example, we know of Publius Claudius Abascantus, a worshipper of Magna Mater and Attis in Ostia and member of the association of the *dendrophori*, tree-bearers in the rituals, and, eventually, president of the association. Originally, however, he was a slave of the provincial council of Gaul, who sent him to Ostia on business in the late second century CE. He was later freed, stayed in the city for the rest of his life and, apparently, enjoyed a successful career.[26]

Several priesthoods connected to the cult of Magna Mater are known from the inscriptions of Ostia. The leading priests were presumably the *archigalli*, who stood out from traditional Roman priests for their peculiar outfit. An *archigallus* in his full ceremonial outfit is depicted in two reliefs and on the lid of a sarcophagus found in the necropolis of Isola Sacra in Ostia.[27] In addition to the *archigalli*, men and women with the title of *sacerdos* are known to have acted as priests and priestesses of Magna Mater in Ostia.[28] For example, Metilia Acte was a priestess of Magna Mater and wife of Gaius Iunius Euhodus, president of the guild of builders (*fabri tignariorum*).[29] The couple's lavishly decorated sarcophagus is now in the Vatican Museums. Various motifs alluding to the cult of Magna Mater can be seen on the sarcophagus, including a Phrygian cap, a shepherd's staff and a *tympanon* (drum). Along with priests and priestesses, players of the flute and *tympanon* or drum (*tympanistrae*) had official status in the cult. The names of these men and women are known from funerary inscriptions.[30]

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25 See Cooley 2015; Van Haeperen 2019, 34-55, 60-67.

26 Meiggs 1973, 215, 362; Cooley 2015, 257-58; *CIL* XIV 324-28.

27 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 13-15. For the portrait of the *archigallus* on the lid, see the article of Prusac Lindhagen in this volume.

28 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 15-16.

29 *CIL* XIV 371; Meiggs 1973, 362.

30 Meiggs 1973, 386; Helttula *et al.* 2007, 207, 211; *CIL* XIV 408.

At least three associations (*collegia*) were connected with the worship of Magna Mater, Attis and Bellona in Ostia; the *dendrophori* (tree-bearers), *cannephori* (reed-bearers), and *hastipheri* (spear-bearers).[31] The members of these associations included both men and women. Only men appear to have acted as presidents of the associations, but a distinguished female member could obtain the honorary title of *mater*, mother of the association.[32] Long-term commitment to the cult association seems to have been common. One Ostian epitaph was erected by Calpurnius Iovinus to his "beloved brother" Iulius Charelampes, who had been priest of Magna Mater in Ostia and led the ritual bearing of the pine tree for 19 years.[33] Numerous votive offerings and almost 50 inscriptions testify to the popularity of Magna Mater and Attis in Ostia.[34]

Egyptian deities, in particular Isis and Serapis, also gained huge popularity in Ostia. Like Magna Mater, Isis and Serapis had sanctuaries both inside the city and at the actual harbour area at Portus. No sanctuary of Isis has been identified with certainty, though we know that the goddess was worshipped here.[35] A Serapeum has been excavated, located in almost the opposite direction from the Forum with respect to the *Campus Magnae Matris*, closer to the river Tiber. There are residential buildings as well as warehouses and baths in the neighbourhood of the sanctuary.[36] According to the epigraphic evidence, the Serapeum was built using private funds, and the principal sponsor was a man with the *gentilicium* Caltilius. Since his full name is not preserved, his social standing remains uncertain, but he was very likely a freedman and in no way a member of the local elite. Caltilia Diodora, who donated a statuette of Venus made of silver and two golden garlands to Isis Bubastis in her will, may have been a member of the same family.[37]

A particularly large number of small busts of Serapis have been found in Ostia, often made of bronze.[38] Serapis was a deity who combined Egyptian Osiris, the divine bull Apis of Memphis, Greek Zeus, Asclepius the god of medicine, and the lord of the underworld, Hades. Serapis was depicted like Zeus with a beard, typically wearing a *modius* (cylindrical measure for grain) decorated with ears of grain on his head.[39] (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 154**) The popularity of Serapis in Ostia may well be related to the grain trade that brought wealth to the harbour city in the second century CE. Egyptian deities appear to have been favoured especially by men active in business and trade in Ostia, and their families. Inscriptions relating to the worship of Egyptian deities in the harbour district of Portus are mainly in Greek[40] – possibly due to the presence of Alexandrian entrepreneurs in Portus and Ostia. There are dedications made by citizens of Alexandria and references to the Alexandrian fleet among the dedications to Serapis in Portus.[41]

Isis is often characterized as a goddess of women, helping and protecting them in matters of family, childbirth and love. However, in Ostia Isis was worshipped by both women and men. Publius Cornelius Victorinus, who worked as a scribe serving the municipal administration in Ostia, donated an equestrian

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31 Meiggs 1973, 360; Van Haeperen 2020, 143-49.

32 Hemelrijk 2008.

33 *CIL* XIV 4627.

34 Van Haeperen 2019, 34-55, 60-67. For the rites and festivals, see the article in this volume.

35 Meiggs 1973, 367-68; Van Haeperen 2019, 210-13.

36 Mols 2007; Van Haeperen 2019, 218-27.

37 Meiggs 1973, 367; *CIL* XIV 21. Van Haeperen 2019, 218.

38 In the exhibition the bronze bust from Museo Ostiense, inv. 3549. For the artefacts, see Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 25-26.

39 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 31.

40 Meiggs 1973, 368.

41 See Bricault 2005, 593-99; Van Haeperen 2019, 297-304.



Figure 5. Serapis was a deity created in Hellenistic Egypt during the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty. He was an amalgamation of several earlier gods: the Egyptian Osiris and Apis as well as the Greek Zeus and Hades. Like Osiris, Serapis was the husband of the goddess Isis. Hades and Osiris provided him with his status as god of the afterlife. In this sculpture, that status is symbolised by Cerberus, the three-headed dog of the underworld, who is sitting at Serapis's feet. Serapis is associated especially with grain and grain trade. This is symbolised by his headdress, which takes the shape of an Egyptian grain measure, *modius*. The cult of Serapis spread from Egypt to Mediterranean grain ports in particular. In Ostia, the cult was very popular, and images of the deity are common in the city. This sculpture was modelled on the gigantic cult image in the Serapeum of Alexandria, Egypt. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 1125. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 6. This boat-shaped lamp with multiple nozzles from the 1st century CE, decorated with the images of Isis, Serapis and Harpocrates, is likely related to the launching of the ship of Isis (*navigium Isidis*), a festival held on 5 March. The festival featured a procession carrying an image of the goddess in a ship, which would then be allowed to sail in the sea. At first, it was practiced by Alexandrian merchants and later by the local population of Ostia and even emperors. The heyday of the city also coincided with the greatest popularity of the cult of Isis. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3218. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

statuette of Mars "to queen Isis who had restored his health".[42] Both Isis and Serapis were venerated as healing deities who could offer help during sickness. Furthermore, Isis was also clearly connected to seafaring in Ostia. This aspect of the goddess is illustrated by a boat-shaped terracotta lamp with the image of Isis in the middle and Serapis and Harpocrates at either end (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 155**). This lamp reflects Isis' role as queen of the seas and protector of navigators and people travelling by sea. This aspect of Isis was celebrated

42 *CIL* XIV 4290.

at the festival of the *Navigium Isidis* on March 5. According to literary evidence, the festival consisted of a large and elaborate procession in which a cult statue of Isis and a miniature ship were carried to the closest seashore or riverbank. The festival opened the sailing season in the spring.[43] A fresco depicting the ceremonies was found in Ostia and is now in the collection of the Vatican museums.

The cults of Magna Mater and Attis, Isis and Serapis were not specifically favoured by the local elite[44] of Ostia before the third and fourth centuries CE, but neither were they under suspicion or subject to restrictive measures by the authorities. Dedications were made to these deities on behalf of the emperor and his family, and for the health and success of the local authorities.[45] One inscription documents a dedication by a Syrian merchant to Jupiter Heliopolitanus on behalf of the emperor Marcus Aurelius and his son Commodus.[46] Sacrifices and donations on behalf of the emperor and imperial family and other public institutions appear to underscore the loyalty and social reliability of people worshipping deities of foreign origin, often immigrants or freedmen themselves.

Tensions caused by religion are hard to detect before the arrival of Christianity in Ostia. Polytheistic religion was by its nature an essentially open and tolerant system. Priesthoods in traditional cults deriving from the Republican period were in the hands of the local elite. In the Imperial era, the college of *Seviri Augustales*, linked to the imperial cult, offered some opportunities to freedmen. Freedmen recruited to the *seviri augustales* seem to have represented the most successful segment of this social group, who had often become wealthy thanks to their business dealings. Practically all the cults practiced in Ostia during the Imperial period were linked into the same system by the imperial cult. "Oriental" cults and their connected associations were particularly important to the non-elite inhabitants of Ostia. From an individual perspective, these cult associations in Ostia were important because they offered security, social esteem, and fellowship.

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43 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 30-33.

44 The local elite is understood here as the segment of the Ostian population eligible for higher magistracies.

45 For *taurobolia* in Ostia, see Meiggs 1973, 362-63.

46 Meiggs 1973, 216.

The Cult of Mithras in Ostia

Marja-Leena Hänninen

The cult of Mithras is a special instance among the cults of foreign origin in Ostia. It was the latest of the so-called mystery cults, and the most exclusive and mysterious. Traditionally, it has been assumed that women were not admitted into Mithraic cult associations, though more recent studies have argued that women were actually involved, at least in some parts of the Roman empire.[1] As many as 17 sanctuaries in Ostia have been identified as Mithraea, making the city unique in the study of the cult of Mithras. But what kind of deity was Mithras and what did the cult involve? In principle, Mithras was a Persian deity of light, but there has been a long scholarly dispute over his eastern origin.[2] The god's name is Persian, and his outfit in cult images is of Persian style, but the majority of finds related to the cult come from the western parts of the Roman empire and the surviving inscriptions are mainly in Latin. That of Mithras' Persian roots may have been an origin myth of the kind typical of antiquity, intended to promote the cult as an exotic eastern newcomer to the Romans.

Very few literary sources on Mithraic cult are extant and its actual theology is thus not known. The central myths have been reconstructed on the basis of the imagery found at cult sites, and Ostia has had a huge influence on such interpretations.[3] The dualism of darkness and light, chaos and order is seen as essential to the cult of Mithras. Every sanctuary of Mithras had some kind of cult image (statue, relief, painting) depicting Mithras slaying a bull, a sacrifice that symbolised the recreation of the world. The bull has also been interpreted as representing the moon and darkness.[4] Mithras is depicted wearing a Persian outfit, with a Phrygian cap on his head. A raven, a dog, a snake, and a scorpion biting the bull's testicles are often also depicted in the iconography. The standard images also include two male figures wearing tunics, one carrying an upraised torch, the other a torch pointing downwards. The figure with a raised torch is called Cautes and represents the sun, light and the south, while Cautopates with his torch pointing down represents darkness and the north.[5] The snake, scorpion and dog, also typical of Mithraic imagery, may be cosmological symbols connected with the constellations.[6] There was no single authorized version of the cult's central myth, but rather several variants.

Even the chronology of the expansion of the Mithraic cult is to some extent uncertain. According to the Greek historian Plutarch, the cult of Mithras had already arrived in Rome by the time of Pompey, but there is no archaeological evidence for the worship of Mithras in Rome before the imperial period. It

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1 For a recent discussion of women in the cult of Mithras, see David 2000.

2 For the scholarly discussion and various theories, see Merkelbach 1984, 75-77; Beard – North – Price 1998, 279-80; Clauss 2000, 3-8; Beck 2006, 17-25.

3 Beard – North – Price 1998, 285-86; Van Haeperen 2020, 123-32.

4 Merkelbach 1984, 193-206.

5 Meiggs 1973, 371.

6 Beard – North – Price 1998, 285-86.

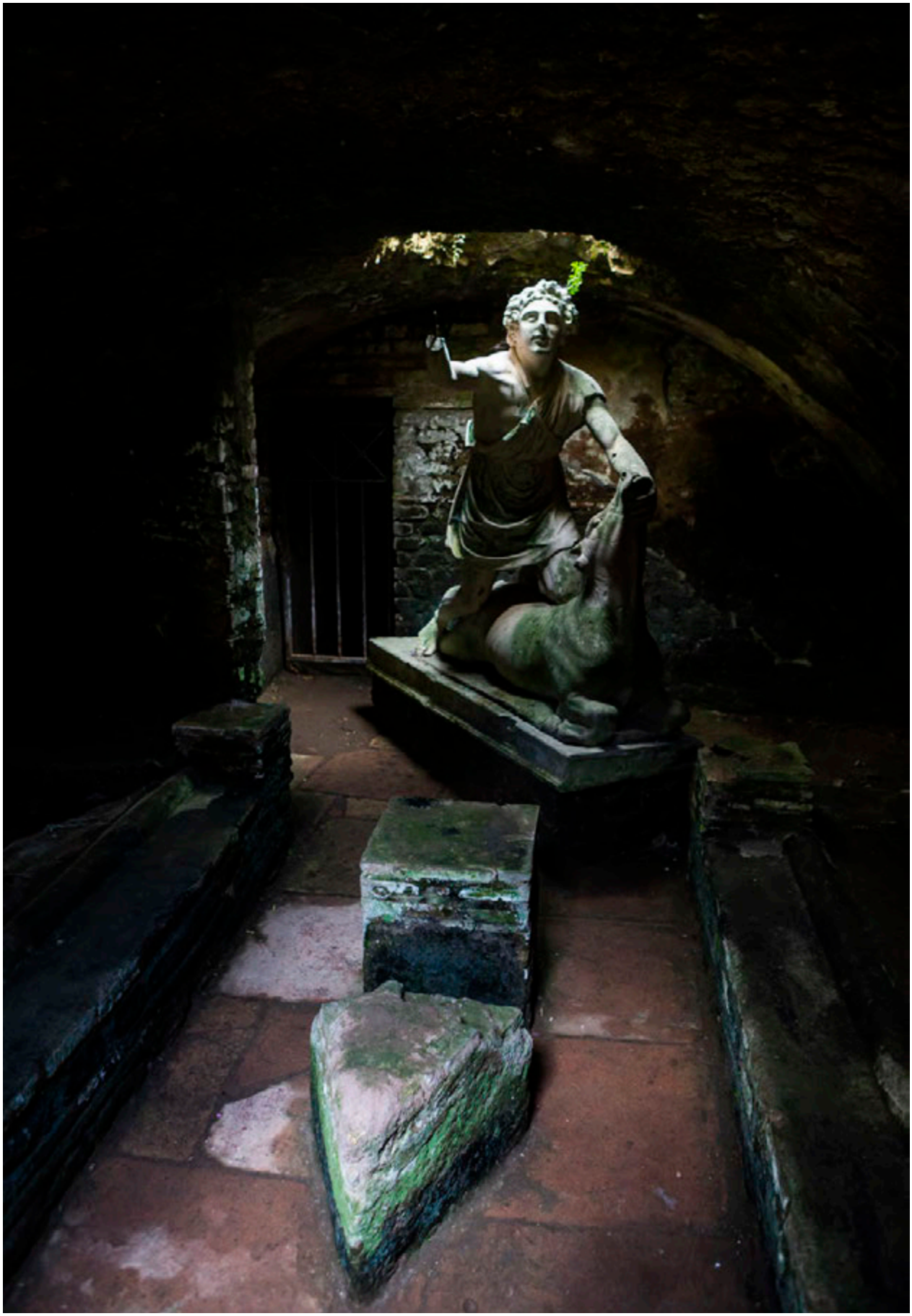


Figure 1. The statue of Mithras slaying the bull in the Terme del Mitra in Ostia. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.



Figure 2. The mosaic of Felicissimus in the Mitreo del Felicissimo. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

has been assumed that the cult of Mithras only gained more followers in the west under the Flavian dynasty and the peak of its popularity seems to date to the third century.[7] The earliest Ostian Mithraea have been dated to the Antonine period, but the majority are of the third century; here, too, the worship of Mithras seems to have been most popular during the third century CE.[8]

It is generally assumed that the cult of Mithras was a men's cult that accepted no female members. However, women's dedications to Mithras have also been found in some areas.[9] In Ostia, there is no evidence of even marginal participation by women in the cult of Mithras. The observation that Mithraea were built mainly in places with Roman military camps or veteran colonies has supported the assumption that this was a cult practiced by men.[10] The worship of Mithras appears to have been especially popular in the central provinces of the Roman empire, such as Pannonia and Dacia, where the Roman army had large military camps.[11] In Ostia, by contrast, the cult of Mithras does not seem to have had any connection with the army, due mainly to the fact that it was not a military town in the imperial era, but primarily a port and commercial centre.

It is assumed that there was a strict internal hierarchy governed by the seven grades of initiation in Mithraic cult groups.[12] (**Fig. 2**) In the central aisle of the so-called Mithraeum of Felicissimus in Ostia[13] there is a black and white mosaic – donated by a man called Felicissimus – whose imagery has had an enormous impact on the definition of the grades of initiation. The lowest grade of was called the raven (*corax*) and was symbolized by a *caduceus*, the staff of Mercury. The second grade was the bridegroom (*nymphus*), symbolized by a torch, a diadem and an oil lamp. The third grade of initiation was the soldier (*miles)*, symbolized by a soldier's bag, a lance and a helmet. The fourth grade, the lion (*leo*), was symbolized by a spade, a *sistrum* and a lightning bolt. The fifth

7 Meiggs 1973, 370; Clauss 2000, 21-25.

8 White 2012, 444-45; Van Haeperen 2019, 150-91.

9 Beard – North – Price 1998, 298.

10 Clauss 2000, 33-34.

11 Merkelbach 1984, 149-53; Beard – North – Price 1998, 294-95, 301; Clauss 2000, 23-27.

12 For the symbols of the various grades of initiation, see Merkelbach 1984, 86-129.

13 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 52-54; Van Haeperen 2019, 162-63.

grade was called the Persian (*Perses*) and was symbolized by a sword, a moon crescent and a scythe. The sixth grade was the sun-runner (*heliodromus*), and was symbolized by a whip, a torch and solar rays. The seventh and highest grade was called the father (*pater*), whose emblems were a *patera* (a shallow bowl), a Phrygian cap and Saturn's sickle. The grade of *pater* presumably meant a leading position in a Mithraic cult group.[14]

Mithraea were distributed quite evenly around different parts of Ostia, but are not found in the most central public areas or along the main streets.[15] Some of the oldest Mithraea in Ostia were installed in residential buildings, *insula* or *domus*, in which one or two rooms were set aside for use by cult members. At least three Ostian Mithraea are located near baths and four in warehouses.[16] One Mithraeum was built into the foundations of an unfinished sanctuary of an Ostian *collegium*, probably that of the ropemakers (*Stuppatores*).[17] The construction of the Mithraeum was sponsored by a man named Fructosus, who was also *patronus* of an association in Ostia of whose name only the first letter *s* survives. However, the name Fructosus also appears in a membership list of the *collegium* of the *Stuppatores*, dating to the same period as the Mithraeum, and rooms used for the production of ropes (*stuppa*) have been identified in the vicinity.[18] We do not know why the original sanctuary of the association was left unfinished. It would have been most unusual to choose Mithras as a tutelary deity of a *collegium*. It is possible that some members of the Mithraic cult group also belonged to the association of the ropemakers or that the worshippers of Mithras had some kind of contract to use the sanctuary on the premises of the *collegium*.[19] One additional Mithraeum was identified in the excavations carried out in 2014, called the *Mitreo dei marmi colorati*, located near a guest



Figure 3. Mitreo del Caseggiato di Diana. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

14 Meiggs 1973, 373; Van Haeperen 2019, 163.

15 Van Haeperen 2019, 338, fig. 7.

16 Meiggs 1973, 374; White 2012, 440-44, 480.

17 Becatti 1954, 21-25; Meiggs 1973, 375; Van Haeperen 2019, 188-90.

18 Becatti 1954, 25-26; Clauss 1992, 35.

19 White 2012, 476-77.



Figure 4. Reconstruction of the Mitreo del Caseggiato di Diana. Reconstruction: Jesper Blid.

house and tavern. This sanctuary has been dated to the second half of the fourth century and is thus the latest known Mithraeum in Ostia.[20]

The Ostian Mithraea do not suggest great wealth. Even the largest Mithraea in Ostia are much smaller than many of those in Rome. They could hold a maximum of 40 people, and some less than 20. Mithraea were usually installed in existing buildings. One of the largest Ostian Mithraea utilizes structures of the service area in a public bath, another the Sullan city wall and tower by the riverbank. In the so-called House of Diana, two rooms in the north-eastern corner of the ground floor were adapted for cult purposes by covering the windows and building benches (*podia*) and an altar (**Figs. 3-4**). This mithraeum dates to the final building phase of the House of Diana, at the end of the third century.[21] A private *lararium* (domestic shrine) was used to install another Mithraeum – the two snakes painted on the wall were also suited to Mithraic imagery.[22]

All of Ostia's Mithraea were installed in existing buildings by modifying and adapting the original space. Recycled materials were also often used in the decorations, and the original paintings and mosaics in the space were not necessarily changed.[23] The most famous cult image of Mithras from the city, a large statue in the Ostia Museum (**Cat. no. 156**; a copy is on display in the exhibition), was most probably acquired second-hand and partly damaged for the sanctuary in the substructures of a bath building (*Terme del*

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20 See the article by Pellegrino in this volume. A short report presenting the main results of the "Ostia Marina Project", directed by Massimiliano David, in Van Haeperen 2019, 168-69, 382, figs. 165-68.

21 Van Haeperen 2019, 156-59.

22 Meiggs 1973, 372; Van Haeperen 2019, 187-88.

23 Meiggs 1973, 372-73; White 2012, 444, 483-84.

Mitra).[24] Most Mithraea in Ostia were not underground sanctuaries, but there may have been attempts to create the illusion of a cave through the decorations and lighting.

Some Ostian Mithraea have original features, but most follow the same pattern.[25] The actual sanctuary is a narrow rectangular room that receives no direct light, representing the cave in which the god was believed to have been born. In two Ostian inscriptions the Mithraeum is actually described as a cave, *spelaeum*. The central aisle of the sanctuary was flanked by long *podia*, benches that sloped slightly towards the walls. Based on the structure of the sanctuaries, it has been assumed that the priest walked down the aisle between the benches towards the altar.[26]

Some altars in the Ostian Mithraea had a hole, probably for a lamp. The front of the altar may have been pierced, so that light could shine through it and create a crescent or illuminate a relief on the front part of the altar. The statue of the sun god was dramatically lit in this way in the so-called Mithraeum of the painted walls (*Mitreo delle pareti dipinte*) The cult's central myth was represented behind the altar, usually in a wall relief. The iconography in different sanctuaries varies only slightly, but the materials used in cult images and the quality of the execution differs. Mithras, wearing a Persian outfit, is depicted slaying the bull with a knife. A dog leaps towards the blood spurting from the wound, while a snake reaches for it from the other side and a scorpion attacks the genitals of the bull. A raven above watches the scene. Two torch-bearing youths, Cautes and Cautopates, are depicted as statuettes or in mosaics at the entrance of the sanctuary or on either side of the altar.[27]



Figure 5. Mitreo delle Sette Porte. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

24 Meiggs 1973, 372-73; Van Haeperen 2019, 190-91.

25 See the article by Pellegrino in this volume.

26 Meiggs 1973, 370.

27 Meiggs 1973, 371.

An unusually rich and well preserved astrological symbolism can be seen in the decoration of a Mithraeum located on the west side of the so-called House of Apuleius in Ostia (*Mitreo delle Sette Sfere*). There are seven black semicircles in the white mosaic of the central aisle representing the seven planets, symbolized by figures depicted in the black and white mosaics on the vertical sides of the benches. The twelve signs of the zodiac are represented in the black and white mosaics covering the horizontal top of the benches.[28] In the Mithraeum of Felicissimus, too, the planets are clearly connected with the seven grades of initiation, and symbols of each initiation grade are depicted in the mosaic panels between the *podia*.[29]

The Ostian Mithraea were mainly located in ordinary city districts, not in remote places that were difficult to access. However, access to the sanctuary and its visibility, in particular, may have been restricted. The Mithraeum was often entered from the side.[30] The Mithraea of Ostia were not monumental or spectacular, but they may have been situated in very close proximity to the city centre. The installation of the earliest Mithraea in private houses suggests that the cult groups were private in nature. Several examples of small sanctuaries in *insula* complexes are known in Ostia, such as the *Sacello delle Tre Navate* next to the *Caseggiato degli Aurighi*. The layout of this sanctuary resembles that of a Mithraeum, but the space is much larger and nothing in the decoration explicitly refers to the cult of Mithras. There is a kitchen next to the sanctuary, as was often the case since ritual feasting was an essential part of the social life of associations and cult groups.[31]

What kind of men belonged to Mithraic groups? According to the surviving inscriptions they did not come from the leading social groups of Ostia. However, no membership lists of Mithraic groups are known from the city. The extant inscriptions from Ostia mainly document the names of priests of Mithras, *patres*, and donors of the cult groups.[32] Consequently, we know largely about the most important and wealthiest members of Mithraic groups in Ostia. Obviously, the associations needed sponsors and donors, since they were always reliant on private funds. Indeed, the majority of the surviving inscriptions document donations needed for the basic furnishings of the Mithraea, such as images of Mithras killing the bull, marble and mosaic decorations for the podia and central aisle, and images of Cautes and Cautopates. Small statuettes of Mithras seem to have been the most typical donations.

The highest grade of initiation in the cult of Mithras, that of *pater*, is the only one mentioned in Ostian inscriptions referring to the cult. The *patres* were presumably leaders of individual sanctuaries and cult groups. The grade of *pater* also appears to have been linked with priestly functions. The "fathers" of the Ostian Mithraea do not seem to have been prominent public figures, such as individuals who might have held municipal offices, for example. On the contrary, their social status was relatively low, and the names of slaves even appear among the worshippers of Mithras in Ostia.[33] Some members of the Mithraic groups did, however, have connections with the trade *collegia*, or professional guilds, of Ostia. Similarly, many worshippers of Magna Mater and the Egyptian deities were also active in the Ostian *collegia*. For example, the *pater* and sponsor of the Mitreo Aldobrandini, Sextus Pompeius Maximus, was president of a *collegium* in charge of one of Ostia's ferry services. The name Sextus Pompeius Maximus is mentioned in two in-

28 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 43-44; Meiggs 1973, 371.

29 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 52-54; Clauss 2000, 133-38.

30 White 2012, 478-79.

31 White 2012, 477-80.

32 Meiggs 1973, 373-74; Clauss 1992, 40-42.

33 Meiggs 1973, 373.

scriptions, one of which was erected by other priests of Mithras to honour him.[34] Sextus Pompeius Maximus is respectfully described as *pater patrum*, father of the fathers, perhaps suggesting cooperation between various Mithraea in Ostia or that there were several *patres* in this particular sanctuary.

The Mithraic groups of Ostia honoured their *patres* in particular with inscriptions. In the *Mitreo delle Sette Sfere*, for example, there was an inscription stating that L. Tullius Agatho had donated an altar to the Mithraeum in honour of the *pater* of the community, M. Aemilius Epaphroditus.[35] In Ostia, the *patres* of Mithraic groups were usually also donors. It is possible that the highest grade of initiation required donations to the community. Status within the cult group seems to some extent to have reflected a man's status in society, or at least his economic standing. Members of the local elite or the holders of public offices never appear as worshippers of Mithras in the surviving epigraphic evidence from Ostia. Instead, we find men who had been members of business and trade *collegia* or who had held priesthoods in other cults, serving in the *Seviri Augustales*, for example. Significantly, many worshippers of Mithras in Ostia had a Greek *cognomen*, suggesting that they or their ancestors had formerly been slaves.[36]



Figure 6 (Cat. no. 157). Handle of a knife, interpreted as an item used in Mithraic rituals. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4317. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

As for the social background of worshippers, the cult of Mithras follows the same pattern as other "Oriental mystery cults", with many followers being wealthy and successful freedmen. In the second century, these cults seem to have constituted a fairly well-established aspect of religious life in Ostia. Cult communities showed loyalty to the empire, praying to their deities, sacrificing and making dedications to them for the wellbeing of the emperor and his family. The cult of Mithras in Ostia is an exception in this respect, since there are no references to the local authorities in the extant inscriptions and only one dedication of the Mithraists on behalf of the emperor is known.[37] Equally, however, there are no references to the authorities being suspicious of Mithraic cult groups in Ostia, or anywhere else. Deference to the authorities and acceptance of hierarchies seem to have been essential to the cult of Mithras.[38]

The cult of Mithras was the latest in the line of the great mystery religions and, consequently, the peak in its popularity is also later than that of the cults of Magna Mater, Isis and Serapis. Mithras was still worshipped as Rome was Christianized during the fourth century, and one new Mithraeum was even founded in Ostia during this century. Common features have been identified in the cult of Mithras and Christianity, such as the dualism of good and evil, and were already noted by ancient writers. Like Christ, Mithras may have been interpreted as a mediator and saviour figure. It is still difficult to say if Christianity and the cult

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34 *CIL* XIV 403; *CIL* XIV 4314; Meiggs 1973, 373-74; Van Haeperen 2019, 150-52.

35 *CIL* XIV 62. See discussion in Van Haeperen 2019, 177-79 (*Mithraeum* Petrini) and 185-87.

36 Meiggs 1973, 373-74; Clauss 1992, 40-42.

37 Vermaseren 1956, no. 273.

38 See Clauss 2000, 21-23, 39-41.

of Mithras were true rivals in Late Antiquity. In any case, the Christians attacked sanctuaries of Mithras in various parts of the Roman empire, especially from the end of the fourth century onwards, and even Christian authors report violent acts against worshippers of Mithras. The Christians thus seem to have regarded Mithraism as some sort of threat.[39] The archaeological remains preserve traces of the intentional destruction of cult sites and images, including in Ostia. After the fourth century CE, there is no further evidence for the worship of Mithras in Ostia.[40]

39 Clauss 2000, 168-72; Winter 2000.

40 Meiggs 1973, 401; White 2012, 471; Van Haeperen 2019, 168-69.

Eastern Cults at Ostia: An Example of Social, Economic and Civic Integration

Angelo Pellegrino

It is well known that a significant portion of the population of Ostia consisted of people of Greek/eastern origin, thanks in part to the presence of the large port complex, built by the emperors Claudius and Trajan between the mid-1st century CE and 113 CE, and soon becoming the Mediterranean's largest emporium. This inevitably had significant repercussions on the practice of the exotic cults arriving from Asia Minor (which had become a Roman province in 133 BCE). The result was a close fusion between foreign religions and the Roman mentality, which aimed to control spiritual manifestations in accordance with the ideological, administrative and legal criteria of the ruling class and the imperial power.

One of the most important of the eastern cults documented at Ostia was that of **Magna Mater/Cybele**, a nature and fertility goddess, great mother of the Universe and of all the gods, who originated in Phrygia where she was venerated at Pessinus.[1] This cult was so highly regarded as to be officially recognized by the Roman state, starting from the Republican period and especially under the emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty (27 BCE – 68 CE):[2] the latter saw this goddess, born not far from Troy, as the ancestress of their own family, descended from the Trojan Aeneas who according to legend left to found his new home in Rome after building his ship from wood cut near mount Ida in Phrygia. According to the well-known myth, the goddess fell in love with the shepherd Attis; however, he wished to marry a mortal and so the goddess punished him by driving him insane and causing him to die beneath a pine tree where he castrated himself. Regretting her actions, the goddess granted him a sort of "resurrection", keeping his body free from decay and allowing at least one of his fingers to keep on "moving".

The cult was officially introduced with a "state" decree in 204 BCE when, acting in accordance with the interpretation of the sacred Sibylline books, the Romans attempted to curry favour with the gods in their war against Hannibal by bringing from Pessinus the "black stone" symbolizing the most important goddess, the mother of all the gods: Cybele, the *Magna Mater.*[3] The ship carrying this image of sorts was ceremoniously greeted by a crowd of prominent individuals at Ostia, near the mouth of the Tiber. However, at this point there was an unforeseen event: the ship ran aground and it was impossible to free it. Only the Vestal Virgin Claudia Quinta, whom the general public unjustly suspected of impurity, miraculously succeeded in towing it to shore all by herself, thus simultaneously demonstrating her own purity.[4] After this miracle the stone was taken to the Palatine hill in Rome where a temple was built in the early 2nd century BCE.

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1 For the finds and an analysis of the cult, see Calza G. 1946, 83-205; Calza R. 1946, 207-27; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 1-18; Vermaseren 1977, 107-43; Rieger 2004, 93-172; Pensabene 2007, 321-33.

2 Cumont 1929, 112-13; Calza R. 1946, 224-26; Meiggs 1973, 359.

3 Liv. 34, 30.

4 The episode is reported in Ovid's *Fasti* (4, 295 ff.).

At Ostia the goddess was worshipped in a large sanctuary (4500 m²)[5] known as the Campo della Magna Mater, perhaps built already in the Claudian period,[6] but subjected to major renovations during the second half of the 2nd century CE[7] (**Fig. 1**). It is a triangular area containing the following sacred buildings: in the south-eastern corner the main temple, on a high podium and originally with four columns along the front; in the western area the small temple of Bellona, an Italian deity associated with Cybele; the shrine of Attis, dating to the early Imperial period but renovated up to the second half of the 3rd century CE with the addition of a second apsidal chamber whose entrance was flanked by two telamons representing Pan (**Fig. 2**); the *fossa sanguinis*, carved out inside the old west tower of the walls, where the rite of the *taurobolium* took place, in other words the sacrifice of bulls whose blood served to regenerate the spirit of the initiates.

The cult was eastern in origin but was "Romanized" both for propaganda purposes and in terms of the organization and management of the religious rites.[8] As regards propaganda, we have already mentioned that the emperors of the first half of the 1st century CE tried to confer a sacred aura on their family by claiming descent from Aeneas, a native of Phrygia where Cybele was worshipped. A particularly important role in this was played by Claudius, who travelled to Ostia on several occasions, and his identification of the Vestal Virgin Claudia Quinta as an ancestress who conferred prestige upon her family.[9]

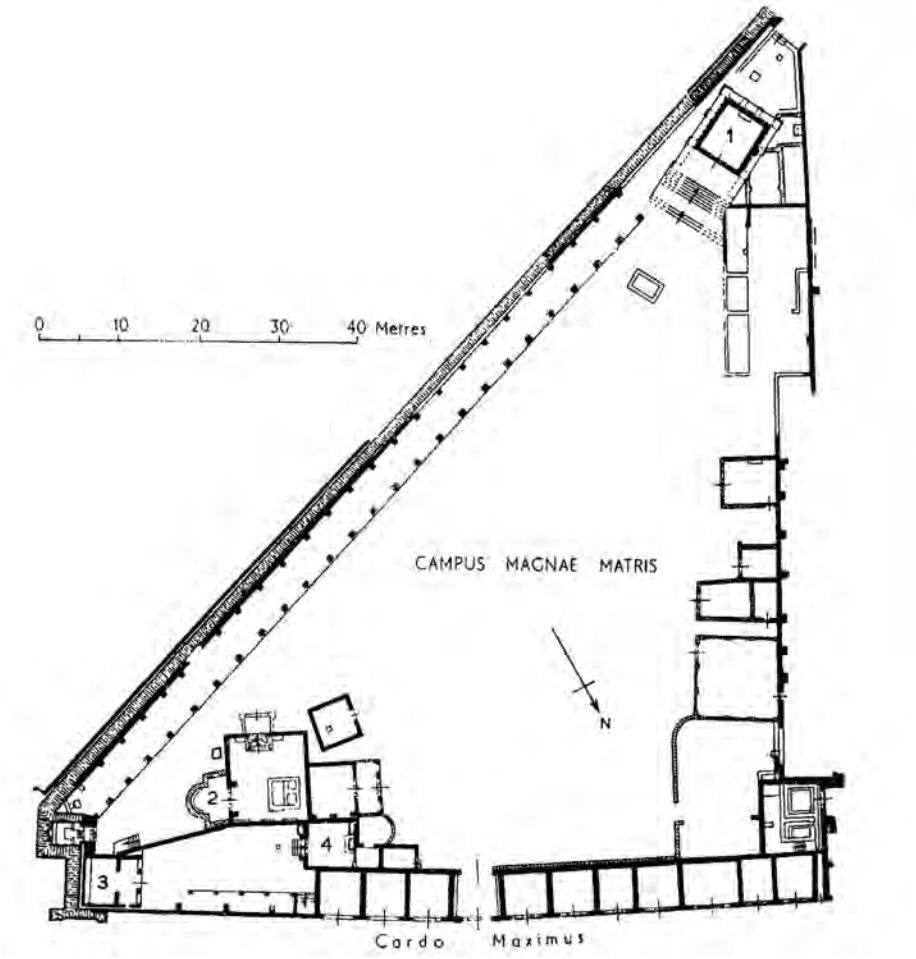


Figure 1. Campo della Magna Mater. 1. Temple of Cybele. 2. Shrine of Attis. 3. Temple of Bellona. 4. Guild house of *Hastiferi*. Plan: Guido Calza.

5 For a description of the sanctuary, see Calza G. 1946.

6 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 1-6; Meiggs 1973, 364; Mar *et al.*1999, 21; Rieger 2004, 118-22; Van Haeperen 2019, 32-67.

7 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 6.

8 Rieger 2004, 154-58; Rieger 2007; see also Steuernagel 2004, 228-42.

9 Zevi 1997, 452-71.



Figure 2. Shrine of Attis. Photo: Angelo Pellegrino.

For this reason, the cult statues of the Greco-Roman pantheon, large and small, found during Visconti and Calza's excavations were naturally associated (in part following a syncretistic rationale) with the worship of Magna Mater.[10] Small images of Venus, Mars/Attis, Dionysus/Attis and Apollo were discovered: Venus was obviously interpreted as the progenitor of the Julio-Claudian family;[11] Mars/Attis might represent the shepherd boy loved by Cybele, the eternal Aphrodite;[12] Dionysus/Attis recalled the concept of the death and resurrection of nature present in the myth of Cybele and Attis, in addition to the orgiastic practices;[13] Apollo was considered the god who, with his interpretation of the Sibylline books, favoured the transportation of the black stone from Pessinus to Ostia.[14] It is also no coincidence that the famous Neo-Attic altar of the twelve Olympian gods (*Dodekátheon*), a copy of a work by Praxiteles of the 4th century BCE (from the temple of Artemis at Megara), was found here, as if to underline the pre-eminence of Cybele, mistress of the Universe, over all the other gods.[15]

Also in this sanctuary was the small temple dedicated to Bellona, the Sabine goddess of war, built in around the mid-2nd century CE and enlarged a few decades later.[16] Her relationship with Magna Mater is explained by the fact that her cult was introduced in the late Republic by the soldiers of Sulla involved in

10 Calza R. 1946.

11 Calza R. 1946, 224-26.

12 Calza R. 1946, 218.

13 Calza R. 1946, 218-20.

14 Calza R. 1946, 220-21.

15 Becatti 1939-40; Calza R. 1946, 210; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1952, 31 no. 6; Pellegrino 2008 (with preceding bibliography).

16 The date is based on the soundings carried out in 1985, see Pellegrino 1987, 188-89. Van Haeperen 2019, 195-204.

the conflict against Mithridates in Cappadocia. Here they were drawn to the cult of Ma, an Anatolian deity of nature and physical strength who was identified in Rome with Bellona.[17]

The now fully Roman and official character of the cult of Cybele emerges from some inscriptions referring to her as *Mater Deum coloniae ostiensis.*[18] The rites themselves were controlled by city functionaries such as the *archigallus coloniae Ostiensis*, the highest authority, assisted by lesser priests.[19] Equally, it was common for the *taurobolia* to be dedicated even to emperors, including Marcus Aurelius, Commodus,[20] Severus Alexander and Trebonianus.[21] This ceremony was also performed at *Portus* as a good luck gesture for emperors embarking on sea voyages.[22] However, the cult was managed by officiants of low social status, members of colleges who were also responsible for restoration and renovation work in the sanctuary:[23] evidently they found in these activities an opportunity for social advancement. The sacred associations were well-structured: the *cannophori* who on 15 March processed with reeds to commemorate the discovery of Attis near the river; the *dendrophori* who on 22 March brought pine branches to the temple, symbolizing the death of Attis;[24] the *hastiferi*, or lance-bearers, who venerated Bellona.

Egyptian cults were also widespread at Ostia, particularly after the Hadrianic period; before this the authorities had always considered them suspect for their orgiastic and uncontrolled rites. Particularly well-documented is that of **Serapis** who was worshipped in a sanctuary area near the mouth of the Tiber and the grain stores. It contained: the temple proper, the so-called Caseggiato di Bacco e Arianna, the Domus del Serapeo, a mithraeum, some *horrea* and the Terme "della Trinacria"[25] (**Figs. 3-5**). The mere presence of all these buildings, which served not just for the cult but also for other purposes (rental properties, recreational facilities, yet others for the meetings of the colleges, etc.), indicates its enormous importance. In the broad sense, the large number of followers of the cult of Serapis (together with that of Isis) can be explained by the fact that much of the grain that served to feed the capital was imported from Egypt.[26] As such, numerous individuals of Egyptian origin must have frequented this area of the city.[27]

The integration of Egyptian cults into Ostian society is demonstrated by the euergetic activities undertaken above all by individuals of eastern origin but who had been completely Romanized. The temple of Serapis was inaugurated on 24 January 127 CE, not coincidentally Hadrian's birthday, by a freedman of the *gens Caltilia*, evidently engaged in profitable commercial activities;[28] the mention of the emperor confers a quasi-official status on the cult.[29] In other words, Serapis and Isis were considered the protectors of the

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17 Cumont 1929, 50-51; Granino Cecere 1987, 1-2.

18 *CIL* XIV 4267, 4301, 4304.

19 Meiggs 1973, 362.

20 More precisely, a *criobolium* (sacrifice of a ram) was dedicated to this emperor, *CIL* XIV 4302.

21 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 16; Meiggs 1973, 362-63.

22 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 16.

23 Steuernagel 2004, 228-42.

24 Meiggs 1973, 360-63; on the performance of the rituals and the consequent "Romanization" of the cult, see Rieger 2004, 154-58 and Rieger 2007.

25 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 18-19; Mar 2001; Pensabene 2007, 334-36. An overview is in Pavolini 2006, 132-36. See also the most recent collection of *testimonia* in Van Haeperen 2019, 218-27.

26 Zevi 2007, 176-77.

27 Steuernagel 2004, 212-27.

28 Bargagli – Grosso 2007, 43. This is a fragment of the *Fasti Ostienses: VIIII k Febr. Templum Sarapi quod [.] Caltilius P [?-]*. In this first phase the temple stood on a brick podium, with four columns along the front (the side columns were set up against pillars), and was preceded by a courtyard with a peristyle: Mar 2001, 44-50; Pensabene 2007, 336-37. The area was accessed through an entrance with two columns surmounted by a pediment with the inscription *Iovi Serapi*: Mar 2001, 46; Zevi 2001, 188.

29 Bollmann 1998, 316.

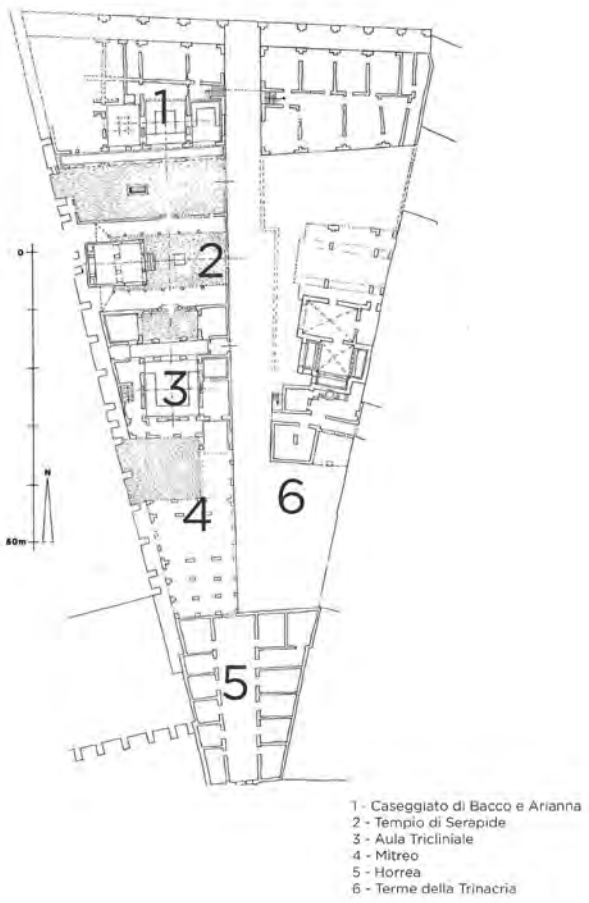


Figure 3. The Serapeum district. Plan: Ricardo Mar.

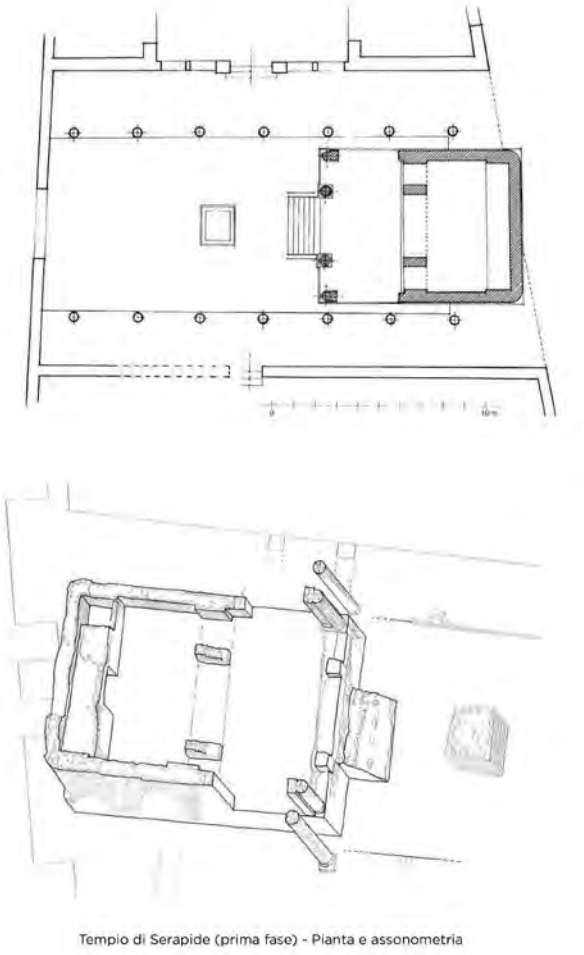


Figure 4. The Temple of Serapis, first phase. Plan: Ricardo Mar.



Figure 5. The Temple of Serapis as it is today. Photo: Angelo Pellegrino.

Egyptian ships that transported grain to the port of Ostia, fundamental to the imperial policy of economic and social control over Rome. Dating to the same period is the construction of a large *triclinium* hall, used for the meetings of cult personnel,[30] decorated with a fine polychrome mosaic (one of the few in Ostia in the 2nd century[31]), and the so-called Caseggiato di Bacco e Arianna, also belonging to the temple. During a later phase (ca. 150-170 CE), at the expense of the family of the *Statilii*,[32] alterations were made to the temple[33] and a *schola* was added on the north side of the courtyard. Finally, another family, that of the *Umbilii,* made further changes with the addition of a mithraeum to the complex during the Severan period.[34]

The tendency of Roman culture to embrace foreign cults once again produced interesting associations. Thus Dionysus and Ariadne, depicted in the mosaic in the house of the same name, symbolize the concept of life and resurrection present in the Egyptian religions. The figures of Cautes and Cautopates in the mithraeum were also believed to protect navigation.[35] Additionally, some inscriptions mention the gods Castor and Pollux, also considered protectors of sailing, and Hercules who in Rome and in Ostia itself had mercantile connotations.[36]

For similar reasons, equal importance was attributed to the cult of **Isis**,[37] whose temple has not been found but was probably near the banks of the Tiber.[38] It is worth noting that every year, on 5 March, the solemn ceremony of the *navigium Isidis*[39] was held to propitiate the resumption of seafaring activities in spring.

But between the mid-2nd century and the 3rd century the most widely venerated deity was certainly **Mithras**,[40] the Persian god who in the myth of the killing of the bull symbolized the victory of light over darkness, good over evil. It has been said that his cult was introduced to Rome and Ostia in the 1st century BCE,[41] but this is not supported by archaeological evidence. However, the earliest sculpture group of Mithras killing the bull was found at Ostia, signed by the artist *Kriton Athenaios*[42] (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 156**). In the case of Mithras, we see the opposite phenomenon to what we found for Cybele and Isis/Serapis: in other

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30 Mar 2001, 50-55; Pensabene 2007, 336-37.

31 Becatti 1961, 144-49, no. 283; Pellegrino 2017, 47.

32 Zevi 2001, 177-87. Some renovations, as we learn from an inscription, were funded by two freedmen *Atimetus* and *Epaphroditus*, with the permission of an important figure, *T. Statilius Taurianus,* see Zevi 2001, 177-85 and Mar 2001, 109-12: the former scholar believes that the dedicatory inscription belonged to the new *schola* built on the north side of the porticoed court, the latter that it ran along the architrave of the portico itself; see also Vidman 1969, 533 c and Pellegrino 1988.

33 The principal modifications were as follows: enlargement of the staircase, replacement of the brick columns of the porticoed court with marble-clad pillars, addition of an exedra (*schola*) on the north side of the portico, see Mar 2001, 103-09, Pensabene 2007, 337.

34 Mar 2001, 118-32; Zevi 2001, 187-96.

35 Subias 2001, 297-98.

36 Zevi 2001, 196.

37 For the cult at Ostia, see Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 19-36.

38 Meiggs 1973, 368; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 27 ff. A monumental statue made of grey marble, representing according to Fausto Zevi *Isis Pelagia*, was found during the excavations at the southern bank of Fossa Traiana at Isola Sacra, and an inscribed architrave found in the Fossa Traiana at Portus in 1959 documents the restoration of the temple of Isis in 376-377 CE, *AE* 1968, 86; EDR074782 (Niquet), see Zevi 2002, 302-04; Van Haeperen 2019, 275-76, 293.

39 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 30; Meiggs 1973, 370.

40 For Mithraism at Ostia, see the well-known classic volume by Becatti on *mithraea* (Becatti 1954), still the seminal work on this topic; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 37-59; Meiggs 1973, 370-75. On the finds, see Vermaseren 1956, 216-321. For the testimonia connected with Mithraism in Ostia, see Van Haeperen 2019, 150-91, for a possible *mithraeum* at Portus, see Van Haeperen 2019, 288-90.

41 Nonetheless, the idea that the cult may have been introduced by Cilician pirates during the war against Pompey is unfounded; it is based on passages from Plutarch and Cicero that do not in fact support this idea, see Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 37-38; Meiggs 1973, 370.

42 Traditionally dated to the Hadrianic period, the date should now be lowered to the early 1st century CE.



Figure 6. Sculptre group of Mithras killing the bull. Museo Ostiense, inv. 149. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

words, Mithraism was not incorporated into the economic and administrative structures of the Roman world, but was itself, thanks to its strong mystical elements (which involved achieving purity of the spirit and its immortality), literally able to win over the minds of the Romans. Not coincidentally the worshippers of Mithras included not only individuals of low social status (both local and eastern) but also people of high social class, all sharing in the new religious sentiment. The emperors themselves sometimes encouraged the spread of the cult, yielding to the desires of the troops on which their power depended. Precisely at Ostia, which in absolute terms is the city with the largest number of mithraea (after Rome), this new religion was given a strong boost by the emperor Commodus who may have had an unusually luxurious mithraeum built in the so-called Palazzo Imperiale.[43] In practice, Mithraism was unconditionally embraced[44] by all social classes, becoming a fully "Roman" religion. The cult places were the mithraea, small rooms created inside existing buildings, with a corridor, two raised platforms on either side on which the worshippers kneeled, and an altar at the back with a relief (or painting) showing Mithras killing the bull. It should be stressed that the most recent mithraeum was found in the suburban district of Porta Marina, dating to as late as the second half of the 4th century CE when Christianity had been the official religion of the empire for some time.[45]

Finally, other eastern cults are also documented, particularly in inscriptions; they include those of *Iuppiter Heliopolitanus*, *Marnas, Iuppiter Sabazius* and *Celestis*, of the Thracian Knight and the Sun, probably with few worshippers and not organized into sanctuary structures.[46]

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43 Becatti 1954, 53-57 and 119-21; *CIL* XIV 66 mentions a *crypta palati* in concession to *C. Valerius Heracles pater et antistes dei... Solis invicti Mithrae*, perhaps to be identified with this *mithraeum*; on the issue, see Meiggs 1973, 374 and note 7. On Commodus' fondness for this cult, see Hist. Aug. *Comm.* 9, 6.

44 The small communities were structured and had a *pater* (the highest authority), some *antistites* and *sacerdotes*; a *pater patrum* was the supreme leader of all the Mithraic groups in Ostia: see Meiggs 1973, 373.

45 David *et al.* 2013.

46 Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 60-70.

New Trends in Late Antique Religions, Beliefs and Ideas: Christianity, Judaism, Philosophy and Magic in Ostia

Arja Karivieri

The arrival of Christianity in Ostia

It is almost impossible to estimate the relative numbers of Christians and the followers of the traditional cults in Ostia in the fourth century CE, that is, the change in size of these religious groups after the official recognition of Christianity in 313 CE, and in the fifth century, when the sacrifices of the old cults had been officially forbidden and the major temples in Rome were closed.[1] Nor is it possible to demonstrate the speed of Christianization in the area of Ostia and Portus. All we can give are examples of the construction of Christian churches, Christian tombstones, sarcophagi and artefacts, as well as followers of the Christian faith mentioned in historical sources, names of ecclesiastical officials in Ostia and Portus, and later hagiographical sources.

The Christianization of Ostia seems to have followed the development of early Christianity in the city of Rome. Rome's earliest official Christian churches, St. Peter's Basilica and the Lateran Basilica, were built during the reign of Emperor Constantine the Great. The Lateran Basilica was built inside the city walls, south-east of central Rome, and St. Peter's Basilica west of the Tiber River in an area that had been a *circus* and a necropolis under Emperor Nero in the early Imperial period. Several churches were built in Rome in the fifth century CE, and the earliest churches in the area of Ostia and Portus date back to the fourth and fifth centuries.

In the fourth century CE, old buildings were renovated in Ostia; at the same time, new dwellings and Christian buildings were being built. According to the written sources, the Basilica of Ostia was built by Emperor Constantine; Michael Heinzelmann and Franz Alto Bauer were able to locate the Basilica near Porta Laurentina inside the city walls in 1996 through a geophysical survey, and they conducted the first excavations at the site from 1998 to 1999.[2] The Basilica of Constantine found near Porta Laurentina shows that the Christian congregation of Ostia had wealthy members already in the early fourth century CE (**Fig. 1**). According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, Constantine dedicated the basilica to Peter and Paul and John the Baptist. The same source recalls that the church was decorated with thirty silver candelabra and a baptismal basin in silver. Thus, the church was the bishop's church in Ostia, the cathedral of Ostia.[3] In addition, martyr legends mention Gallicanus as the founder of the church. According to the legend of Gallicanus, the church was located at the gate to Laurentum, which confirmed Bauer's and Heinzelmann's interpretation after the excavation.[4]

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1 Cf. Brenk 2001, 262.

2 Bauer – Heinzelmann 2001.

3 *Liber Pontificalis*: "*Eodem tempore fecit Constantinus Augustus basilicam in civitate Hostia, iuxta portum urbis Romae, beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli et Iohannis Baptistae, ubi et dona obtulit haec […]*" (Duchesne 1886, 135-38). Bauer – Heinzelmann 2001, 278; Brenk 2001, 268-69.

4 Bauer – Heinzelmann 2001, 278-80.

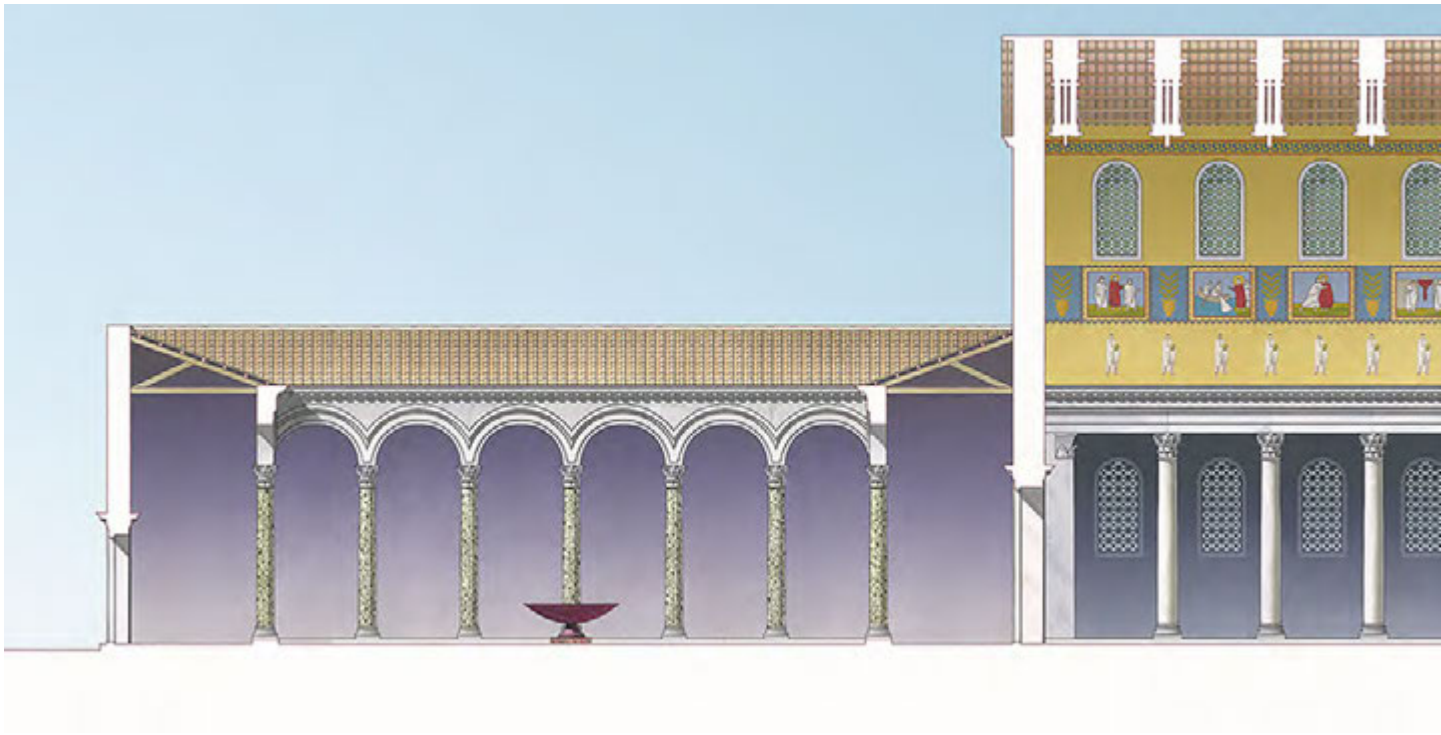


Figure 1. Basilica of Constantine. A proposed reconstruction of the interior of the church: Jesper Blid.

Several Christian tombs have been found during the excavations of the early Christian basilica of Pianabella,[5] south of the walls of the city of Ostia, near Porta Laurentina. The Basilica di Pianabella was built in the late fourth century next to an older necropolis by the road. The basilica plan is reminiscent of a well-known type in Rome, where the church was built in connection with a martyr's tomb, with the altar and the main tombs located in the choir of the church. There is a single tomb in the north-south direction at the western end of the Basilica di Pianabella, while the surrounding 100 underground tombs are all placed in the east-west direction. According to Beat Brenk, that central tomb in the north-south direction was probably the tomb of a saint or a martyr, and the graves surrounding this tomb were still used in the ninth century CE.[6] (**Fig. 2**) The construction of the Basilica di Pianabella can presumably be dated to the end of the fourth century, according to the coin evidence. During this period, in 393-394 CE, the *praefectus annonae* funded the restoration of the temple of Hercules.[7] The traditional old cults of the city thus demonstrably had a strong position in the late fourth century, at a time when two large churches had already been built in Ostia.

However, there is only one known private house in Ostia whose owners were evidently Christian, the so-called *Domus Tigriniani*, previously also known as the Basilica.[8] (**Fig. 3**) The house includes structures typical of late antique private houses, such as semi-circular apses. One of these is in the *triclinium,* the dining room of the house, which has an entrance at the end of a long corridor visible to Decumanus. In addition, beside the *triclinium*, separated by a row of columns, there is also an apsidal fountain recess, or *nymphaeum.* Thus, the house has two spaces with semicircular apses, separated by columns, but at different levels, unlike the usual plan of a Christian basilica. The Christian faith of the owners of the house is evidenced by the

5 Paroli 1999.

6 Brenk 2001, 269-70.

7 Rieger 2001, 249, 260, n. 9.

8 Brenk 2001, 264-66, figs. 4-7.

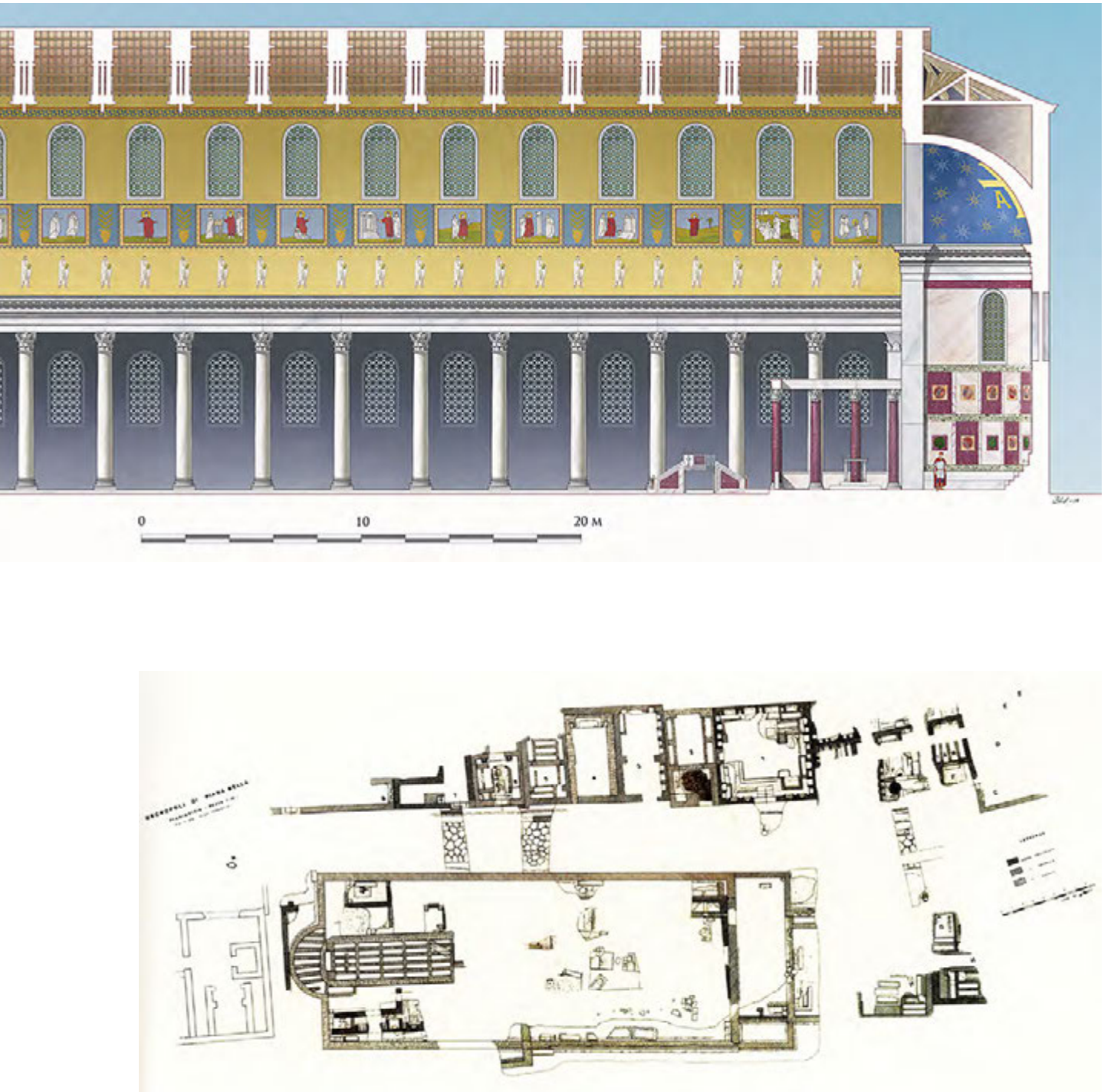


Figure 2. Floor plan of the Basilica di Pianabella. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

inscription *In Christo* (*khi-rho* symbol) *Geon, Fison, Tigris, Euphrata*. *Tigrinianorum sumite Fontes,* in the marble architrave supported by two marble columns that adorned the entrance to the *nymphaeum* (**Fig. 4**). The text thus refers to the four rivers of Paradise, in the name of Christ. Beat Brenk has suggested that the reference to the rivers of Paradise is symbolic, since the text suggests that the owners of the house, the *Tigrinianii*, used the water of the *nymphaeum* in a secular context.[9]

9 Brenk 2001, 265-66.



Figure 3. Domus Tigriniani, view of the semicircular apses of the *nymphaeum* and the *triclinium*. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 4. Domus Tigriniani. *In Christo* (khi-rho symbol) *Geon, Fison, Tigris, Euphrata. Tigrinianorum sumite Fontes*. Photo: Arja Karivieri.





Figure 5a-b. The terracotta oil lamp produced by Annius Serapiodorus, with a Good Shepherd carrying a sheep on his shoulders depicted on the discus. The central discus is surrounded by a stylized vine. At the bottom of the lamp the name of the lamp maker is visible, ANNISER, in an abbreviated form. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 2509. Photos: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

There are written sources related to later martyr legends that refer to early Christians in Ostia before the early fourth century CE. These legends tell about several Christians who suffered martyrdom in Ostia in the third century CE, during the years when Christians were persecuted in the Roman Empire. The most famous of these martyrs is Aurea; the Church of S. Aurea in the centre of modern Ostia Antica was built in honour of Aurea.[10] No archaeological remains or Christian graves can be dated to the third century, but there is one group of objects that may have been favored by Christians, i.e., terracotta lamps with the Good Shepherd depicted on the central discus, produced by Annius Serapiodorus, a lamp maker in Ostia, in the early

10 See the article by Melotti in this book.



Figure 6. The bronze ring is dominated by the X P - symbol, or *Khi rho*, the initials of Christ in Greek. Ostia Nuovi Depositi, inv. 4135. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

third century CE.[11] (**Figs. 5a-b; Cat. no. 160**). However, this motif can be interpreted in a neutral way, since it was part of the traditional imagery of ancient art. At the same time, Annius Serapiodorus made lamps for other customers, with images of Roman gods, such as Mars and Fortuna.

At the end of the third century, symbols of the Christian faith began to appear in the catacombs of Rome and on Christian tombstones, the most important of which is the so-called *khi-rho* symbol, depicting the first two letters of Christ's name in Greek, superimposed. A ring engraved with the *khi-rho* symbol (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 159**) and a silver mirror frame adorned with the same symbol (see the article by Berg, p. 285, fig. 16) have also been found in Ostia. This symbol also adorned the entrance to the *nymphaeum* of the *Domus Tigriniani.*

Most of the Christian inscriptions found in Ostia are published in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, volume XIV. The latest discoveries have been published by Alfredo Marinucci, Danilo Mazzoleni, and Donatella Nuzzo.[12] According to Mazzoleni, some Christian inscriptions of Ostia have features that appear in the inscriptions of the late third or early fourth century CE, and such a date has also been suggested for some sarcophagi.[13] The tombstones identify the burial as Christian by the expressions *hic dormit* (here rests), and the phrase *in pace* (in peace) is often added.[14] These expressions replaced the dedication to the Spirits of the Underworld that was usual in the pagan tombstones, either in the form of *Dis Manibus* or as an abbreviation *D M* at the top of the text. Surprisingly, this expression, *hic dormit*, was particularly popular in the Ostia region and along the coast in the fourth century CE, but rare in Rome.[15]

Most early Christian tombs in Ostia were found during the excavations of the early nineteenth century south-east of the city, where the churches of San Ercolano and St. Laurentius are located. One of the inscriptions tells that Anicius Auchenius Bassus and Tyrrenia Honorata dedicated the Church to God and the Saints.[16] Anicius Auchenius Bassus was a senator and the city prefect in 382-383 CE.

Augustine lived with his mother Monica in Ostia, and described his time there in the *Confessiones*.[17] Monica fell ill and died in Ostia in 387 CE. Monica, who came from Hippo to Ostia, did not want to be buried in her hometown in Africa. Instead, she was buried according to the local customs in Ostia. In the early Christian history of Ostia, the tomb of Monica is said to have been located at the Basilica of S. Aurea, where there is a tombstone associated with her cult today, in the same chapel as the inscription interpreted as the tombstone of Aurea (cf. the article of Melotti, p. 386, fig. 2). Three fragments of the epitaph of Monica were found in 1945 during the excavation of the Basilica of S. Aurea, used as the cover of a terracotta sarcopha-

11 Ceci 2001, 192, 194, fig. 2.

12 Marinucci 1991; Mazzoleni 2001; Nuzzo 2019. A volume presenting the Christian inscriptions of Ostia is forthcoming in the series *Inscriptiones christianae Italiae*, see Nuzzo 2019.

13 Mazzoleni 2001, 283.

14 Mazzoleni 2001, 284; Nuzzo 2019.

15 Mazzoleni 2001, 284.

16 *CIL* XIV 1875. Mazzoleni 2001, 284.

17 Aug. *conf.* 9, 8-12.

gus. The tombstone of Monica retains the first six lines of the memorial that Consul Anicius Auchenius Bassus dedicated to Monica and her son Augustine in 408 CE:[18]

> *Hic posuit cineres genetrix castissima prolis*
> *Augustine tui(s) altera lux meriti(s),*
> *qui servans pacis caelestia iura sacerdos*
> *commissos populos moribus instituis.*
> *gloria vos maior gestorum laude coronat*
> *virtutum mater felicior subole*.
>
> "Here the righteous mother set her ashes, Augustine, another merit;
> as a priest, you served the laws of heavenly peace,
> by teaching your life to the nations entrusted to you,
> greater glory than the glorification of your achievements will crown both of you, Mother of Goodness, happier for your offspring."[19]

The complete text is preserved in its entirety in a seventh-century manuscript, and Douglas Boin therefore suggests this later date to the inscription on the basis of archaeological, paleographic, and philological grounds.[20]

To the east of the theatre of Ostia, along the Decumanus Maximus, there was a *nymphaeum* that was converted during the early Middle Ages into a Christian chapel or an *oratorium* (**Fig. 7**); a lid of a sarcophagus found in the area preserved the inscription *Hic Quiriacus dormit in pace*,[21] dedicated to Quiriacus, a text that has been used as evidence for the existence of the Christian cult adjacent to the theatre. An Early Christian sarcophagus depicting Orpheus is also present at the site today (**Fig. 8**). According to the legend, the site is connected to Bishop Cyriacus, who suffered martyrdom in the late third century CE, but there is no evidence to support this interpretation.[22]

Philosophy in Ostia

In Ostia, as in other large cities in the Roman Empire, philosophy and natural sciences could be studied. To the south of the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria is a building known as the Terme del Filosofo, the Baths of the Philosopher; the name was given to the building when two portraits interpreted as portraits of one of the most famous philosophers of Late Antiquity, Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism in the third century CE, were found in the excavations (**Fig. 9**). There is a vaulted room at the east end of the Baths north of the central courtyard, built *c.* 235-250 CE. To the south of the courtyard there is a long open hall, with benches between the brick pillars of the north wall facing the central courtyard and a wall bench along the south wall (**Fig. 10**). There is a wall recess at the end of the hall, where either portraits of philosophers or other small

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18 Brenk 2001, 270; Germoni 2001, 437. The text is known from several mediaeval manuscripts.

19 Boin 2013, 229-31.

20 *Anthologia Latina, sive poesis latinae supplementum*, 140 (c. 670 CE). Boin 2013, 229-31.

21 *CIL* XIV 5232. Mazzoleni 2001, 284-85.

22 Brenk 2001, 264-65; Mazzoleni 2001, 284-85; Bruun 2016, 799-800.



Figure 7. *Nymphaeum*, facing the Decumanus Maximus, that was converted into a Christian oratory in the early Middle Ages. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 8. Early Christian sarcophagus depicting Orpheus. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

sculptures could have been preserved. This eastern part of the Baths may have served as a philosophical school or a lecture hall.[23]

23 For the analysis of the excavations and reconstructions, see Boersma *et al.* 1985, figs. 36 and 137.

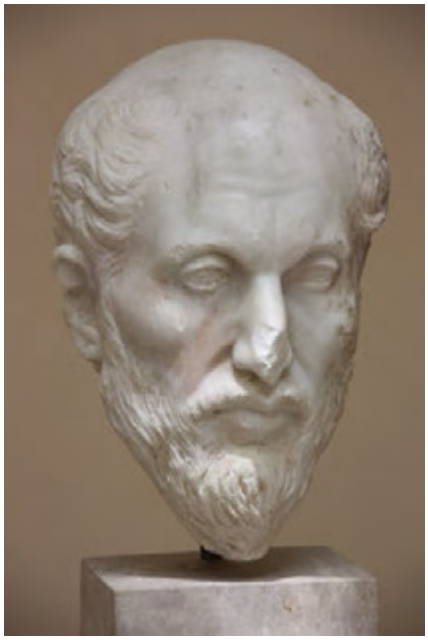


Figure 9. Portrait of a philosopher found in the Terme del Filosofo. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 1386. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 10. Meeting hall in the Terme del Filosofo with wall benches. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

A marble relief was found in a late antique building near the Temple of Hercules, depicting a lecture or a seminar, either at one of Ostia's philosophical schools, or representing a Christian speaker whose sentences are written down by two persons sitting at tables, while others are clearly having a heated discussion on the same subject (**Fig. 11; Cat. no. 161**). An additional interpretation of the scene would be a courtroom scene, where a professional speaker in the centre of the scene either defends his customer or accuses his customer's opponent.[24]

We know that Egyptian-born Plotinus moved to Rome in the mid-third century CE and quickly gained popularity. His students included many senators, also upper-class women, and the Emperor Gallienus and the Empress Salonina showed him favour.[25] Plotinus spent most of his final years in Rome before his death in Campania in 270 CE. Plotinus' Neo-Platonic doctrines were strongly influential in Rome, and Augustine too, who came to Ostia in the late fourth century, studied Plato's texts with the help of Latin texts that had been written on the basis of Plotinus' teachings. Porphyry, one of Plotinus' most famous students, wrote a biography of Plotinus that states that his teacher based his lectures in Rome for ten years on his studies with his own teacher, Ammonius, without writing any notes. However, Plotinus encouraged his students to ask many questions. Thus, there were lively discussions during Plotinus' lectures, just as we can imagine from the image shown in **Fig. 11**. Plotinus' pupil Amelius, who stayed with Plotinus for twenty-four years, criticized these early Roman debates as "pointless chatter", but he wrote down the notes of all the meetings of the philosophical school of Plotinus and compiled *c.* 100 volumes, which he gave to his adoptive son.[26] According to Porphyry, Plotinus himself began writing notes on the subjects that came up in the meetings of the school during the first year of the reign of the Emperor Gallienus, but few had obtained copies of them.[27]

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24 Cf. May 2002, 49-68.

25 Cf. Porph. *Plot.* 7, 9 and 12.

26 Porph. *Plot.* 3.

27 Porph. *Plot.* 4.



Figure 11. A marble relief featuring a lecture. Two scribes write down the speaker's presentation, and at the same time the audience discusses the subject and gestures vigorously. The relief, which has been dated to the late fourth century CE, was found in a late antique building near the Temple of Hercules. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 130. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio fotografico.

Outside the Porta Marina of Ostia, near the ancient seafront, was found an L-shaped, late-antique luxurious building complex that has been named the Building with *Opus sectile* in scholarly literature. Supported by two columns, the arcade with three arches gave a luminous entrance to the most important, rectangular room of the building, whose walls were decorated with *opus sectile* panels consisting of multi-coloured marble, porphyry, granite, etc., featuring geometric patterns, floral motifs, fish and battles of exotic animals.[28] In the middle of the side wall, there is a bust of a bearded male character; he shows with his fingers the sign of the speaker. The head of the male figure is surrounded by a circle of white marble, the

28 Brenk 2001, 266-68, figs. 8-10. Today, the reconstructed main hall of the *Opus sectile* - building is the main attraction of the Museo dell'Alto Medioevo in EUR.

nimbus. This portrait was originally interpreted as a portrait of Christ, but Beat Brenk has shown that Christ is always depicted in the middle of the space in all portrayals in the fourth and fifth centuries CE, and never as part of a completely secular program of images like in this room in the Building with *Opus sectile*. Brenk notes that the picture depicts a philosopher or a teacher, and suggests that the building would have been a school built in the late fourth century CE, a *collegium*.[29]

The Jews of Ostia and the Synagogue

Ostia also had a significant Jewish community by the early Imperial period. This is evidenced by many inscriptions and a significant synagogue complex south of the city, along the Via Severiana by the sea, dating back to Late Antiquity (**Fig. 12**). There are two interpretations of the history of the Synagogue (see also below), based on the earliest results of the first excavations of Maria Floriani Squarciapino in the 1960s and the interpretation of the synagogue project of the University of Lund led by Birger Olsson in the late 1990s, based on literary sources, the first excavations, and archaeological material. The second interpretation is represented by Professor L. Michael White of the University of Texas at Austin. The publication of the final results of the American excavation project will provide much additional material for a new discussion of the history of the complex.

The entrance to the Synagogue is located south of the Via Severiana. Through the entrance the visitors descend into the vestibule of the Synagogue, and next to the stairs there is a well with a marble well-head. From the front yard, three entrances lead to the synagogue itself and two entrances to a room with a furnace and a table with a marble table top. The Synagogue's main hall is elongated and divided into different levels and floors: the lower front has mosaic floors and the rear, the higher part, has an *opus sectile* floor. Between

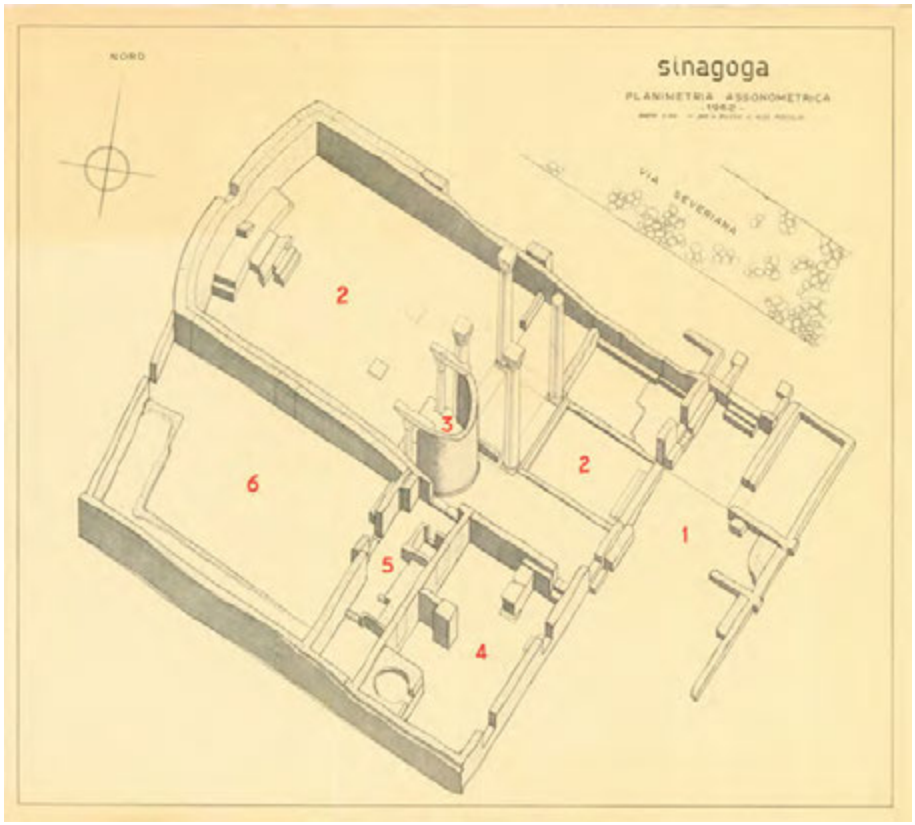


Figure 12. The plan of the synagogue in Ostia. 1. Front yard, 2. Corridor and main hall. 3. Torah-shrine. 4. Kitchen. 5. Additional room. 6. Large meeting-hall. Plan: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Disegni.

29 Brenk 2001, 268.



Figure 13. The Torah-shrine of the Synagogue with two columns supporting decorated consoles. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

the two spaces, there are four Corinthian columns, the recesses at the bottom of which show that there was some kind of fence between the columns that limited the space. According to Floriani Squarciapino, the visitors entered from the central door of the main hall of the synagogue into the most sacred area through the area covered by four columns; the door to the right would have been the entrance to the pool for ritual purification.[30]

On the left side of the main hall, between the two columns and the wall, there is a semicircular masonry structure, the holy shrine of the synagogue, where the sacred texts of the Jewish congregation, Torah, were kept (**Fig. 13**). This holy *aron*, the holy shrine, is placed on an elevated base. Four steps led to the apse that was covered with *opus sectile* decoration. There are two columns on the sides of the base that support the composite capitals. The capitals support consoles, decorated with gilded reliefs of Jewish symbols: a seven-branched candlestick, *menorah*, engraved with squares and rhomboids imitating gem-stones and diamonds, *etrogh* (lemon), *lulav* (palm branch) and *shofar* (horn that symbolizes the victory at Jericho) (**Figs. 14a-b; Cat. no. 162**).[31] Opposite the *aron*, in front of the curved rear wall of the main hall, there is a pedestal that apparently had a podium for the reading of the Law. The holy shrine had been placed so that when studying the holy texts, members of the community had to look to the southeast, toward Jerusalem.

Floriani Squarciapino dates the first phase of the Synagogue to the end of the first century CE, and its last reconstruction to the early fourth century CE, when the Torah shrine was expanded. The date of the

30 Floriani Squarciapino 2001, 272-73.

31 Floriani Squarciapino 2001, 273-74; Panariti 2001, 436; Boin 2013, 155-57.



Figures 14a-b. The marble console is decorated with symbols of Judaism. 14a: Arja Karivieri. 14b: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio fotografico.

Synagogue has ignited much debate among researchers. Douglas Boin, in his book on Ostia in Late Antiquity, follows the new date proposed by the excavation team of L. Michael White from the University of Texas at Austin, combining the construction of the Synagogue with the elevation of the whole area when the new road, the Via Severiana, was built along the seafront *c*. 200 CE.[32] According to White, the building initially would not have been a synagogue in the first century CE, but was built for private use, and it would have been turned into a synagogue only in the second phase. However, we know for certain that the Synagogue was in use at least until the late fifth century CE.

The activities of Jews in Ostia are attested also in inscriptions from the early Imperial period. First, an inscription of Caius Iulius Iustus found in Castelporziano shows that Ostia had a significant Jewish community in the first century CE.[33] Second, another piece of evidence for the construction history of the Ostian Synagogue is provided by an inscription written in Greek and Latin, dedicated to the health of the Emperor, that was found embedded in the floor of the entrance hall of the Synagogue. In this text, dated to the third century CE, Mindis Faustos says that he has used his own money to finance the construction of an ark, *keiboton*.[34] The third text, found south of Ostia, tells of Plotius Fortunatus, who was the *archisynagogus*, the head of the Jewish synagogue.[35]

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32 Boin 2013, 119-21.

33 Runesson 2001, 88, fig. 106; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 186-87, no. 48.1.

34 Runesson 2001, 85-88, fig. 105; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 188, no. 48.4; Boin 2013, 120-22.

35 Floriani Squarciapino 2001, 275-77; Runesson 2001, 91, fig. 107; Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Caldelli – Zevi 2010, 188, no. 48.3; Boin 2013, 157.

Magic in everyday life

In the Imperial period and in Late Antiquity, it was customary in the Roman Empire to use amulets as symbols of good luck and to ward off sickness and evil spirits, such as phallic amulets (see the article by Berg in this volume, p. 318) as necklaces, snake jewelry (see the article by Germoni in this volume, p. 276), or, for example, amulets and miniatures depicting gods, demigods, or guardian spirits, which were preserved in the dwellings either on the domestic altar of the gods or in wall recesses. In crisis situations, a specialist, a magician, could be contacted for help, and the abilities of Egyptians, in particular, as masters of magic rituals and secret knowledge, were highly valued. A magician could help make magical rites to win someone's love or to overcome an enemy in a dispute.[36] In Ostia, finds also include a statuette of Osiris, related to Egyptian cults[37] (**Fig. 15; Cat. no. 166**), and a Roman replica of a scarab statuette (**Fig. 16; Cat. no. 165**).[38] In rituals of power, symbols and deities were adapted from different religious traditions. It was believed that these sculptures enabled magicians to create a connection with the spiritual world.

Many examples of curses written on small lead tablets, asking for demons to help in chariot racing to overturn rival chariots, have been found throughout the Roman Empire. There are magical spells to





Figure 16. A statuette depicting a scarab, of green serpentinite. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3578. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Figure 15. A statuette of green serpentinite depicting Osiris. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3580. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

36 See Karivieri 2010 for St. Augustine's definition of magic and religion, and a short introduction to the various categories of magic.

37 This small statuette shows Osiris as a mummy, with both arms crossed on the chest. Osiris has a crown on his head, decorated with a snake in front. In the hieroglyphs engraved on a pilaster that is attached to the statuette's back, a person called Psammeticus is mentioned. The statuette can be dated to the late phase of Egyptian culture. Height 13 cm. Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. 3580. Agnoli 1997a, 414.

38 The scarab imitates original Egyptian scarabs. On the base of the scarab, signs written in five lines imitating hieroglyphs are preserved. The length is 8.5 cm and the height 3 cm. Ostia, Nuovi depositi, inv. 3578. Agnoli 1997b, 416.



Figure 17. Small lead plate. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4164. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.





Figure 18a-b. Double-sided circular amulet in bronze, where Hecate with her three characters is depicted, and on the other side Solomon and a plurality of magic symbols. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4168. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio fotografico.

help a man in love with a woman to succeed in making her leave her family, to become deeply in love in him, come to his house and never leave again. These curses and magical spells often contain magical signs and symbols in addition to Latin or Greek words. A curse tablet, inv. 17044, found in Ostia preserves a list of about thirty named persons, most of them women (see **Cat. no. 143**, p. 506). This rolled curse tablet was found in the Tomb 11 of the Porta Romana necropolis in 1954.[39]

A simple small lead plate, inv. 4164, is embellished with both the letter "A" and the reverse letter "R", added by a cross line, which may have been either a Christogram or a staurogram depicting the cross and the letter rho, a symbolic image of Christ on the cross. This lead plate is also believed to have a secret meaning (**Fig. 17; Cat. no. 164**). The goddess Hecate, who was portrayed in in the Imperial period and in Late Antiquity as either a three-headed female figure or as three female characters, played an important role in ancient magic. Apuleius wrote in his novel the *Golden Ass* in the second century CE that Hecate is the same goddess as Juno, Bellona and Isis.[40] According to ancient literary sources, black puppies in particular were sacrificed at the crossroads in the cult rituals of Hecate. A double-sided round bronze amulet, inv. 4168, from Ostia could be worn by its owner either through a hole made through the amulet or attached to a garment. (**Figs. 18a-b; Cat. no. 163**) Three female figures decorating the other side of the amulet depict three forms of Hecate, of which the outer two hold a torch and a blade in their hands.[41] In addition, the figure shows a seven-branched candlestick, snakes and other symbols. As the seven-branched candlestick shows, many Jewish symbols were used in ancient magic, and Jews were also believed to have a special knowl-

39 Fora 2001, 448.

40 Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, 11, 47.

41 Cf. the description and interpretation of the amulet by Douglas Boin, Boin 2013, 103-08.

edge of magic. On the other side of the upper edge of the talisman is written the name Solomon, and below is depicted a male character turned to the right, with a rod in his raised left hand. With the rod in his right hand, the man touches the large container in front of him. On the left is depicted the so-called *caduceus* stick adorned with two snakes, the symbol of the god Mercury, and there are various symbols around the man. Thus, the amulet contains a large number of magic symbols, as well as the goddess Hecate and Solomon, both associated with magic in antiquity, and Solomon was believed to possess secret knowledge.

St Hippolytus and the Martyrs of Ostia.
The Sea and the Construction of a New Christian Landscape

Marxiano Melotti

The resting place of St Hippolytus and the memory of the Ostia area

A few disordered lines on a small, humble-looking marble slab (*Hic requiescit beatus Ypolitus Martyr*) (**Fig. 1**; **Cat. no. 168**) mark the resting place of the blessed martyr Hippolytus[1]. The history of Christian culture in the west has been built over the centuries on such objects of popular devotion. Short and simple texts like this testify to a process of popular construction and transmission of the faith, based, on different levels, on local identity, a sense of cultural belonging and pilgrimage. The gravestones with the names of the earliest martyrs, like their burial places and relics, were signs that marked the landscape, indicating the presence in space and time of a Christian community. There, in that place, a man or women had been martyred or buried (and often both), who (like the civilizing heroes of Greek mythology) had forever changed the cultural history of the area, initiating or confirming a cultural and religious tradition. The marble slab, in short, marks the start of a historical and cultural process based on collective memory and practices, like acts of devotion and pilgrimages, that connect the individual to the community, and the latter to its territory and past.

Frequently – as at Ostia and Portus – around (or above) these burials, marked by slabs and usually located just outside the urban space in cemetery areas, and thus in meeting and cult spaces, other cults

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1 In the Christian tradition there are several figures with this name. The *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, edited by Smith and Wace (1877), lists ten Hippolyti, seven of which are martyrs. The most influential, known as Hippolytus of Rome, seems to have been a pugnacious theologian and probably a bishop, the author of many texts, including the *Philosophumena* (*Refutatio Omnium Haeresium*). He is regarded as the "last great Greek theologian of the ancient Roman communities" (Cerrato 2002, 6). When in 217 Callistus became Pope, Hippolytus was elected anti-Pope (the first in Christian history). He remained anti-Pope during the papacies of Urban I and Pontianus. According to tradition, he was martyred (probably in 235) together with Pontianus with whom he had reconciled. He is the only anti-Pope who was canonized, and he is considered a saint by both the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Some scholars maintain that there was another Hippolytus, a bishop of Eastern Christianity and author of a *Commentary on Daniel*, composed between 202 and 211. But their works are often confused. The Martyr referred to in the inscription mentioned in our text is often identified as Hippolytus of Rome, in spite of some controversial aspects (for instance, the anti-Pope was martyred in Sardinia and his corpse was translated to the Catacombs on the Via Tiburtina, while the martyr of Portus was martyred and buried in the area of Portus). Some scholars have tried to resolve these contradictions with fideistic, historicist and scientist approaches, revealing an inability to understand the deep cultural meaning of certain texts, such as the lives of saints. For instance, Cecchelli 1982 maintains that Hippolytus the writer should receive a "more correct position among the martyrs of the area of Roman Portus", though these martyrs are "mainly known through a confusing legend, which hardly helps us to reconstruct actual historical reality". On the "question of St Hippolytus" see Loi *et al.* 1977; Saxer 1978; Follieri 1989; and, particularly, Brent 1995, who contextualizes the various works attributed to Hippolytus within the social and theological tensions of the third century. The "plethora of evidence and the evolving intricacies" of the issue are clearly discussed by Cerrato 2002, 3-13. He recalls that "the first universal martyrology – the *martyrologium Hieronymianum*, composed in Northern Italy between ca. 431 and 450 – lists sixteen days for the veneration of Hippolyti". He adds that the entries in the texts on a Hippolytus who was a prolific writer do not appear to predate the medieval period, although numerous non-literary Hippolyti are listed: "The records provide evidence of the late association of an author with Rome and Roman Portus" (8-9 and n. 10). "The existence of a Hippolytus, bishop and martyr of Portus Romanus, is attested by a memorial basilica erected as early as the fourth century and supported by martyrologies, including the *martyrologium Hieronymianum*. The dates are confused and reported variously: *natale* 22 August *post* 222 - c. 252, or c. 260, or post 268" (10-11).

developed, settlements emerged and basilicas were built. Obviously, this is often a myth-making process projected backwards in time, with the construction or invention of a tradition (to use a modern concept) in which the cult place is associated with a founding hero-martyr, characterized by a specific history and often gifted with special powers.

It was through this mechanism that the Basilica of St Hippolytus was built in the fourth century at Portus, in the Isola Sacra area around the grave of the martyr Hippolytus.[2] Similarly, between the late fourth and early fifth century, the Basilica of St Aurea was built and an independent settlement formed around the tomb of the martyr Aurea at Ostia.[3] Portus and Ostia later became bishops' seats, small but important facets of this new organization of the territory.

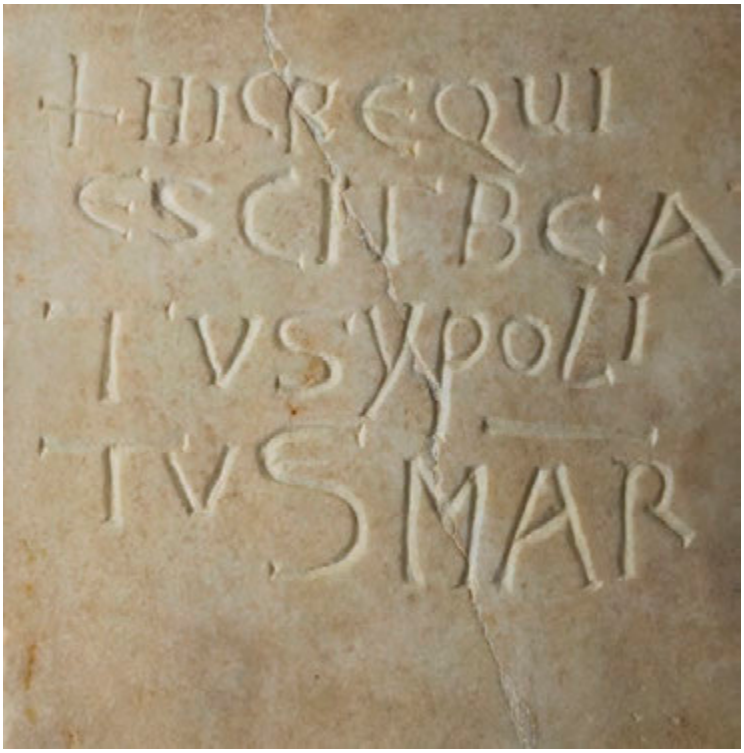


Figure 1. Funerary inscription of Saint Hippolytus that was found during the excavations of the Basilica of St Hippolytus at Isola Sacra. On the basis of the style of the inscription, it has been suggested that the text dates to either the ninth century or the twelfth century CE. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 32838. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The Basilica of St Aurea probably became a bishop's seat in the ninth century, after the collapse of the Basilica of Constantine, with the foundation by Pope Gregory IV of the village of Gregoriopoli (later the village of Ostia Antica, just outside the present-day archaeological site of Ostia).[4] These cult places must have been of great importance, not just to the Christian community living in the area but even to that of Rome and, a few centuries later, to many of the pilgrims who travelled to Rome (often in search of relics of martyrs) following in the footsteps of the early founders of Christianity.

The inscription of St Monica

The church of St Aurea had an advantage in this context because, according to tradition, it housed the remains of St Monica, the mother of Augustine who had died in 387 at Ostia, where she was waiting

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2 The basilica, destroyed in 455 during the Vandal sack, and rebuilt and embellished with a splendid ciborium by Pope Leo III in the early ninth century, was brought back to light by an excavation campaign begun in 1970 in the area next to the Romanesque bell tower of St Hippolytus. The inscription with the name of Hippolytus, dated to between the ninth and twelfth century, appears on a sarcophagus, containing the bones of several individuals, found in the area of the chancel during these excavations. See Mazzoleni 2001 and Garella *et al.* 2001, 391-92.

3 The basilica is thought to have been built in the fifth century over the place of the martyr's tomb, in a suburban area of Ostia, that, like the suburban areas to the east and south-east of the walls of Ostia, "had always been one of the strongholds of the Christian community" (Pavolini 1986a, 271). Bakker 2000 accepts a date in the fifth century. According to Boin 2010, the foundation of this church in the fifth century is not sufficiently demonstrated: the only certain element is a column of the fifth century reused in a later building (and found only in 1950), bearing the inscription *S[ancta] Aur[ea]* (201, no. 21). Mastrorilli 2012 thinks that this column proves the existence of a church dedicated to St Aurea in the fifth century and considers it plausible that the church existed already at the end of the preceding century, when St Augustine buried his mother.

4 See Mastrorilli 2011, 122, and Mastrorilli 2012, 221-22 and 234.

with her son to set sail for Africa.[5] In a famous passage of his *Confessions* (7, 8-32), Augustine sadly recalls his mother's final days, her death and her funeral. These pages of great tenderness and sensitivity contributed to the construction of the image and to the fame of St Monica; at the same time, they offer a picture of Ostia in the early centuries of Christianity. On their travels, Augustine and his mother found hospitality in a house where, looking onto a garden "far from the noise of the crowd" they could discus the workings of the universe and the meaning of life itself. Augustine was later supported in his moment of grief by his friends and the city's Christian community, who helped him to prepare the funeral celebrations.

These pages by Augustine probably helped to consolidate an image of Ostia as a liminal space, a boundary between different worlds: "On reaching Ostia by the Tiber my mother died".[6] The city, enclosed between the sea and the river, is where the journey (the crossing to Africa) instead becomes a wait for death and transition to a new life.

As the importance of Augustine (and his mother) became gradually consolidated in the Christian imaginary and cultural system, this passage must have led to forms of worship and pilgrimage in the Ostia area and to the search for Monica's grave and relics. An account included in the *Acta Sanctorum* describes the attempt made by a pilgrim from Arrouaise to seek out and recover the relics in 1162.[7] According to tradition, the relics were identified and translated to Rome in 1430.[8]



Figure 2. Funerary inscription of Saint Monica. The text was possibly written by Consul Anicius Auchenius Bassus in 408 CE, who dedicated it to Monica and her son Augustine. The marble slab was used as the cover of a terracotta sarcophagus. Ostia Antica, Basilica of St Aurea, inv. 10732. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio fotografico.

Mentions of this grave have found partial archaeological confirmation in relatively recent times. In 1945 an inscription was found by chance in the small courtyard of the Basilica of St Aurea referencing Monica's burial by Augustine.[9] The text is fragmentary, but its contents are known from other sources: given the importance of the dedication, referring to St Augustine, it was included in an anthology of epitaphs preserved in numerous medieval manuscripts. The text found at Ostia is carved on a marble slab, probably used as the lid of a sarcophagus (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 167**). According to tradition, it was erected shortly after Monica's death by a member of a powerful Christian fam-

5 On St Monica see Clark 2015.

6 Augustinus Hipponensis, *Confessiones* 9, 8, 17.

7 *Acta sanctorum*, May 1: 484-85.

8 On the identification of Monica's tomb and the texts mentioning it, see Mastrorilli 2011, 126, and Mastrorilli 2012, 232-34.

9 On this discovery see, among others, Casamassa 1952-54. The inscription is now placed on the wall of a side chapel in the Basilica of St Aurea in the village of Ostia antica.

ily, the Anicii (perhaps the future consul Anicius Auchenius Bassus).[10] According to others, it was erected at least a couple of centuries later, between the late sixth and early seventh century, as part of a campaign to render the memory of Christian Ostia more visible by setting up markers and monuments in the area.[11]

The martyrs of Ostia

The lives of the first saints of Christian history, as was true of Hippolytus and Aurea, inevitably tended to end tragically. Violent death at the hands of a cruel Roman magistrate hostile to the new religion plays a fundamental role not only in the life course of the saint who, through martyrdom, is symbolically reborn and welcomed into the "other" dimension of sainthood and veneration, but also for the community of worshippers. In contexts of social marginalization, poverty and suffering, not infrequent in the past, they saw themselves in the suffering of the saint and this gave meaning to their own lives: just as the saint found true happiness in death, so each of them, thanks to their faith, could hope for a better future.

Equally, as is often the case in western culture, violence acts as a cultural marker capable of constructing a collective identity as it creates a difference between an "us" and a "them". Additionally, the memory on the part of the community of a specific martyrdom becomes a strong marker of identity that characterizes the history of an area and its value system. The literary and theatrical aspect of many martyrologies, with their gruesome events, also has a cultural and psychological function: it does not merely satisfy human voyeurism but helps to construct a community that, depending on the period and the situation, gathers to hear, read and represent these events.

The stories of St Hippolytus and the other Ostian martyrs form part of this context: an extraordinary repertoire of stories, on the one hand still profoundly influenced by the system of mythical thought of the ancient Greek and pre-Christian Mediterranean world, and on the other coherently aimed at constructing a new collective Christian imaginary through a process of reculturalization of the territory and territorialization of the new culture.[12]

The saints, with their lives and above all their deaths, construct a new Christian cultural landscape inserted into and later replacing that of the dominant pagan culture. Places of martyrdom and burial, like tombs, gravestones and relics, become key elements in this new landscape.

Pilgrimage towards these special places and other cult activities were forms of periodic reappropriation of the territory within a process of constructing a collective memory and community history, different from political and institutional macrohistory. In fact, these texts are religious and literary reworkings, carried out at least a couple of centuries later than the stories they tell, and are the result of successive retellings, interpolations and contaminations that make them the collective and foundational texts of an entire cultural system, just as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were for Greek pre-Christian culture.

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10 In one of these medieval manuscripts, it is specified that the memorial was erected by a *Bassus exconsul*. Scholars have identified three members of the wealthy family of the Anicii, all with the same name, Anicius Auchenius Bassus, to whom this passage might refer. See Boin 2010, 200-02, who leans towards the Bassus who was consul in 408.

11 Boin 2010.

12 The stories of Ostia's martyrs can be found essentially in one Greek manuscript (Taurinus Graecus 116 of the 15th-16th century) and two collections in Latin, the *Acta martyrum ad Ostia Tiberina sub Claudio Gothico*, Rome: Simone de Magistris, 1795, and the *Acta sanctorum*, Antwerp: Société des Bollandistes, 1643-1940. The martyrdom of Hippolytus (BHL 3960-69) appears in *Acta sanctorum*, August 4, 505-06 and in *Acta martyrum* 5; that of Aurea (BHL 808-13) in *Acta sanctorum*, August 4, 757-61 and in *Acta martyrum* 2-3. The texts of the *Acta sanctorum* are available on the site http://www.ostia-antica.org/atexts.org. The site also hosts an English translation of the martyrdom of Aurea (Boin 2006). These texts are thought to have been drawn up during the fifth or sixth century. See on this Dufourcq 1900 and Boin 2010, no. 2, 196.

Death and the power of water

Hippolytus and the other martyrs of Ostia form part of these processes in spite of themselves. However, their histories stand out for their unusual violence, recurrently associated with a specific element: the world of water, be it the Tiber, the sea, the cisterns or wells to be found in the countryside and in the salt pans and marshes. Hippolytus, for example, is bound hand and foot and thrown while still alive into a ditch or a well, depending on the version. Aurea is first tortured on a rack and whipped, then her breasts are burned and her jaw broken, before she is finally thrown into the sea with a stone tied around her neck. Among the other Ostian martyrs, Sabinianus was thrown into a well and Gaius into the fast-flowing river.

A passage from the *Acta Sanctorum* on the martyrdom of Hippolytus[13] offers a vivid and imaginative picture of life in the Isola Sacra area at a fairly late period, when the Basilica of St Hippolytus had already fallen into ruin and been rendered "indecorous" by frequent pirate raids. Immediately afterwards, the text, jumping back several centuries, recalls that the Christians, by night and in secret, had removed the martyr's body from the well into which it had been thrown and, accompanied by hymns and songs of praise, had buried it a short distance away "on the island surrounded by the sea and two branches of the Tiber". The space of the so-called Isola Sacra takes on the connotations of a magical place, separate from the world and in complete discontinuity with real life in the nearby towns.

Hippolytus reappears in another passage, within the story of the martyrdom of St Aurea.[14] Hippolytus (the name given here to a certain Nonnus)[15] is determined to recover the body of Aurea, which has washed up on the shore, and to bury it on the land where the martyr once lived "outside the walls of the gate of Ostia". Again, the relationship with the sea, liminality and otherness are fundamental. Hippolytus, acting as a messenger between worlds, moves between land and sea, in the liminal space of the beach, to recover the bodies of the dead and carry them towards their new dimension[16]. Hippolytus starts the cult of St Aurea by giving shape to her grave. In the *Acta Martyrum ad Ostia Tiberina* Hippolytus appears as a *senex* (i.e. an "old man", perhaps equivalent to the "Nonnus" of the other version) who rebukes the Roman magistrate for persecuting the Christians. The latter flies into a rage and has him thrown alive into a ditch with his hands and feet bound. A miracle also occurs: just as he is hurled into the ditch "before the walls of Portus" infants are long heard giving thanks to God.[17]

Water thus seems to play a special role in these martyrologies, almost as a spectacular and extreme form of baptism. The saints, through this definitive and fatal immersion in water, do not find death but, as in baptism, a new life. In Christian culture, martyrdom corresponds to the *dies natalis*: the day of 'birth'. This

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13 *Acta sanctorum*, August 4, 505-06.

14 *Acta sanctorum*, August 4, 757-61, 2, 17.

15 On the relationships between Nonnus and the various martyrs named Hippolytus see Brent 1995, 36-8: "It is plausible to infer that two aetiological legends, one of Hippolytus and one of Nonnus, are combined rather than a reference being made to a cult with any historical core". According to him, Nonnus should be interpreted as a *cognomen* rather than a description of age. "The ambiguity of the manuscript tradition is indicative of aetiological manipulation and precludes any historical core".

16 It is worth noting that a similar relationship with the sea and the liminal space of the beach appears in the story of another "famous" Hippolytus. As recounted by Euripides in the tragedy *Hippolytus* (lines 1173-1248), its hero, a son of Theseus, is on the beach at Troezen with his horses; these, startled by the crashing of the waves and the prodigious appearance of a bull from the sea, bolt and lead him to death. According to Pausanias, this same Hippolytus, resuscitated by the god Asklepios, travelled to Latium, where he became king of Ariccia and priest of Artemis (*Hellados Periegesis,* 2, 27, 4). This interference between Euripides's character and the Roman martyr also appears in a hymn by a Christian poet, Aurelius Prudentius Clemens (probably 348-413 CE), devoted to the martyrdom of Hippolytus, who was dragged and injured by wild horses in an area of wilderness near Ostia, between the sea, the river and the forest (*Peristephanon*, hymn XI, in *PL*, LX, 530-56).

17 *Acta martyrum ad Ostia Tiberina*, 5.

is thus an initiation ritual that allows the individual to pass from one phase to another and, depending on the context, to acquire a new social identity, entry into a new existential condition, transition to a new age class or to join a special group, as the community of Christians was.

Rites of passage are usually based on antithetical images and symbologies (culture and nature, life and death, light and darkness) in a game of oppositions and complementarities: to acquire a new identity it is necessary to cancel out the preceding one or complete it by acquiring knowledge and experience proper to the sphere not yet known or experienced. Contact with otherness and entry into the other world performed precisely this function.[18] This otherness can take the concrete and experiential form of the forest, the cave or, as in this case, the world of water and the sea. Immersion, disregarding the dubious psychological interpretations based on return to the maternal womb, is a simple and effective way of staging the temporary exit from our world and entry into a different one: dark, dangerous, uninhabitable, infertile (in prevalently agricultural cultures the salty sea is a dangerous "other" with respect to the fertile earth). Re-emergence, adopting the same logic, marked the departure from the phase of temporary incorporation into the other world and the individual's return to the world of culture and sociality.

Rituals of this type exist in many cultures. Without falling into the ahistorical and mechanical trap of some interpretations of comparative anthropology, we could recall that ritual immersion in water was a recurrent rite in ancient Greek culture, as fully attested by the literature and the mythological stories. Scholars have given this ritual, with specific reference to immersion in the sea, the name of *katapontismós*.[19]

In ancient Greek culture, immersion in water had an initiatory meaning that often included aspects of an ordeal: the individual who dove (or was thrown) into the water effectively subjected themselves to a "difficult test", to adopt the definition used by Propp in his analysis of the structures of the fable.[20] Surviving the dive, in some cultural contexts, signalled the individual's purity, their lack of guilt or qualification for entry into a given social group. Similarly, being thrown into the sea could be a punishment[21]. The community, by throwing into the sea an individual considered guilty of a crime or of bringing misfortune, symbolically (and physically) removed the evil from the social space, without being contaminated by direct contact with the sphere of death and blood. The individual thus thrown acted as a *pharmakós*, a scapegoat who purifies the community and, as in a collective rite of passage, allows it to enter a new phase of existence. Clearly, rituals of this type combine aspects of initiation, ordeal and punishment.

The hagiographic texts on the martyrdoms of the Ostian saints, including Hippolytus and Aurea, share this use of the symbolic meaning of water and ritual precipitation. However, we are dealing with a significant symbolic refunctionalization of these ancient practices. The sea and the river are transformed into boundless baptismal fonts. The whole area surrounding Ostia and Portus and all the waters permeating it are Christianized, in a process of cultural appropriation.

To understand the meaning of this operation it is worth remembering that at Ostia and Portus the presence of the sea and of water is a foundational and identity-creating factor. The word Ostia is a toponym meaning "river mouth" and "entryway", and refers to the mouth of the Tiber, just as the word Portus means "harbour".

In this new process of Christian myth-creation, the pervasive presence of water denotes the whole area as marginal, liminal and initiatory: it is almost as if the cultural and urban space disappears in the face of

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18 On rites of passage see van Gennep 1909. On their presence in the classical world, see Brelich 2008.

19 See Hubaux 1923; Gallini 1963; Beaulieu 2016; Melotti 2018. On the ritual use of water in late antiquity see Hellholm *et al.* 2011.

20 Propp 1928.

21 On this aspect see Cantarella 2002.

the looming presence of the river, the sea and the depressions full of water, reinterpreted as spaces of death and passage to an "other" dimension.

Of course, this Christian use of liminality and water is not new but is based, as we have seen, on pre-existing elements. As concerns Ostia and the religious sphere, we could recall, for example, the famous episode, recounted by Ovid, of the matron Claudia Quinta: wrongly accused of breaking the rules, she proves her innocence by effortlessly drawing out the ship bringing the statue of the Magna Mater to Rome, which had run aground in the muddy bed of the Tiber and resisted all efforts made to move it.[22]

Like other Roman cities, Ostia hosted an important ceremony connected to the sea that, owing to its maritime and commercial vocation, took on a special meaning: the *Navigium Isidis*. This was a complex festival in honour of Isis, a goddess of Egyptian origin, protectress of navigation, sailors and, as a figure connected to fertility, of the grain trade, to which the fortunes of the city and its "international" community of merchants, ship-owners and sailors were linked. The festival, held on 5 March when sailing resumed after the winter, involved a procession with her statue and the launching of a boat dedicated to her.[23]

The construction of a Christian landscape

In the texts on the lives of the martyrs of Ostia, the novelty that reveals a change in socio-economic context and cultural perspective is the meaning ascribed to water: no longer an element connected to the circulation of goods and the creation of the material wealth of the Roman ruling class, but an "other" place with funerary and initiatory connotations, linked to the symbolisms and ritual practices of the new Christian culture. Ostia and its harbour are no longer the gateway to the empire or to the commercial space that created its wealth, but a Christian space of initiation, prayer and pilgrimage.[24]

Clearly this is an ideological viewpoint that, especially in the period following the edict of Constantine (313 CE) and the gradual consolidation of state Christianity, did not correspond to reality: not only was the Roman ruling class largely Christian but, as shown by recent research, the area of Portus and in part of Ostia still had an important economic function.[25]

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22 Ov. *fast.* 4, 291-330. The ship runs aground as it enters the river from the sea, in the mouths ("ostia") of the Tiber. The account emphasises the ambiguity of this space, which welcomes and rejects, in keeping with the cultural danger of places like harbours, where different cultures come into contact. The episode, which marks the introduction of the cult of Cybele to Rome in 204 BCE, is also mentioned by Livy (29, 14, 13): Publius Cornelius Scipio, with a boat, takes delivery of the statue from the ship which has just reached Ostia, brings it ashore and entrusts it to the matrons, including Claudia Quinta.

23 The fine terracotta lamp in the shape of a ship with the figures of Isis, her husband Serapis and their son Harpocrates, preserved at Ostia Antica, offers extraordinary evidence for this ceremony (see on this Hänninen 2019). The cult of Isis prefigures important elements of the cult of the Virgin, especially in the form of Maria Stella Maris (among other things, celebrated at Ostia, as in other Mediterranean towns, with a maritime procession of the statue that includes a *katapontismós*: a sailor dives into the sea to recover a ring and gives it to the statue of the Virgin, who thus celebrates her symbolic marriage with the sea). See Witt 1971.

24 In this process of Christian culturalization of the area we can also mention an episode in 849, when the Christian fleet of some powerful coastal cities (Amalfi, Gaeta, Naples and Sorrento) defeated a Saracen fleet in front of the mouth of the Tiber. This battle was the most important naval victory against the Muslims before that of Lepanto. The event is commemorated in a fresco by Raphael of 1514-15 (now in the so-called "Raphael Rooms" in the Vatican Museums). According to tradition, Pope Leo IV travelled to Ostia to bless the Christian soldiers and to celebrate a Mass: the consecrated host ensured the victory. This was probably a key moment in the area's history: the Latin word *ostia* (river mouths) is reconfigured, between myth and para-etymology, as *hostia* (consecrated host). Following the same logic, Fiumicino, which developed in an area adjacent to ancient Portus, hosts the Church of Santa Maria Porto della Salute: the Roman port (*portus*) becomes a place consecrated to a Virgin Mary who, like a harbour for sailors, ensures salvation for her worshippers.

25 Pavolini (1986a) discussing the economy and everyday life in late-antique Ostia, writes that "we know a fair amount about what it no longer was, but we understand much less about what it had become". Ostia's economic role was soon taken over by Portus, triggering, already from the mid-third century, a process of contraction in the principal activities and a gradual but real decline. Ostia first took on a secondary service role with respect to Portus and then, as the latter declined, gradually vanished from history.

These hagiographic texts adopt a different viewpoint: in part they respond to a rationale that we could describe as "global", detached from "local" reality and the immediate use of a specific territory by the community. These are exemplary accounts, with a foundational function, aimed at the whole Christian community. The area of Ostia and Portus takes the form of a symbolic space in the development of Christian culture and society: the countryside and the sea are essentially mythical and literary spaces that witness the deeds of the new founding heroes. The area around Rome, seat of the Popes and symbolic fulcrum of the new culture, in turn becomes a special place, simultaneously marginal and central. This ambiguity and doubleness in some ways revives the historical relationship with Rome resulting from centuries of Ostia's participation in Rome's centrality and, at the same time, its subalternity to Rome.[26]

The importance of Ostia and Portus as an economic district essential to Rome's survival declined, but they continued to be areas of privileged access to the city and above all a vast "other" territory where, with other districts around and outside the city, Rome could stage that other dimension needed to define its identity and that of the faithful. The whole territory around the city, populated by necropolises, catacombs and basilicas, was a sort of huge Christian cemetery that symbolically and factually enveloped Rome, demonstrating its sacred nature especially to pilgrims.

A text, probably of the 12th century, recounting the adventure-filled attempt of a pilgrim from Arrouaise to steal the relics of St Monica, remarks: "The relics of the saints in this derelict place are so numerous that we were unable to find a place where they could be housed in the honourable way that they deserve".[27] In a way that appears almost comical, the text describes the comings and goings of the faithful, busily digging everywhere to find relics and preserve them in a safe place.

From this perspective, these areas are in some ways conceptually interchangeable, to the extent that various martyrs were conceived as being buried in several places in the area. For example, tradition also assigns to Hippolytus (whose identification with various historical figures of the same name is debated, as we have mentioned) a burial in a necropolis on the Via Tiburtina, as well as on the Isola Sacra.[28]

Nor should it be forgotten that these hagiographical texts are the complex outcome of successive interpolations, and can thus also be read cross-chronologically. In their representation, Ostia and Isola Sacra form an area that encapsulates their animated heyday but also their reorganization after the decline of the earlier world and economic system. As such, the area becomes a de-urbanized dream space: a sort of vast cemetery and grandiose battlefield where the wars between Christians and pagans were fought and where the memory of those clashes can be traced.[29]

The Christian community of Ostia was thus effectively consolidated within the context of a recession. The excavations and studies directed by Simon Keay, however, indicate a more complex dynamics with phases of reorganization of activities in the area linked to the trade in commodities See Germoni *et al.* 2018. On Ostia in late antiquity also see Février 1958; Pavolini 1986b. On its Christianization see Brenk 2001; Boin 2013. With reference also to Ostia in the Middle Ages, see Paroli 1993.

26 Ostia long played an important part in the internal dynamics of the church. According to a tradition dating back to 336 and reported by Augustine, its bishop enjoyed the privilege of consecrating the new Pope. Additionally, at times of *sede vacante*, he could perform Papal duties. In 1150, the Pope decreed that its bishop was to be dean of the college of Cardinals; the seat of Ostia was assigned to the cardinal dean of the Sacred College; over the centuries as many as twelve bishops of Ostia have been elected Pope; the most recent cardinal bishops of Ostia include Joseph Ratzinger, later elected Pope with the name of Benedict XVI.

27 *Acta sanctorum*, May 1, 484-85, especially 2, 9.

28 According to tradition, the Catacomb of St Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina was built by Vigilius around the tomb of a St Hippolytus, usually identified as the bishop, philosopher and anti-Pope martyred in the early third century. See Berthonière 1985. This funerary area is also thought to have hosted, among other things, the remains of the martyr Concordia, who, like Hippolytus, was thrown into a wet place (in her case, as an extreme outrage, a sewer). See Ghilardi 2014. Brent 1995, 38, maintains that the cult-centre on the via Tiburtina existed before 354, well before there was any such centre at Portus, whose earliest remains date from 385.

29 Interesting are the conclusions of Boin (2013), according to whom, between the sixth and seventh century, Ostia "emerged at the end of this long process as a monument in and of ruins, but it was also a monument to ruin, an act of abandonment, conscious or practical, that commemorated a Christian victory over the past".

These minute epigraphical traces, from the inscription of St Hippolytus to that of St Monica, are thus precious signs of this process of Christian reculturalization and re-territorialization: a grandiose process of appropriation of the economic, political, cultural and urban space of non-Christian Roman society. Ostia is no longer thought of as the port of the empire, and the port of Rome is no longer a space of trade and commerce, but a new Christian space of initiation. We are dealing with a new Mediterranean and European "post-global" world that goes beyond the specific experience of globalization created by the Roman state. At least on a symbolic and ideological level, we see a transformation and reduction of space and mobility: from trade to pilgrimage.

The story continues. Fiumicino and the festival of St Hippolytus

There is now a new chapter in the story of St Hippolytus. As we have seen, the sarcophagus and the bones interpreted as the relics of the saint, and the inscription with his name, were discovered relatively recently, thanks to the archaeological excavation begun in 1970.

The diocese and those in charge of the ceremonies are in no doubt as to the historical identity of Hippolytus and the attribution to him of the remains uncovered: the saint is presented and celebrated as the first bishop of Portus, disciple of St Clement of Alexandria who came to Rome to venerate the tombs of Peter and Paul and who was martyred in 229 CE, as he celebrated the Eucharist. The diocesan website, perhaps adopting a more modern and less ethnocentric view of Mediterranean culture (also more open to welcoming outsiders), claims that Hippolytus was of "Arabs [sic] race, perhaps a native of Persia".[30]

By intertwining the fates of the area's various martyrs, the website also performs an interesting act of mythopoesis in line with ancient hagiography. It explains that Hippolytus was "thrown into a deep cistern full of water and immediately dragged to the bottom by the weights tied to his hands and feet" (a fact not mentioned in the Latin *Acta*).

On the website, the story of the saint's remains is told in an engaging manner. In the 10th century, the sarcophagus was concealed beneath the floor of the cathedral and forgotten for centuries. "Isola Sacra is a no-man's land": "only a few very poor fishermen live here, criminality flourishes and it seems impossible to turn things around". This image is consistent with the liminal and marginal nature of the area. But its otherness is broken by the discovery of the sarcophagus: Hippolytus "thus definitively emerges from the mists of the past".

The remains of the saint have been kept since 1988 in an urn set on the altar of the Church of Sant'Ippolito e Lucia at Porto-Fiumicino, on which the same legend present on the marble slab found during the archaeological excavations has been incised. From the early 1990s, on 5 October at Fiumicino, for the festival of the patron saint, the relics are carried in procession to the ancient Basilica of St Hippolytus at Isola Sacra, where the bishops celebrate the Eucharist.[31]

A website promoting the area describes the ceremony as follows: "According to tradition, the urn holding the saint's ashes is placed on a horse-drawn carriage that drives along the route to reach the Basilica of St Hippolytus".[32] Though recent, the festival is now presented as a traditional one. The ceremony ends, as the diocesan website writes, "on the ruins of what was the first Cathedral Basilica in our diocese".[33]

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30 See: http://www.diocesiportosantarufina.it/home/news_det.php?neid=2650.

31 The celebrations for St Hippolytus are organized, in collaboration with the diocese, by the Comitato S. Ippolito and the Pro Loco Fiumicino.

32 See: https://ostiaedintorni.it/festa-s-ippolito-patrono-fiumicino/.

33 See: https://www.santerufinaeseconda.it/2019/04/05/santippolito/.



Figure 3. Dialogue between religion and archaeology. The Mass of St Hippolytus on the ruins of the Basilica of St Hippolytus. Photo: Pro Loco Fiumicino.

Mass is held in the archaeological site, attended by the faithful outside the boundary fence (**Fig. 3**). The day ends with guided tours around the remains of the Basilica and its Antiquarium, organized in collaboration with the Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica. Here the archaeological area becomes an interesting space where past and present, archaeology and religion, faith and tourism, education and territorial marketing can meet and converse. All in a dimension profoundly linked to the area's local identity, adding value to both the archaeological site and the religious festival.

This relationship between archaeology, religion and identity appears in numerous local narratives. For example, some area websites credit archaeology with having confirmed the historical existence of Hippolytus, whom many had regarded as a merely legendary figure.[34]

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34 A small brochure with a prayer to the saint, published by the Diocese of Porto and distributed during his festival, also refers both to the ancient hagiographical texts and the recent archaeological excavations (Sant'Ippolito 2018). It explains first that the martyr, according to the *Passio*, was thrown into a deep cistern full of water; then it specifies, between quotation marks, that "the ancient account reports that 'the faithful buried him with every care in that same place, about 60 feet from the well'"; finally, it concludes that "the recent archaeological excavations have offered an interesting historical confirmation that these traditions are well founded" and Hippolytus "thus definitively emerges from the mists of the past". Indeed, as noted by Germoni and Genovese (2019), excavations have detected the presence of the system of ancient cisterns in the Basilica area, vivid confirmation of the landscape of wells and ditches full of water passed down by the hagiographical tradition. As for the intricate question of St Hippolytus, the brochure mentioned above seems to have no doubts: the recent recovered Hippolytus, "first bishop of Portus and martyr", must not be confused either with Hippolytus Romanus or "even with an anti-Pope". The conflicting philosophical dimensions of the ancient writer named Hippolytus, in our deintellectualized age no longer interested in theological issues (and frightened by the idea of arguing against the Pope), is regarded as a dangerous subject to avoid.

The celebrations for St Hippolytus allow us to grasp an extremely interesting process in real time: the construction of a tradition for identity-related and, in part, political ends. This is a cultural process typical of the modern period; between the 19th and 20th centuries, nation states and other political entities constructed "new" national and collective identities by introducing new heroes and new myths.[35] Consider for example the political use of Arminius or Spartacus.[36]

In a largely post-modern and post-political context like that of the present, this now seems like a practice of the past. Fiumicino, by contrast, has recently needed to create its own identity. Until 1992 it was part of the municipality of Rome. When it became an independent municipality, it also had to identify its own patron saint. Of course, Hippolytus was chosen: a local martyr and saint connected to the history of the area. The same happened in neighbouring municipalities (St Aurea is the patroness of the village of Ostia Antica and in 2004 St Augustine became the patron of Ostia). Furthermore, Hippolytus was a "new" saint, recently "dug up" and rediscovered, not yet part of a ritual and cultic system. A local newspaper transparently recounts this dynamic: "After its independence from Rome, the city began to rediscover its identity, thanks in part to its protector Hippolytus".[37] In 2018, the mayor of Fiumicino, speaking inside the Church of Santa Maria Porto della Salute during the festival of St Hippolytus, stated: "Our city, when it belonged to the Municipality of Rome, had another patron saint. This festival represents us. St Hippolytus has played a very important role". However, inventing a tradition and an identity is not so simple: "We do not feel particularly attached to this figure, and we must ensure that he gives our city an identity. If we give ourselves a strong identity, we will have feelings of strong attachment to our city".[38] It seems that the martyrs of Ostia are continuing their work to culturalize the area.

35 See Hobsbawm 1983.

36 See Melotti 2019, 79-103.

37 See: http://www.qfiumicino.com/santippolito-il-5-ottobre-la-festa-a-fiumicino/.

38 Speech recorded by the author on 5 October 2018 during his fieldwork in the area.

The Funerary Inscriptions of Ostia and Isola Sacra

Ghislaine van der Ploeg

As a result of Ostia's large population, a single cemetery was not sufficient to deal with all the city's dead. Therefore, Ostia had multiple burial sites, the best excavated of which are the *necropoleis* at Porta Romana, Porta Laurentina, and Isola Sacra, as well as the tombs at Pianabella. However, no grand monumental elite tombs have been found here. The poorest members of society were commonly interred either in mass-graves called *puticuli* or in *columella*, where the deceased's remains were placed in an amphora of which only the neck would stick out of the ground, making the place of burial. *Columbaria*, barrel-vaulted tombs containing niches for the ash urns of the deceased, are also found in the *necropoleis* of Ostia and Isola Sacra as well as modest individual or family tombs.[1]

The Porta Romana necropolis (**Fig. 1**) is located to the east of the Ostian city gates and this cemetery included individual and inhumation graves as well as *columbaria*.[2] Early on, it was normal for people in



Figure 1. The necropolis of Porta Romana. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

1 Hopkins 1983, 211.

2 Floriani Squarciapino 1955, 11-62.



Figure 2. A cinerary urn of travertine, c. 100 BCE – 100 CE, from the necropolis of Via Ostiense, Acilia, tomb 297. There is a hole in the lid of this urn, possibly used to make a libation to the deceased when visiting the tomb. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 52718 and 52719. Photo: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.



Figure 3. A house-like tomb and a sarcophagus in the tomb at Isola Sacra, Tomb 89. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

Ostia to be cremated and for their remains to be interred in cinerary urns (**Fig. 2; Cat. no. 170**). However, in the 2nd century CE inhumation became the norm and the physical layout of the tombs changed in order to accommodate this. Bodies were now entombed in sarcophagi (**Fig. 3**) or were placed either in *arcosolia*, recesses in the walls of the funerary chambers, or in *fossae*, depressions or hollows in the ground. The Porta Romana cemetery, as well as the Porta Laurentina one, were in continuous use between the 2nd century BCE and the 3rd century CE. The Porta Laurentina necropolis is located to the south-east of the city and the oldest tombs here date to between 50 and 30 BCE. This cemetery greatly resembles the Porta Romana necropolis in the distribution of tomb types. These tombs could be richly decorated with mosaics and wall-paintings and the famous painting of the *Isis Giminiana* (see figure on p. 85), now located in the Vatican Museums, comes from the Porta Laurentina necropolis.

Pianabella is located to the south-west of the Porta Laurentina cemetery and was the site of an Early Christian basilica (see plan on p. 373). The basilica is dated to the 5th century CE and it was in use until the 10th century CE. An earlier pagan necropolis was present on the site which was located next to the basilica and dates to between the 1st and 3rd centuries CE. The site has preserved over 350 grave inscriptions.[3] The cemetery at Isola Sacra (**Figs. 3-4**) was in use from the Trajanic period to the 3rd century CE. There were over 100 graves at Isola Sacra, containing over 670 burials. A number of inhumation graves are located in the north-east area of the necropolis but the majority of burials here were cinerary in nature.[4] The inscriptions from Isola Sacra are generally dated to the 2nd century with the majority dating to the Hadrianic period. The majority of funerary inscriptions from these cemeteries, and Ostia in general, date to between the 1st century BCE and the 4th century CE, though earlier and later examples also exist. People from dif-

3 Nuzzo 1999, 33.

4 Helttula 2007, xxii-xxiii; see Baldassarre 1987; Baldassarre *et al.* 2018, no. 13.



Figure 4. A grave enclosure with *columbaria* in the necropolis of Isola Sacra, Tomb 76. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

ferent backgrounds were buried in the various cemeteries as traders and craftsmen were mainly at the Porta Laurentina necropolis and Isola Sacra. No magistrates or town councillors were found buried here, though these men do occur in the Porta Romana necropolis.

An important part of the rite of burial was the erection of an inscription which commemorated the deceased. These could be inscribed either in stone, wood, or on a painted plaque. The funerary epitaphs make up the vast majority of extant inscriptions and were commonly erected by the side of the roads leading in and out of a city so that they could be read by passers-by.[5] These provided information about the deceased such as their name, profession, and age at the time of death. An example of the inclusion of profession is an inscription set up for Titus Flavius Stephanus who was a *praepositus camellorum* (**Fig. 5; Cat. no. 172**):

Dis Manibus / T(iti) Flavi Aug(usti) lib(erti) / Stephani / praeposito(!) / camellorum[6]

'To the spirits of the dead. For Titus Flavius Stephanus, imperial freedman, *praepositus camellorum*.'

Stephanus was possibly in charge of overseeing the importation of exotic animals to Ostia. Relief decoration places extra emphasis on Stephanus' profession as drawings of two camels and an elephant are also depicted on the epitaph. Many inscriptions also name the dedicator who had erected the monument. These people were often related to the deceased and these inscriptions are a good source for studying family dynamics in antiquity. The people commemorated in these inscriptions were frequently members of the lower and middle socio-economic strata and were memorialised by people who knew them. How they were commemorated

5 Hope 2009, 153.

6 *AE* 1955 181.

was determined in part through Roman social norms but also the feelings of the dedicator towards the deceased.[7]

A large portion of these epitaphs commemorates the nuclear family and only a small number of funerary inscriptions from Ostia and Isola Sacra commemorates brothers and sisters or further removed relatives such as grandparents or grandchildren. Spouses were frequently commemorated due to high mortality rates in antiquity and people could use either the gender-neutral term *coniunx* or the gender-specific terms *maritus*, husband, and *uxor*, wife, in these. A large portion of epitaphs also commemorates deceased sons and daughters, including very young children, which is noteworthy as these, especially infants, were not commonly represented in funerary inscriptions despite the high rates of infant mortality during the Roman Imperial period.[8] However, in certain urban centres such as Carthage and Ostia the inscriptions for young children form a majority of the funerary inscriptions.[9] The reason for this was likely the large freedman, manumitted slave, population in these places as these people placed a higher emphasis on the commemoration of children than the freeborn population.[10]



Figure 5. Funerary inscription to Titus Flavius Stephanus, who was *praepositus camellorum*, the overseer of camels, from the Via Laurentina necropolis. Ostia Lapidarium, inv. 7029. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

Epithets were commonly added to funerary inscriptions as part of the commemoration ritual. These appellations were chosen by the dedicators and displayed certain aspects of the deceased's character. It is important to note that what is on display is not always a reflection of reality but instead shows what people believed should be said. This was dictated in part by social norms but also by emotions.[11] While death was an everyday occurrence for people in antiquity, sorrow and loss were not negated by this commonality; rather these feelings were channelled into socially acceptable ways of expressing grief. The display of emotion in funerary inscriptions through epithets was allowed as they showed how a bereaved was affected by the death of their loved one. Epithets were chosen from a standard repertoire, but the choice was made about which word suited the deceased best both with regard to situation in life as well as their personality. For example, commonly used epithets are *dulcissimus (*sweetest*), pientissimus* (most pious), *piissimus* (most pious), *carissimus* (dearest), *dignissimus* (most deserving), and above all *benemerens* (well-deserving). Adults received a greater variety of epithets than children did which reflected their more multifaceted place both in society and within the household. Many epithets could be used for brothers and sisters, for example, *dulcissimus*, *carissimus*, and *rarissimus* (rarest), while for husbands and wives virtually any epithet could be used from *pientissimus* to *merentissimus* (most deserving), though *benemerens* was the most ubiquitous.

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7 Hope 2009, 152.

8 Rawson 2005, 6; Harlow – Laurence 2002, 43.

9 Saller – Shaw 1984, 130.

10 Saller – Shaw 1984, 130.

11 Chaniotis 2012, 26-27.

Dulcissimus was the most commonly used epithet in Ostia for children while in Isola Sacra this was *pientissimus*.

The word *infans* could be used to describe very young children, infants, though this is not so common in Ostia and no inscriptions containing this term occur in Isola Sacra at all. Only one epithet was found in combination with *infantes* in Ostia, namely *dulcissimus,* for example:

D(is) M(anibus) / Vegoe / infanti dulcissimae / Vitalis mater[12]

'To the spirits of the dead. Vegoe, the sweetest infant, by Vitalis her mother.'

This homogeneity indicates that *dulcissimus* was considered to be the appropriate epithet for a young child in Ostia. While *infans* was only used to describe the youngest children, many epitaphs were erected to a *filius*, meaning son, or a *filia,* daughter (**Fig. 6**). A wider variety of terms was used to describe these children than for infants, though *dulcissimus* was still a common and popular epithet. *Pientissimus* was another frequently occurring epithet for children which means the most pious. *Pietas* was the quintessential Roman family value, which signalled the subjugation of a child to the authority of the head of household, the *paterfamilias*, but also implied obligations and affections which parents were supposed to give to their children, so it is unsurprising to find it commonly used in these epitaphs.[13] The use of *dulcissimus*, then, reflected the young nature of the individual, the fact that they were a child, but also their subordinate status to the head of the family as they would still have been too young to form their own family. These epithets, thus, reflect the liminal place and status of the deceased. Following Roman notions of childhood, they had a still unformed character as well as a lack of illustrious deeds which would prevent commemoration by other terms.[14] The epithet used to describe these children reflects their position in the household as children were subject to their *paterfamilias* and had not yet had the opportunity to develop their place in society fully.

While the majority of these epithets are positive terms to describe the deceased, there are also a few epitaphs which express a negative emotion, namely that those whereby the dedicators describe themselves as being 'the unluckiest', *infelicissimus*, for example:

'*D(is) M(anibus) / Gelasini fili(i) dulcissimi / piissimi sanctissimi / amantissimi incom/parabilis adfectus / erga parentes vixit / annis XVIII me(n)sibus X / diebus XVIIII / A(ulus) Egrilius Gelasinus / pater infelicissimus*'.[15]

'To the spirits of the dead. For Gelasinus, the sweetest, most pious, most revered, most beloved, incomparable son, affectionate towards his parents, who lived eighteen years, ten months, eighteen days. Aulus Egrilius Gelasinus, the unluckiest father [made this].'

The other terms used in these inscriptions all reflect virtues of the deceased such as sweetness or piety which makes *infelicissimus* stand out as it expresses a negative emotion. This epitaph is also interesting as while the father himself described himself as being the unluckiest because of the loss of his son, the son himself

12 *CIL* XIV 1738.

13 George 2005, 41.

14 Sigismund Nielsen 1997, 190, 197.

15 *CIL* XIV 936.



Figure 6. Tomb 99 in the necropolis of Isola Sacra was erected by the parents to their daughter. It has been dated to the Antonine period. '*Diis Manib(us) / Petroniae Stolidis / fi[l]liae piissimae / C(aius) Petronius Andronicus / et Petronia Maritima / parentes fecerunt / vixit ann(is) XX d(iebus) XXII h(oris) IIII*'. 'Caius Petronius Andronicus and Petronia Maritima, her parents, erected this (monument) for Petronia Stolis, their most pious daughter. She lived 20 years, 22 days and 4 hours.' Isola Sacra, inv. 18394 (Helttula 2007, 153-54.). Photo: Arja Karivieri.

is memorialised by five different epithets. This is exceptional in Ostia where the majority of the inscriptions contain only a single epithet though the use of more than one epithet does occur infrequently. The most common of these secondary epithets is *benemerens* which is often added at the end of an inscription. The above epitaph is, thus, exceptional in terms of the emotion expressed, the number of epithets contained within the inscription, and the number of epithets given to the deceased. The epithets used here describe virtues, but they also offer some reflections on the boy's character who, according to his father, was the sweetest and most loving. Every available element which could be included, was. Gelasinus' individuality and character, in other words his identity, were displayed in all possible ways. The use of an epithet had a similar function as it added layers to the identity of the deceased and to the relationship shown between the dead and the living. Epithets were focusing devices and they showed aspects of people which were worthy of commemoration, even in the young. Thus, these funerary inscriptions were an important part of life and death in an ancient city. They reflect social and family values but could also give an indication of who a person was in life and the sense of loss left behind by their death.

Vixit Annos: Mortality, Childhood, and Disease at Ostia

Ray Laurence

Experiencing death

The evidence for the commemoration of those who died in childhood at Ostia causes us to pause in the twenty-first century, and to wonder how parents and relatives, as well as a child's friends, dealt with the death of a child. We can distance ourselves from antiquity by seeing a society that exposed children in the first days of life, due to birth abnormalities or a desire to limit the size of a family, or another social reason, such as illegitimacy.[1] This can cause us to feel that we as humans are different from humans in antiquity,[2] but in fact we deal with some of these issues through surgery (abortion or correction of birth abnormalities) and medicine. Yet, even today, I know of colleagues and friends who have held funerals for their dead child. The setting up of a memorial to a child created a memorial or a memory that was sharply focussed on the number of years of life. These are evocative texts and examining all the epitaphs of children in Ostia, we can become overwhelmed by the names of those who died young. There is another side to this. The modelling of populations and their demographies that developed after the World War II by the United Nations created probabilities of life and death in pre-modern and modern contexts.[3] One of the things these models show us is that patterns of commemoration in epitaphs are culturally constructed and do not reflect demography of a population. Secondly, many children would have experienced the death of their father prior to adulthood – maybe as many as fifty percent.[4]

Commemorating life at Ostia

The epitaphs found in tombs and on tombstones at Ostia and Portus frequently mention the Latin formulae *vixit annis* or *vixit annos* to denote the age of the deceased. It needs to be borne in mind that not all epitaphs include an age at death. Where it is included, these ages at death provide us with information about how people were commemorated and how old were those who were commemorated. This is evidence that is created through the act of commemoration. We cannot see this as objective evidence that if we added up all the ages and divided by the number of individuals would provide us with an average age at death.[5] Instead, the ages commemorated provide us with an insight into the differentials of age and gender that created this record. The pattern of number of inscriptions recording various lengths of life is far from even and does not

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1 Harris 1994 for full discussion of the evidence and strategies of child exposure.

2 Garnsey 1991, 49-50.

3 Parkin 1992 discusses the parameters and issues relating to the use of life tables and ancient evidence to reconstruct ancient demography.

4 Figures reproduced most recently in Laes 2011, 28-29; Saller 1994, 53-65.

5 Shaw 1991, 67-69.

fit any specific demographic reality *per se.* Instead, we see in this pattern of peaks and troughs in ages of commemoration a different pattern that is quite unlike that found in other port cities or, for example, in cities in the African provinces of the Roman Empire. The pattern is not dissimilar to that found in the rest of Italy with a strong focus on the commemoration of children, who died at an early age.

Looking across all the inscriptions that mention age at death, we find that fifty percent of males commemorated in this way were under the age of fifteen years of age. For females, fifty percent of those commemorated with an age at death were under the age of twenty. The range of ages goes up to ninety years for males and seventy-five years for females. The human-life span was not so different from today, but the number of adults surviving to ages over sixty was very different – probably around seven percent.

The use of Roman numerals based on a system of I (1); V (5) and X (10) causes a degree of rounding to numerals ending in V (5) and X (10), but these patterns are most noticeable amongst adults rather than

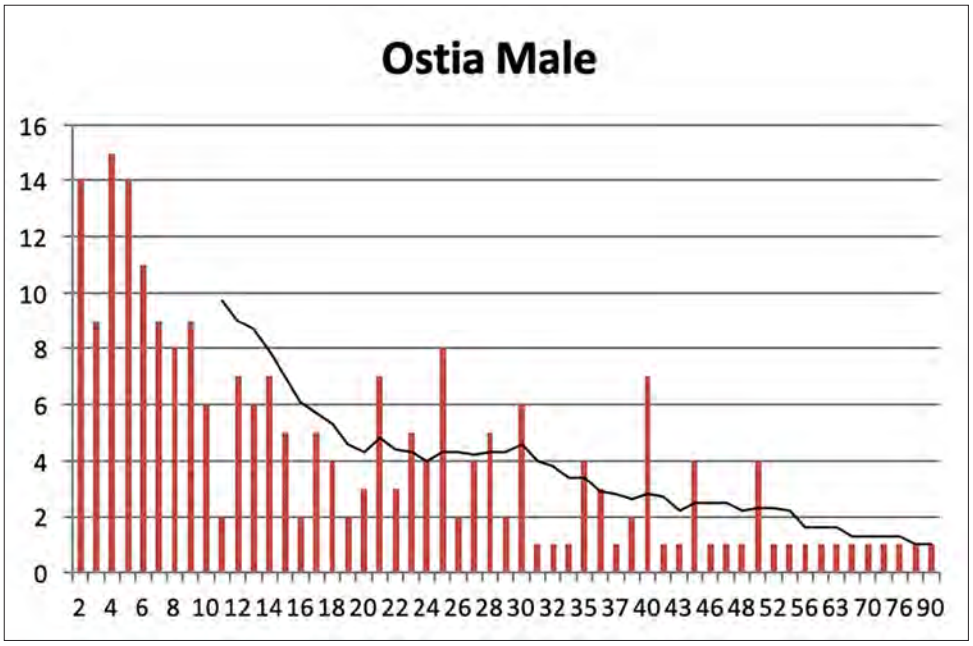


Figure 1. Frequency of Ages at Death in Inscriptions 1: Male.

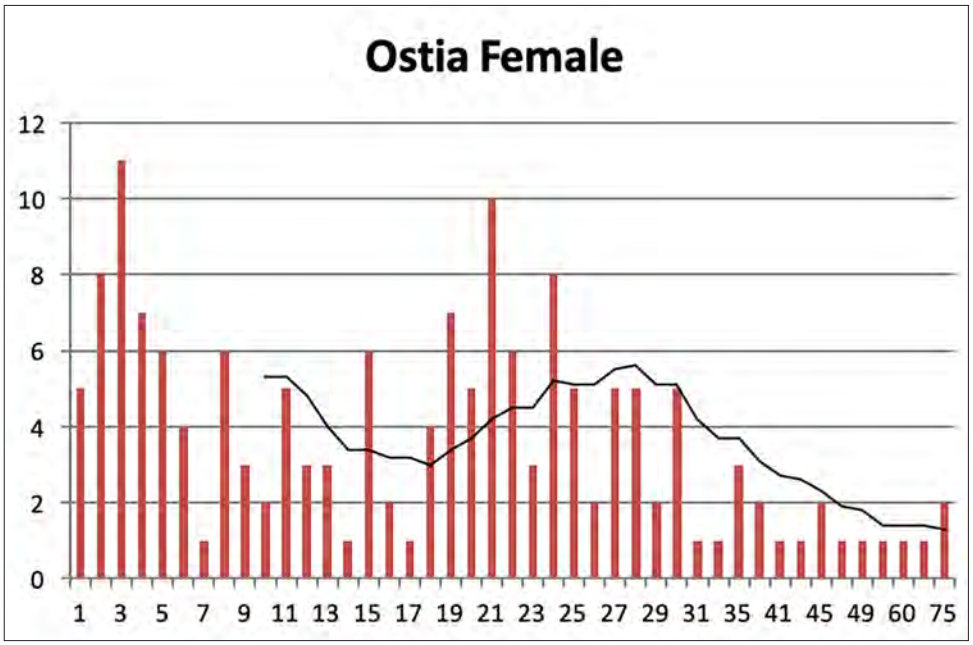


Figure 2. Frequency of Ages at Death in Inscriptions 1: Female.

children. This is most clearly seen with reference to males at the ages of twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, forty, forty-five, and fifty and sixty. Having said this, there is a notable peak in commemoration of people at the age of twenty-one regardless of gender. This may point to twenty-one as an important age. Alternatively, it is possible to suggest that the combination of two almost magical numbers three and seven created its importance. Compare peaks for other numbers divisible by three and/or seven in Figures 1 and 2: three, fifteen, eighteen, twenty-four, twenty-seven, twenty-eight, and thirty.

Where gender comes into play to affect the pattern of commemoration, we see this most strongly in the female pattern with a peak in commemoration in the late teens and early twenties. It would have been at this age that we might expect women to have been married and biologically reproductive. Childbirth leading to the death of the mother would not have been uncommon. The male pattern of commemoration seen above in Figure 1 shows a graph that emphasises death in childhood and would fulfil (with admittedly some age rounding) what is expected from probability models constructed for pre-industrial populations.

In sickness and in health

The epitaphs from Ostia are very difficult to date with any accuracy or a methodology that cannot be open to critique. It seems highly likely that many of them were created during the second and third centuries CE. It was precisely in this period from 165 CE through to the middle of the third century, that what was known as the Great Plague took hold across the Roman world.[6] This disease has been much discussed with a general view that it was probably small pox, and contact with this disease was new.[7] Eye-witness accounts, such as that of the doctor Galen, reveal some of the reactions to the advent of the disease and their effect on Ostia. Galen states clearly: 'After I passed three years at Rome, when the Great Plague began, I swiftly returned to my native city (Pergamum)'.[8] Those who had migrated to Rome left, presumably through Ostia and/or Portus. What is very unclear is what effect the plague had on Ostia, there seems to be good evidence for building in this period of increased mortality.[9] However, it is equally clear that metal production – identified from pollution in the Greenland ice fields – was affected by the Great Plague that points to a major change globally.[10]

The location of the city of Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber in an area of low-lying land that was associated with lagoons and lakes has been in the past associated with mosquitoes and malaria.[11] Monica, the mother of St Augustine, died from malaria at Ostia, after an illness of nine days,[12] and, in 536 CE, the Byzantine general Belisarius suffered a life-threatening fever at Ostia.[13] Sallares suggests that the adjustment made by the building of canals for drainage and the isolation of the lagoons from the sea contributed to the incidence of malaria.[14] The construction of road embankments – such as on the Via Ostiensis or the raising of street levels within Ostia – would have altered the water-table.[15] Studies of malaria point to its effects

6 Duncan-Jones 1996 for full review of ancient sources.

7 Ambasciano 2016 for recent review of the literature.

8 Galen. *libr. propr.* 19, 15.

9 Bruun 2003, 433-34.

10 McConnell *et al.* 2018.

11 Sallares 2002, 69, 74-75.

12 Aug. *conf.* 9, 8, 11.

13 Procop. *Goth.* 3, 19. Sallares 2002, 86.

14 Sallares 2002, 87.

15 Sallares 2002, 93-95, notes that similar construction projects for the railway from Fiumicino to Ponte Galera created major risks to those working on the project.

on migrants as being much higher than on those settled in a city.[16] However, a very recent study of skeletal remains from Isola Sacra found an absence of malaria.[17] It is worth noting, as Sallares does, that mosquitoes cannot fly in an upward trajectory – hence, those living on the upper floors of apartment blocks were at a lower risk than those living on the ground floor.[18] The findings on the skeletal remains contrast with lower density settlements and it maybe with apartment living above the ground floor, the population of Ostia became less susceptible to malaria.

Viewing the apartment buildings of Ostia, it is relatively easy to empathise with those who once lived there and to consider families inhabiting these spaces.[19] However, a recent study of the skeletons found at Isola Sacra has found that nineteen percent of those under the age of twenty were afflicted by rickets – a disease that is associated with vitamin D deficiency and results in inadequate bone mineralization, which effects the growth of children.[20] The presence of rickets in nineteen percent of the bones studied from Isola



Figure 3. A child's sarcophagus from the necropolis flanking the Via Severiana at Isola Sacra, 100-150 CE. SBAO, inv. 34, 34a. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

16 Killgrove – Montgomery 2016 for discussion of migrants and migrant children; earlier studies by Prowse *et al.* 2007; discussion by Killgrove 2010, and critique by Bruun 2010 from the perspective of an epigrapher.

17 Marciniak *et al.* 2018.

18 Sallares 2002, 96-97.

19 Rawson 2003, 253-54 links the nature of the urban environment to the presence of *alumni* or foster children by suggesting the 2nd century apartments afforded 'a greater ability to take in a child'.

20 Mays *et al.* 2018; on diet of children, see Prowse *et al.* 2005.

Sacra was much higher than that found in rural contexts and we can see this as an urban disease. A key variable for vitamin D production is sunlight and it is possible that the tall buildings of Ostia with their covered side-walk porticoes denied children adequate contact with sunlight. Ironically, the apartment blocks so admired by some historians were the actual cause of suffering of their inhabitants as they attempted to grow up in Ostia.[21]

There is further evidence from skeletal studies for periods of illness in childhood, as indicated by *cribia orbitalia*, at Ostia, that were higher than those found elsewhere in Italy (seventy per cent compared to fifty-six percent).[22] Moreover, the first of childhood at Ostia has been shown, from a study of milk-teeth, to have been associated with a high incidence of severe ill-health.[23] As this is a pre-modern population, we should expect numerous diseases that we do not experience to be routinely present, such as tuberculosis. The presence of ill-health in children leading to death, maybe, an explanation for why we find so many *alumni* or foster children in inscriptions from Ostia,[24] but can only speculate whether these children were caring for the family's sick children or were seen as replacement family members for those that had died.

21 Rawson 2003, 253-54 for *alumni.*

22 Garnsey – Gowland 2010.

23 Fitzgerald *et al.* 2006.

24 Bellemore – Rawson 1990, 14-15. Sigismund Nielsen 1987 defines the relationship as quasi-adoption.

The Culture of Death

Katariina Mustakallio

Studies of the *culture of death* have shown that rites and rituals connected to funerals usually change slowly. Such rituals are closely linked to ideas about the sacred and profane, the pure and impure. These are key practices through which the "proper" relations between different groups within a society, as well as between mortals and gods, are constructed and re-constructed.[1]

A major factor in the Roman culture of death was a deep-seated fear of the ritual pollution often associated with death.[2] When a person died, his or her family became a *familia funesta*, meaning that they could not participate in everyday life in the usual way. Only after the last funeral rituals had been performed was the family purified (*familia pura*) and its members permitted to return to society and live a normal life again. Contact with death threatened the delicate balance guaranteed by the proper and pure relations between humans and gods.[3]

The Romans believed that the proper celebration of funerary rituals kept the pollution caused by death under control, and the door between everyday life and the sacred and dangerous world of death closed. Echoes of the dreadful underworld could be heard in the dark rituals of necromancy, a kind of popular magic widely practiced in the Greek and Roman worlds.[4]

The process of Roman funerals

The traditional Roman funeral can be approached as a three-stage process. The first consisted of ceremonies within the home. This was followed by the funeral procession and the burial of the dead, and then, finally, purification rituals at home and in the graveyard.[5] Whenever possible, family members and friends gathered together around the dying person.[6] Various customs were connected to procedures in the home, such as a final kiss after which the family called on the deceased person three times.[7] After washing the body and dressing the corpse, some sources mention that a coin was placed in the mouth to pay the deceased's fare for

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1 See Douglas 1966, 1-28. On the continuity of Roman burial practices, see Toynbee 1982 (1971), 43-72; Hope 2009, esp. chapters 3 and 5.

2 Not all Romans believed in an underworld: see Hope 2007, 215-31.

3 Purifications: on *suffitio* and the purification of the home and its gods, see Fest. 83L, *feriae denicales*, see Cic. *leg.* 2, 22, 55; Paul. Fest. 61L, *silicernium* and *cena novendialis*, see Tac. *ann.* 6, 5; Petron. 65. See also Prieur 1991, 21, and Lindsay 2000, 152-73.

4 See e.g. Ogden 2001. On attitudes towards defilement and death in general, see Parker 1983 and Douglas 1966, 176-79. For the Romans, the underworld was not wholly dreadful: the Elysian Fields (as in Vergil Aeneid 6) were also part of it.

5 For a more detailed description of Roman funeral practices, see Marquardt – Mau 1905, 340-85; Blumner 1911, 482-98; Toynbee 1982 (1971), 43-61; Hope 2009, esp. chapters 3, 5, and 6.

6 See e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 98-99; Cic. *div.* 1, 30, 64. Toynbee 1982 (1971), 44.

7 Serv. *Aen.* 6, 218; Lucan. 2, 21-23. Cfr. Plin. *nat.* 7, 52. The last kiss was of central importance in Roman death culture, see e.g. Sen. *dial.* 6, 3, 2; Cic. *Verr.* 5, 118; Stat. *silv.* 5, 1, 207.



Figure 1. Decorations for a funerary bed from the Augustan period, from the necropolis of Via Ostiense at Acilia, found in 1912. The decorations of the wooden bed were made of bone, including depictions of three Cupids and two female figures; two Cupids and a griffin decorated the bed platform; and the bedrest (*fulcrum*) featured a panel depicting a sphinx, perhaps alluding to a celestial banquet. Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4332, 4333, 4338, 4330, 4340, 4341, 5227, 5322, 5325. Photos: Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Archivio Fotografico.

Charon's boat.[8] Women began their ritual weeping and wailing immediately after the death, and the female members of the deceased's family also played a central role in other activities at home related to the corpse. Traditionally, they washed the body and dressed it in accordance with the social status of the deceased. Later, professional undertakers, or *libitinarii* named after the goddess of funerals *Libitina*, and *pollinctores*, those who prepared corpses, took care of the funeral.[9] If the family was wealthy, the body was placed on a funerary bed, or *lectus funebris* (**Fig. 1; Cat. no. 174**), inside the *atrium* of the house, where it might lie for several days. Close relatives and friends, clients and colleagues paid a last visit to show their respect to the deceased person and their family.[10]

Funeral Procession: Carriers, Mourners, Musicians

During the funeral of wealthy Romans, the funeral bier was carried on the shoulders of male relatives or bearers.[11] Important evidence of this is provided by Roman funeral sarcophagi and reliefs depicting a funeral procession from Amiternum (**Fig. 2**).[12] The funeral of a prominent individual included a procession in which the deceased was represented by his or her effigy. The deceased was surrounded by relatives and friends, and accompanied by mourners who acted like a chorus in classical drama.[13] Funeral music was played by flutes and horns, alongside funeral songs and cries performed by hired professional mourners (**Figs. 2-3**). In Rome, lamentations and funeral music had a strong emotional impact on the audience: according to Plutarch, their main purpose was to create an atmosphere suited to the occasion and to help the mourning



Figure 2. Funeral procession, relief from Amiternum, mid-1st century CE, Museo Nazionale d'Abruzzo. Drawing: Ria Berg.

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8 Juv. 3, 267. Toynbee 1982 (1971), 43-45.

9 Customarily a coin was deposited in *Libitina*'s temple for each of the deceased. For female mourners, see e.g. Mustakallio 2003, 86-99; Hope 2009, Chapter 5. For undertakers, *libitinarii* and *pollinctores*, see Sen. *benef.* 6, 38; Mart. 10, 97; Plut. *quaest. Rom.* 23; Plut. *vit. Num.* 12, 1-2; Bodel 2000, 128-51.

10 *Lectus funebris,* see Toynbee 1982, table 9 and p. 44; Prieur 1991, 17, a relief from a sarcophagus in the British Museum; Maurin 1982, 199.

11 Tac. *ann.* 1, 8.

12 See **Fig. 2**, the marble relief of *Amiternum*, now in *L'Aquila Museum*, from the late Republican or Augustan period, Toynbee 1982 (1971), 46, fig. 11.

13 See **Fig. 3**. Bianchi Bandinelli 1969, 59, Fig. 60, with the group of mourning women with hands raised and folded, and with dishevelled hair, two in front of the bier and eight behind it.

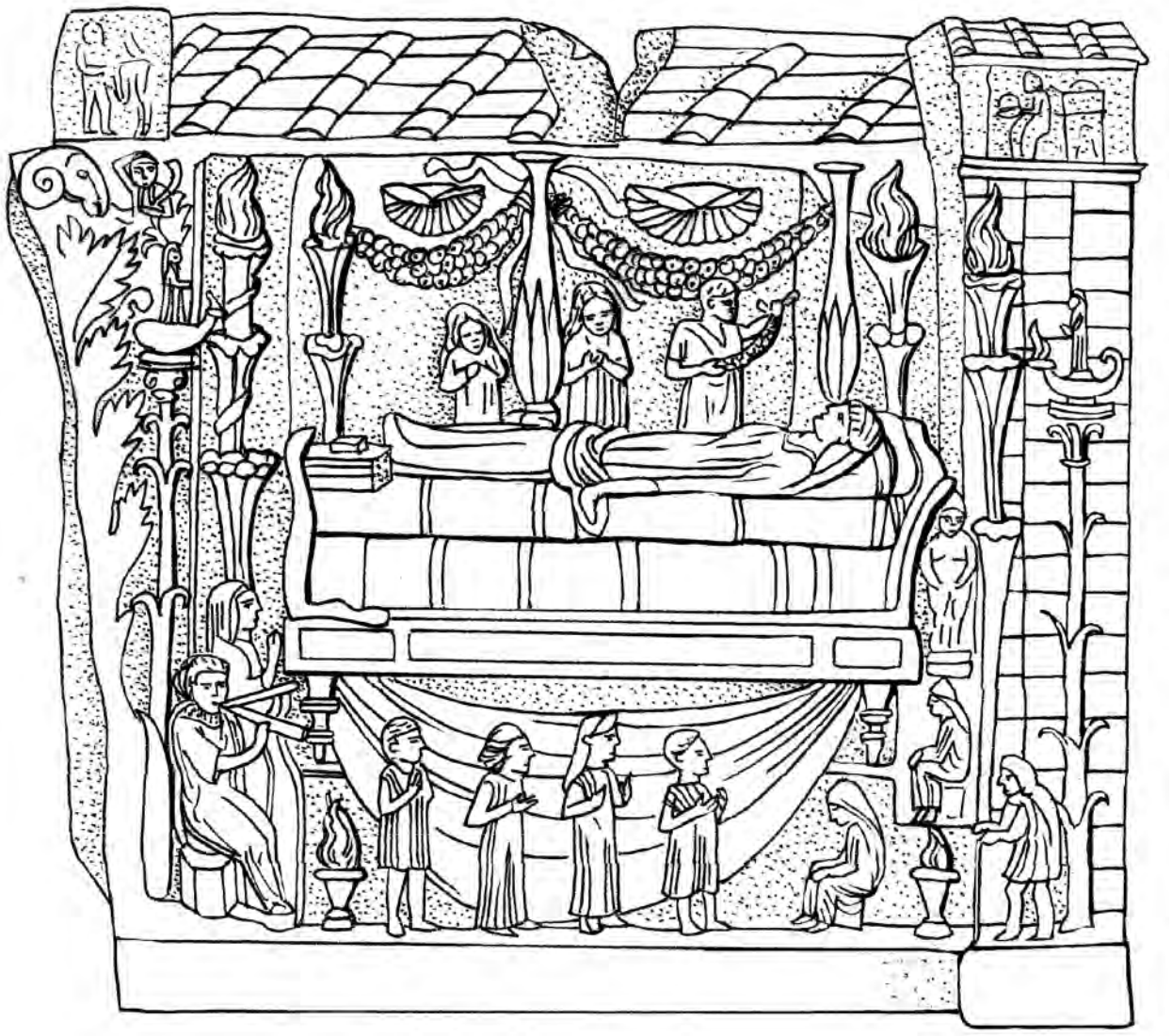


Figure 3. Relief from the grave monument of the Haterii, along the Via Labicana outside Rome, *c.* AD 100, Musei Vaticani. Burning torches and a burning lamp on a stand are placed next to the funerary bed. At one end of the bed is a flute player and female mourners next to it beat their breasts. Drawing: Ria Berg.

process to start. People also believed that making a noise and crying frightened away the malicious powers of death.[14]

Roman matrons played a central role in funeral celebrations. According to the Roman historical tradition, during the Republican period the *luctus matronarum*, the public mourning and lamenting of the matrons, was an institutionalized phenomenon.[15] Varro (116-27 BCE) tells us that female mourners formed a chorus who lamented following the lead of a *praefica*, a professional mourner. They performed "with dishevelled hair and hands raised to beat their breasts", sometimes even harming themselves. We can assume that the act of mourning, and especially the *luctus matronarum*, was a formalized practice with its own regulations, not an impromptu show of emotions.[16] Public mourning highlighted the social status and importance

14 Plut. *mor.* 657A; for mourning in the literary context see, e.g. Marcus 2004, 105-35.

15 Huntington – Metcalf 1991 (1979), 27 (Greek villages), 36 (Australian tribes), 40-41 (the Nyakyusa of Tansania).

16 Varro *rust.* 3, 110; Varro *ling.* 7, 70. On the role of mourning women in general, see Huntington – Metcalf 1991 (1979), 27-28.

of the Roman citizen after his or her death. Its more violent aspects may have aimed to placate the souls of the dead and the underworld.[17]

Public funerals of the Roman elite

Public funeral ceremonies were prestigious occasions at which people from different social classes and generations could meet. Ceremonial processions formed a central part of these public festivals and acted as a form of entertainment for ordinary people whilst simultaneously fulfilling other objectives. They were expressions of the visual rhetoric of power, in addition to re-creating a sense of unity and reaffirming order in a hierarchical community. By participating in such ceremonies, people constructed their identities and experienced themselves as more united and strong.[18]

In public funeral processions, as in the triumphal ceremonies of Roman military commanders, ancestors played an important role. Their portraits were carried in procession on both occasions. Images of ancestors were also borne in the funeral ceremonies of noble women. These images were mostly of male ancestors but, according to Harriet Flower, the female family members of the deceased were also represented.[19]

The ceremonial processions taking place as part of public funerals were the most spectacular aspect of the rich phenomenon of the Roman culture of death. Romans believed that the whole community – living and dead alike – participated in these ceremonies.[20]

Polybius, a Greek historian of the second century BCE, distinguished very carefully between the participation of different social groups in Roman funeral processions. The carriers of images of deceased members of the family, mimes and actors acted out well-known episodes from the lives of the ancestors during the procession. The picture becomes even more colourful and vivid when Polybius recounts how the procession of ancestors arrived in the forum and went to take their seats on the *Rostra*, the speakers' platform, in accordance with their social rank and carrying marks of their power, rods and axes. Polybius concludes:

"The greatest result (of the public funerals) is that the young men are encouraged to undergo anything for the sake of the common cause in the hope of gaining the good reputation which follows upon the brave deeds of men."[21] Polybius stressed the central role of funerals in shaping the social ethos of self-sacrifice for the sake of the Roman Republic, thus reinforcing Roman patriotic identity.

Processions were an enduring feature of Roman funeral ceremonies. Over two centuries later, describing the funeral of the emperor Vespasian, Suetonius noted that the participants could even make jokes during the procession. In this case, the actor carrying the image of the late Vespasian joked about his stinginess. Tragedy and comedy, mourning and laughing, were an aspect of public funerals.[22]

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17 For offerings to placate the unhappy souls of the dead, see e.g. Cic. *leg.* 2, 22-23; Paul. Fest. 83L; Ov. *fast.* 2, 615 and 5, 419.

18 See e.g. Miles 2000, 29-62.

19 Elite women like Junia (91 BCE), Atia, mother of Augustus, and later Livia and Poppaea also had public funerals. Flower 2002, 78-79 and 122-25, Junia is mentioned in Cic. *de orat.* 2, 225. On the great funeral games of Julia, see e.g. Cass. Dio 39, 64; Suet. *Jul.* 26, 2; Plut. *vit. Caes.* 55, 3. See also Quint. *inst.* 12, 6, 1; Suet. *Aug.* 8, 1.

20 Vernant 1995, 206, has stressed that society rebuilds its central values and hierarchies through funeral rituals and the culture of death. Versnel 1970, 98.

21 Polyb. 6, 3.

22 On historical developments and public displays at funerals, see e.g. Bodel 1999, 258-81.

Continuity and change in funeral rituals

The proper mourning period depended on the relationship between the mourner and the deceased, as well as on the latter's age. According to Plutarch (46-120 CE), a famous Greek biographer and moral philosopher, the standard Roman mourning period was ten months.[23] In the event of the death of an important statesman, the matrons mourned them in public for one year. This was true – according to Livy – particularly of defenders of the Republic and of female dignity.[24]

The rituals performed during Roman funeral ceremonies changed in many ways from the Republican period to the first century BCE, and this shift is also evident in our literary sources. During the late Republic, Roman funeral practices, especially those of upper-class families, were strongly influenced by Hellenistic funerals.[25] Roman families of noble origin competed with each other in the luxury and splendour of their funeral festivals, games and so on. One development was the change in the nature of the *luctus matronarum*, from the traditional lamentations of Roman matrons to an organized and highly professional lamentation by hired women.[26]

If a distinguished Roman citizen had died, a speech, or *laudatio funebris*, was delivered by a male relative, normally a son of the deceased, at the *Rostra* in the centre of the forum.[27] Augustus' funeral ceremonies included two eulogies honouring his deeds, and in many ways illustrated the new way of celebrating funerals. Senators carried the body to the pyre and leading knights, barefoot and with unbelted tunics,



Figure 4. Achilles mourning the death of Patroclus. The frontal relief in a sarcophagus depicting the events of the Trojan War, dated to *c.* 160 CE. The sarcophagus was found in the excavations of the Pianabella necropolis in 1976. Museo Ostiense, inv. 43504. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

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23 Plut. *vit. Num.* 12, 1-2.

24 Defenders like Iunius Brutus and Publius Valerius Publicola, see Liv. 2, 7, 4; 2, 16, 8; restrictions of mourning, see Mustakallio 1994, esp. 11.

25 Flower 1996, 122-27.

26 Varro *rust*. 3, 110; Varro *ling.* 7, 70.

27 More detailed in Toynbee 1982 (1971), 46-50.

collected the ashes and placed them in the family mausoleum. All businesses in Rome closed out of respect for the emperor.[28]

According to Plutarch, eulogies also became part of the funerals of older women.[29] The first such woman was *Popilia*, publicly eulogised by her son *Q. Lutatius Catulus*, probably during his second consulship in 102 BCE.[30] Subsequently, eulogies were regarded as a standard feature of funeral ceremonies. One of the famous funerals of Roman elite women recorded in the literary sources is that of *Iunia*, wife of Caius Cassius and sister of Marcus Brutus. Her funeral eulogy was delivered at the rostra and masks of twenty of the most illustrious families preceded the bier.[31] Delivering a funeral oration was an important opportunity for a younger man to gain social popularity. The first public speech delivered by *Caesar* was at the funeral of his aunt *Julia*, the wife of Marius. He succeeded very well in his task, which thus became extremely important for his later political career.[32]

Usually the corpse was carried to the pyre, where it was cremated before the remains were buried in the family tomb. The remains and ashes were delivered to the nearest female relative. If the mother, wife or daughter was not available, the remains could be delivered to the wet nurse of the deceased.[33] This custom changed during the first and second centuries, when inhumation became more popular in the western part of the Roman Empire.[34]

The civil war and the crisis of the first century BCE led to a significant change in Roman values and norms concerning funeral culture, identity and gender. The period following the crisis was a time of revision, resignification and renewal of so-called traditional Roman values, and this process led to a flourishing of Roman culture, particularly in literature and history writing. The great reforms enacted by the emperor Augustus were conducted under the watchword of restoring the Republic (*restauratio rei publicae*). New elements of Roman identity were connected to the *mos maiorum*, the customs of respected ancestors. During the Imperial period, great funeral ceremonies were the prerogative of the emperors, aristocratic families, and the local nobility in the colonies. At these ceremonies, the ruling families displayed their enormous prosperity to the community as a whole. Such funerals became a way for the privileged elite to manifest their power and wealth to an audience consisting of the non-privileged multitudes.

Commemorative rituals in Ostia

Commemorative ceremonies were an essential part of Ostian culture. Already during the Republican period, gladiatorial games formed part of funeral ceremonies and were held to placate the forces of death. Funeral games lasted until the purificatory rites were celebrated, the home had been purified and the family gathered at a *cena novendialis*, the dinner held on the ninth day after the funeral near the tomb.[35]

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28 Suet. *Aug*. 100.

29 Plut. *vit. Caes.* 5, 4.

30 Cic. *de orat.* 2, 11, 44.

31 Tac. *ann.* 3, 76; by comparison, the funeral celebrations of Livia Augusta were a low-key occasion, and even Tiberius did not come to Rome to celebrate his mother's funeral; the *laudatio* was delivered by Gaius, a great grandson of Livia, see Tac. *ann*. 5, 1.

32 He was also the first to deliver a funeral oration for his young wife at her funeral, which according to Plutarch made him even more popular.

33 See Suet. *Cal.*

34 Toynbee 1982, 39.

35 The first known gladiatorial games were organized by D. Iunius Pera and his brother to honour the death of their father in 264 BC, Liv. *perioch.* 16, cf. Val. Max. 2, 4, 7; Hopkins 1983, 14-25. During the imperial period, they were also organized for the funer-

The proper mourning period was followed by rituals of commemoration: *Parentalia,* the festival of the ancestors and the dead, which was celebrated in February; *Lemuria*, a festival to appease the frightening spirits of the dead in May; *Rosalia* and *Violaria* during the summer, when graves and tombs were garlanded with flowers. Besides the public festivals, there were more personal commemorative days when the family and relatives of the dead went to the tombs to honour their loved ones and to celebrate shared meals together, offering wine and food to the souls of the dead.[36]

According to an inscription, *Iunia Libertas*, a wealthy woman from Ostia, left her property after her death to her freedmen, and after them to the whole population of Ostia, specifying that a portion of her money should be used for the annual observance of the commemorative festivals of the dead as well as for the decoration of her tomb. The inscription mentions the festivals of *Parentalia*, *Violaria* and *Rosalia*. This was a way of ensuring that her grave would continue to be visited and her memory preserved.[37]

Graveyards outside the cities became focal points for the *Parentalia*, *Lemuria* and *Rosalia* festivals as well as for more personal commemorations, when families and members of the same *collegia* paid their respect to their loved ones by pouring libations of wine, honey, milk and blood to their dead family members and friends.[38]



Figure 5. The necropolis of Porta Romana, grave monument B12 with a *columbarium* for cinerary urns. To the left the first steps of a staircase leading to the roof terrace. Photo: Arja Karivieri.



Figure 6. The necropolis of Porta Romana, tomb B12; oven where funerary meals could be prepared. Photo: Arja Karivieri.

als of imperial women, see Suet. *Caes*. 24. Later, the emperors reserved the right to organize gladiatorial games and their connection with funerals was lost, see e.g. Gregori 2001, 15-25. For the celebrations, Toynbee 1982 (1971), 51.

36 Toynbee 1982 (1971), 62-64. For commemoration ceremonies in general, see Borg 2019.

37 Dolansky 2011, 134; Hope 2007, 100; Bakker 1994, 52. See Epigraphic Database Roma, EDR073435.

38 Toynbee 1982 (1971), 37.



Figure 7 (Cat. no. 29). The central emblema of the mosaic floor that was found under the Caseggiato delle Taberne Finestrate. The theme of the upper part of this central image from a mosaic floor is a common one in antiquity: doves at a water bowl. The doves are a reference to Venus. There are three other birds on the bottom row, possibly a wryneck pecking at a walnut, a black-eared wheatear and a green Alexandrine parakeet (for the identification of bird species we are greatly indebted to Antero Tammisto. See also Tammisto 1997, 76-80, 382-84.). One more bird, perhaps a dove, is flying in the background. There is also a round, golden object on a pillar behind the bowl. It may be a pomegranate, another reference to Venus. The entire work may be interpreted as an allusion to beauty and femininity and perhaps also as a reference to an abundant and paradisiacal afterlife. Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 36584. Photo: Saana Säilynoja, Vapriikki Photo Archive.

The huge number of people visiting tombs on a regular basis also required a variety of services. In Ostia, some structures such as shops and utilitarian buildings have been identified at the Porta Romana necropolis, where those visiting the graves could buy the everyday items they required. At Isola Sacra there are traces of structures and furnishings, ovens and wells near the tombs where meals could be prepared.[39]

Usually the members of a single family were buried alongside their slaves and freedmen in the same tomb for generations. The Isola Sacra and Porta Laurentina necropoleis host large columbaria with the capacity to hold over one hundred urns.[40] There are also tombs containing multiple burials with niches for cremations and sarcophagi for inhumation.[41] We can thus say that these burial places were used for a prolonged period and that there were repeated celebrations and commemorations at the site for generations. For the Romans, the idea that the living and the dead were in communication with each other was normal. The dead were often imagined as spirits who could help later generations as protectors if they were treated well. This was perhaps one of the incentives for families to celebrate the days for the commemoration of the dead.

39 Graham 2005, 138; Heinzelmann 2000.

40 Meiggs 1971, 460.

41 Tomb 43 at *Isola Sacra* is a good example of a multiple burial with space for fifty burials, see Borg 2013, 22; on *columbaria* tombs in general, Borbonus 2014.

OSTEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

A Brief Osteological Overview of 30 Individuals from Anas Acilia Via del Mare

Paola Francesca Rossi and Anna Kjellström[1]

Introduction

Archaeological excavations have taken place in Ostia and the surrounding area for centuries, involving both settlement sites and necropolises. Anthropological studies of buried individuals may reveal information about activities and health of the inhabitants of the ancient city. In this study, an anthropological overview is presented of 30 randomly selected adult individuals, sampled in January 2018 from the necropolis "Anas Acilia Via del Mare". The samples are part of an ongoing project where results from three different techniques (documentation of non-metrical traits, strontium analysis and analyses of human DNA) will be joined and compared, in order to investigate questions of affinity and mobility. In this chapter, an initial osteological presentation about the sampled individuals will be outlined. Additionally, the relationship between the osteological results and the archaeological context will be discussed.

Short background about the excavation

The Necropolis, located 18 kilometers from the SS Via del Mare, was excavated between 1994 and 2000 by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Ostia.[2] The site is close to the 12th mile of the ancient road near the urban area of Dragoncello. The surrounding region, already affected by the presence of modest farms in the mid-republican period, was characterized by large rural housing systems, whose management was entrusted to workers and freemen of Eastern Greek origin. Many of the families associated with the sepulchral monuments and burials that flanked the Via Ostiense come from this population.

The necropolis that developed along the road is made up of both individual small monuments and large collective enclosures for incinerations and inhumations. The necropolis is probably to be dated between the Augustan and the Trajanic period (i.e. first century BCE to second century CE), apparently without differentiation in the funeral ritual.

More than 300 burials have been excavated, and both inhumations and cremations are well represented.[3] Different types of inhumations were identified: earthen burials without a cover, earthen burials covered with tiles (*cappuccina tombs*), amphora, peperino sarcophagus (1 burial) and lead sarcophagus (1 burial). In several cases, the diseased were buried with grave goods such as coins in the mouth (obols) or near the cranium, *unguentari* (small ceramic or glass bottles) or iron nails.

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1 Paola Francesca Rossi: Servizio di Antropologia, Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica, Viale dei Romagnoli 717 – 00119 Roma. Anna Kjellström: Osteoarchaeological Research Laboratory, Dept. of Archaeology and Classical Studies, Stockholm University, Lilla Frescativägen 7, SE-106 91 Stockholm, Sweden.

2 Pellegrino 1999.

3 Pellegrino 1999.

Material and methods

Although the excavated collection consists of several hundred skeletons, in this study only 30 individuals from inhumation graves from two sections (20 from section H and 10 from section I) have been selected. The individuals were buried in a variety of tombs. In 16 cases, the diseased were buried supine in earthen pits, in four cases in *cappuccina tombs* (earthen burials covered by tiles), and at least one individual was buried in a peperino sarcophagus; for the remaining nine burials no contextual data was available (**Table 1**). Most of the individuals studied had no grave goods, but in seven burials coins or iron nails were discovered in the mouth or close to the diseased, and the individual in the sarcophagus had several intact and fragmentary *unguentaria.* The variation in burial traditions suggests differences in wealth of the sampled individuals.

Table 1. Distribution of graves at ANAS Acilia Via del Mare

	Coin and or nail	Other goods	no goods
Earthen pit without cover	6	2*	8
Peperino sarcophagus	-	1 **	-
Earthen pit with tiles (cappuccina)	2	-	2

* boccalino (jug), olletta (jar), poggiatesta (headrest), ** unguentarium

The skeletons were cleaned in tap water and dry-brushed before the macroscopic inspection. To estimate the sex, morphological traits of the pelvis[4] and the skull[5] were applied. The age of adults was estimated based on characteristics of the pubic symphysis,[6] the auricular surface,[7] dental attrition[8] and ectocranial suture closure.[9] Stature was calculated from measurements of long bones, according to work by Trotter and Gleser.[10]

Results

Demography

The material includes individuals of both sexes; ten females, four possible females (F?), 14 males, and two possible males (M?) (**Table 2**). The age of the individuals ranges from early adulthood to above 40 years of age. However, a majority was in the age interval 16-25, and most of the sampled below 35 years were women.

Table 2. Demographic distribution

Site/Section	**Grave number**	**Sex**	**Age-at-death**
AVM H	T2	M	25-35
AVM H	T185	F	25-35

4 Phenice 1969; Buikstra – Ubelaker 1994.

5 Buikstra – Ubelaker 1994.

6 Brooks – Suchey 1990.

7 Lovejoy *et al.* 1985.

8 Brothwell 1981.

9 Meindl – Lovejoy 1985.

10 Trotter – Gleser 1952.

AVM H	T198	F	17-25
AVM H	T201	M	25-35
AVM H	T204	M	35-45
AVM H	T206	F?	25-35
AVM H	T210	M?	Adult
AVM H	T215	M	25-35
AVM H	T218	F	17-25
AVM H	T224	F	17-27
AVM H	T225	M	17-25
AVM H	T232	M	24-45
AVM H	T240	M?	25-35
AVM H	T244	M?	17-35
AVM H	T260	M	25-35
AVM H	T262	F	17-25
AVM H	T264	M	17-25
AVM H	T276	F?	25-35
AVM H	T277	M?	25-35
AVM I	T289	M?	17-25
AVM H	T290	?	25-35
AVM I	T302	F	25-35
AVM I	T303	F	17-25
AVM I	T339	M	25-35
AVM I	T345	F	17-25
AVM I	T346	M	45+
AVM I	T370	F	17-25
AVM I	T371	M	17-25
AVM I	T373	M	17-35
AVM I	T375	F	25-35

Stature

The stature was calculated on the basis of femur lengths when possible (11 cases), or humerus lengths (6 cases) and the formulas by Trotter and Gleser[11] were applied (**Table 3**). Based on femora, the mean stature, is c. 165±3.27 cm for males and 161±3.72 cm for females.

Dental pathologies

A total of 666 teeth were examined, and dental pathologies are quite common in the examined sample. Dental diseases were divided into four categories: *Caries, Enamel hypoplasia, Calculus, Intra-vitam tooth loss*. Caries in the form of cavities was documented in 15 individuals (9 teeth) (**Table 3**). Three individuals (5 teeth) showed a severe degree of caries (*destruens*) with a complete destruction of the dental crowns, and in two cases corresponding periapical lesions (i.e. dental abscesses) were noted. Ten individuals (all anterior teeth) showed traces of calculus (i.e. dental plaque) (**Table 3**). Calculus may form through a mineralization

11 Trotter – Gleser 1952.

of the bacterial film on the surface of the teeth, and could lead to periodontitis (tooth loss).[12] Hence, this could be the reason why fourteen individuals exhibit *intra-vitam* tooth loss (29 teeth), consequently showing remodeled bone. Enamel hypoplasia are enamel defects that may form during the development of the teeth through exposure to a variety of factors such as malnutrition, infections or trauma, but may also be caused by inherited conditions.[13] Six skeletons exhibited hypoplasia on one or more teeth.

Table 3. The relative frequency of dental pathologies among affected individuals. (No data= no preserved teeth).

	Caries	**Intra-vitam tooth loss**	**E. Hypoplasia**	**Calculus**
Presence	50 %	46.7 %	20 %	33.3 %
Absence	50 %	50 %	73.3 %	60 %
No data		3.3 %	6.7 %	6.7 %

Pathologies and trauma

Several of the analyzed individuals displayed minor skeletal changes. Trauma, seen as healed partial or complete fractures,[14] were observed in four individuals. Both cranial and postcranial elements were affected: clavicles (2 cases), zygomatic bone (1 case), tibia (1 case). All the affected individuals are over 30 years of age; two males are in the age interval 30-40; one possible male is 35-40 years and a possible female is over 50 years of age. All of these individuals were buried in earthen pits without a cover.

Three individuals showed periosteal reactive bone changes (*periostitis*) in the form of irregular bone depositions on the cortex. These may be caused by a number of irritants such as subperiostal hemorrhage or inflammation caused by trauma, infections or neoplasm.[15] One individual had a congenital anomaly called *patella bipartite,* which means that the patella consists of two bones because of an unfused accessory ossification center. The condition is asymptomatic in most cases. Pathological changes of entheses (tendon or ligament attachments) known as enthesopathies are associated primarily with age but also with sex and a heavy work load.[16] Enthesopathies were recorded using the method developed by Hawkey[17] and were noted in three individuals, all localized on the ulna (triceps brachial muscle). One individual exhibited an ankylosis of the second metacarpus and first phalanx, implying reduced mobility of the finger.

Conclusions

A brief overview of 30 sampled individuals from the necropolis Anas Acilia Via del Mare has been presented here. The individuals were all in inhumation graves. Some were buried in simple earth-cut graves, others in sarcophagi with or without grave goods, indicating different positions in the social hierarchies. Both men and women are included in the selected sample. Several of the women seem to have died at an earlier age than the men, but it is not possible to say if this is representative of the complete skeletal assemblage. The presence and nature of the documented skeletal changes were expected, since they can be regarded as fairly

12 Hillson 1998, 262.

13 See Bereczki *et al.* 2018 for a review.

14 Ortner 2003, 119-20.

15 Weston 2008.

16 E.g. Milella *et al.* 2012.

17 Hawkey – Merbs 1995.

common in larger skeletal collections. No clear distribution patterns could be determined in relation to sex, age or burial type, and no single individual seems to have been more physically affected than any of the others. The mean stature of the men from Anas Acilia Via del Mare is, in relation to previous investigations of individuals buried near Rome, normal, whereas the women seem to have been somewhat taller.[18] The forthcoming genetic and isotope analyses will add to our knowledge of the mobility and origin of the individuals.

18 Tartaglia – Nava 2015.

Dietary Landscape of the Community of Castel Malnome (Rome, 1st–3rd Centuries CE)

Flavio De Angelis, Sara Varano, Cristina Martínez-Labarga, Olga Rickards & Paola Catalano[1]

Although the osteological surveys of Imperial Age Romans have often focused on their lifestyle,[2] the development of biomolecular techniques has deepened our knowledge in remarkable ways by providing powerful tools capable of shedding light on crucial aspects of bio-cultural characteristics of this ancient human population. Specifically, there has been a rapid growth in nutritional research using stable isotope analysis, because of its ability to draw correct inferences about ancient dietary habits.[3] However, isotopic data in Romans are currently very scanty[4] and mainly related to people from England, Spain, or Southern Italy. Only a few people that lived in the capital of the Empire have been analyzed to date.[5] Thus, the biological analysis of a sample of Imperial people living at the edge of Rome and close to Ostia should help in better characterizing this ancient population in terms of its dietary patterns.

The relationship between ancient Rome and its suburbs has been extensively investigated by historians. According to Witcher,[6] the *Suburbium* could be defined as the area extending at least 50 km away from Rome, whose physical boundary in the Imperial Age was represented by the Aurelian Walls (271-275 CE), a permeable barrier allowing constant movements of people. The *Suburbium* could be considered an extension of the city itself, and the two areas constituted a single unit in terms of demography, economy, and social organization.[7]

Archaeological evidence suggests the countryside was inhabited both by poor people, who could not afford city life, and by people from the upper strata of Roman society who wanted to spend their lives outside the unhealthy environment of the city.[8] This liminal area also included marginal business excluded from the city for religious or public safety reasons, such as landfills, quarry pits, brick-making facilities, and funerary areas.[9]

Movements between the *Urbs* and *Suburbium* were frequent and were magnified in the territory between two really populated cities such as Rome and Ostia. People living in rural areas came to the cities to trade and farmers' engagement in the markets is demonstrated by the presence of manufactured goods in

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1 Flavio De Angelis, Sara Varano, Cristina Martínez-Labarga and Olga Rickards: Centre of Molecular Anthropology for Ancient DNA Studies; University of Rome "Tor Vergata". Via della Ricerca Scientifica 1, 00133, Rome, Italy. flavio.de.angelis@uniroma2.it Paola Catalano: Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma. Piazza dei Cinquecento, 67, 00185, Rome, Italy.

2 Catalano *et al.* 2010; Catalano 2016.

3 Lelli *et al.* 2012; Scorrano *et al.* 2014; Itahashi *et al.* 2018; Pestle – Laffoon 2018; De Angelis *et al.* 2019.

4 Prowse *et al.* 2004; Craig *et al.* 2009; Rutgers *et al.* 2009; Crowe *et al.* 2010; Craig *et al.* 2013.

5 Killgrove – Tykot 2013.

6 Witcher 2005.

7 Jones 1964.

8 Champlin 1982.

9 Killgrove 2010.

small sites.[10] However, most farmers likely fed themselves directly through their harvests rather than depending on the market economy. Historians suggest they might have produced different kinds of grain for their own sustenance (barley and millet) and for the market (mainly wheat).[11]

Since 2007, the archaeological survey performed in the south-eastern suburbs has allowed the identification of a vast necropolis in the extant Ponte Galeria suburb. This cemetery should encompass more than 400 burials, although modern public works related to nineteenth-century rail constructions wrecked a section of the burial ground, allowing the recovery of only 326 individual tombs. The landscape where the necropolis was set hosted some saltworks from the Iron Age onwards, and this area was broadly disputed in historical times between Rome and the city of *Veius:* the existence of the saltworks leveraged the topographic and social development of this territory through times. Indeed, the ancient Via Campana linking Rome to the Tyrrhenian sea lay in this area, and several storehouses for salt processing were discovered not very far from the necropolis.[12] The individual tombs were mainly located in an East-West direction, although some nuclei could account for a North-South arrangement, and were roughly dated to the first to third centuries CE. The preservation status of the skeletal elements is fairly good, so that they represent an outstanding archive for the identification of bio-cultural features of the persons buried in the necropolis.

The osteological features have been extensively investigated,[13] allowing the suggestion that people buried in Castel Malnome engaged in the salt-managing activities, although the information about their diet has been determined only by the presence of cariogenic lesions and the presence of a heterogenous amount of calcified plaque on their teeth. Nevertheless, further study of the assessed correlation of these markers with foodstuff consumption, and the identification of nutritional requirements of the working people of Castel Malnome, as well as of the dietary practices of the Romans in general, is needed.

The discussion of the diet of ancient Romans is currently supported by primary sources, such as novels and artworks.[14] However, there can be no doubt that this material was mainly produced by and for the upper social strata, representing less than 2% of the population, so there is still little evidence about the diet of commoners[15] and even more of poor people employed in ancient manufacturing activities such as in Castel Malnome. Although primary information about diet was provided by texts describing foods and ancient recipes,[16] no straightforward evidence could be clearly identified. Grain was the base of the diet of Imperial Rome: Cato's *de Agricultura* lists the ratios that slaveholders should provide for their farmhands, consisting of four *modii* (roughly 26 kg) of grain (specifically wheat) and half a liter of olive oil for month, along with wine, salt, and olives.[17] Furthermore, the grain dole (*annona*) provided five *modii* (about 33 kg) of wheat per month to male citizens[18] by the time of the Late Republic. Grain was eaten in several recipes, mainly as bread or *puls*, a grain pottage that could be also mixed with vegetables, meat, and cheese.[19] Overall, carbohydrates from grains would have accounted for about 70% of Romans' daily energy intake.[20]

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10 De Ligt 1993.

11 Rickman 1980.

12 Cianfriglia – De Cristofaro – Di Mento 2003.

13 Catalano *et al.* 2010; Catalano *et al.* 2013.

14 Purcell 2003; Wilkins – Hill 2006.

15 Killgrove – Tykot 2013.

16 Garnsey 1999; Wilkins – Hill 2006.

17 White 1976.

18 Hopkins 1978.

19 Garnsey 1991.

20 Delgado – Vaz Almeida – Parisi 2017.

Cereals were widely cultivated in the Roman Empire, despite consistent evidence of their widespread importation from areas like Sicily and Egypt: the commercial value of grain was highlighted by the Edict of Diocletian (301 CE), which set the maximum prize of wheat, barley, and millet. In particular, the role of millet is not clear; it may have been mainly used for animal fodder rather than for human sustenance.[21] A wide variety of vegetables, fruit, and legumes were also eaten by Romans.[22] Despite sources that emphasize the consumption of plant-based food, Pliny and Apicius also described meat consumption. The livestock trade was extremely widespread in the Roman world, and the main sources of meat were goats, sheep, lambs, kids, and pigs.[23] Lastly, the role of fish in the Roman diet is unclear, since this foodstuff was seen as either an expensive or a common food[24] in varying ecological contexts. According to Galen, marine fish were more highly valued than freshwater fish, and their consumption increased through the use of *garum*, a fish sauce. Faunal remains analysis at Portus of Rome revealed information about the relationship of Romans to fish,[25] but we do not lack other clues to the contribution of this resource to the Roman diet.

The evaluation of preserved bone remains, such as those recovered in Castel Malnome, by the most modern tools and techniques could provide a huge amount of information. Among the most frequently applied biomolecular methodologies, stable isotope analysis performed on human skeletal material is widely used to investigate dietary patterns in ancient populations and also to explore social practices and subsistence activities within ancient societies.[26] This methodology employs chemical elements, such as the carbon and nitrogen of proteins known to be suitable dietary markers for breaking down an individual's diet.[27] Bone collagen is particularly suitable for molecular analysis in ancient skeletal material. This analysis is based on two assumptions: (a) the isotope composition of bone collagen reflects the isotope composition of the foodstuffs consumed in the diet, and (b) different food resources are marked by specific isotope signatures. Moreover, nitrogen isotopes mainly come from the protein component of the diet, whereas carbon isotopes come not only from proteins but also from lipids and carbohydrates, especially in low protein diets.[28]

The method is based on the estimation of the ratios of $^{13}C/^{12}C$ and $^{15}N/^{14}N$ detectable from the bone collagen, which reflect the diet in the last decades of life. The natural abundance of ^{13}C and ^{15}N is expressed as per mil (‰) deviation from international standards: $\delta^{13}C$ or $\delta^{15}N$ $(R_{sample}/R_{standard} - 1) \times 1000$, where R in $\delta^{13}C$ and $\delta^{15}N$ is $^{13}C/^{12}C$ or $^{15}N/^{14}N$, respectively. The carbon standard is represented by V-PDB (Vienna PeeDee Belemnite), while atmospheric nitrogen (ambient inhalable reservoir, AIR) is used as the nitrogen standard. Dietary reconstruction is based on the concept that the carbon and nitrogen isotope values in consumers' bone collagen are higher than the corresponding values of their prey. For this purpose, the carbon isotope composition ($\delta^{13}C$) is suitable to determine the consumption of plants with different photosynthetic pathways (C_3 and C_4), although this marker is also useful in distinguishing terrestrial and marine sources, and freshwater ecosystems are also identified because they often display lower $\delta^{13}C$ values than C_3 terrestrial plants. Additionally, the difference in values between two species at adjacent trophic levels is about 1‰. The

21 Spurr 1983.

22 Garnsey 1991.

23 Brothwell – Brothwell 1998; MacKinnon 2004.

24 Purcell 1995.

25 Prowse *et al.* 2004; Prowse *et al.* 2005.

26 Larsen 2002; Katzenberg 2008.

27 Ambrose – Norr 1993; Jardine – Cunjak 2005.

28 Tieszen – Fagre 1993; Hedges 2006; Jim *et al.* 2006.

nitrogen signature ($\delta^{15}N$) provides information on overall trophic levels because an average growth between 3-5‰ in the food net is observed. Thus, it is possible to detect low $\delta^{15}N$ levels in plants, and greater levels in herbivores, omnivores and carnivores. Moreover, the marine ecosystem sources could be ascertained through nitrogen stable isotope data: this phenomenon also accounts for the marine denitrification process that is associated with the fractionation of the heavy isotope and with the presence of ^{15}N rich compounds.

The isotype analyses of individuals from Castel Malnome and variations in diet

A total of fifty individuals were analyzed for carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes in Castel Malnome: these samples were chosen according to the morphological preservation of their ribs. Demographic parameters such as sex and age at death were available from previous studies.[29] The baseline for the terrestrial protein component in the diet was accounted for through ten coeval faunal remains pertaining to *Sus scrofa*, *Canis sp*. and herbivore species.

Collagenic bone fraction was extracted using the modified Longin protocol[30] and each extraction was also simultaneously performed on a modern bovine bone as a control. Approximately 0.8-1.2 mg of collagen was weighted in duplicate into tin capsules and analyzed by Elemental analyzer ratio isotope mass spectrometry (EA-IRMS).[31] Bone collagen quality was evaluated in accordance with Van Klinken:[32] Collagen yield >0.1%, Carbon content (%C) >25%, Nitrogen content (%N) > 10%, C/N ratio from 2.9 to 3.6.

Isotopic data were analyzed using the Bayesian mixing model provided by the software FRUITS v2.1.1 (Food Reconstruction Using Isotopic Transferred Signals),[33] which allows for the probabilistic quantification of dietary inputs. FRUITS incorporates food macronutrients, elemental composition, and isotopic composition in its calculation. Human (consumer) data consisted of individual or average isotopic data, which were inputted into FRUITS with instrumental uncertainties of 0.1‰ or with standard error, respectively. To account for differential elemental routing, the model proposed by Fernandes and colleagues[34] was followed. Source (food web) data were provided by the coeval fauna, when available, or from the literature. The macronutrient composition of each food source was determined by reference to a range of comparable foodstuffs in the USDA (National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference).[35] **Figure 1** displays the individual results for the humans and faunal remains respectively.

Dietary heterogeneity was detected in Castel Malnome, both in $\delta^{13}C$ and $\delta^{15}N$ values, with no differences in isotopic signatures between males and females. The carbon range is ~6‰ (max -14.78‰ and min –20.81‰), but its breadth could be explained by some outliers. The range of δ15N values is ~6‰ (max 12.92‰ and min 7.17‰), and individual isotopic values are homogeneously distributed between the extreme values.

Overall, the human values are consistent with a diet based on C_3 plant resources exploitation, demonstrating the key role of cereals, in particular wheat, in the Imperial diet. These carbohydrate-rich resources were supported by the addition of protein-rich foodstuffs, from both terrestrial (with almost all the humans

29 Catalano *et al.* 2013.

30 Brown *et al.* 1988.

31 Ben-David – Flaherty 2012.

32 Van Klinken 1999.

33 Fernandes *et al.* 2014.

34 Fernandes – Nadeau – Grootes 2012.

35 United States Department of Agriculture 2013.

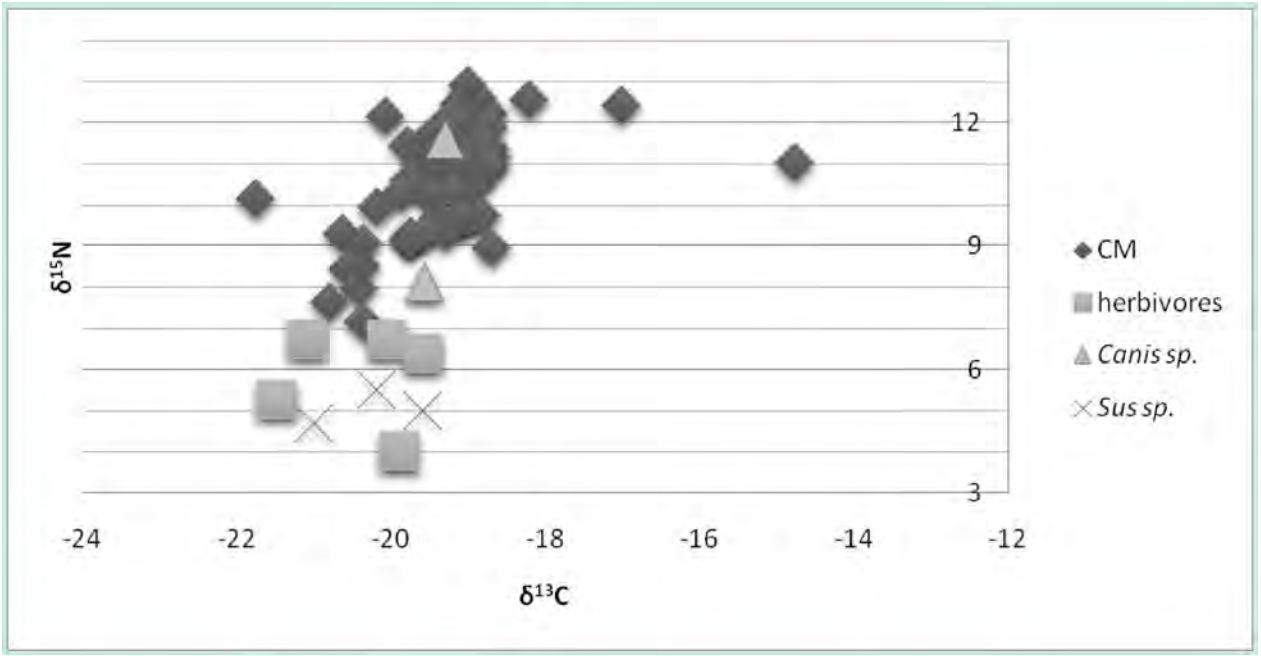


Figure 1. Graphical representation of individual data for the humans and faunal remains respectively.

at a mean nitrogen value of 10.74±1.24‰, a trophic level above herbivores) and freshwater environments (as suggested by the high $\delta^{15}N$ values of many Imperial individuals), resulting in a balanced diet founded on carbohydrate and protein-rich foodstuffs. The results display no evidence of the consumption of marine and C_4 plant resources, with the putative exception of few people, whose odd position could be related to individual preferences, since we lack specific biological and cultural peculiar characterization.

The historical evidence of Imperial Rome is unclear with regard to human consumption of C_4 plants such as millet, so it is currently unknown whether or not Romans ate these grains. Millet exploitation is often reported in famines and food shortages;[36] it was a grain for the poor because it was easy to grow, with the climate of Italy suitable for the cultivation of *Setaria italica* and *Panicum miliaceum*.[37] However, millet might also have been used for animal fodder, and as birdseed for hens rather than being directly eaten, and ancient perceptions of millet as a substandard grain might support the hypothesis that it was only seldom consumed by humans. Fish likewise does not seem to be account as common food, although it could also be eaten salted (*salsamenta*) and in the form of fish sauces (such as *garum*), the use of which is also reported in medicinal recipes.[38]

As we have noted, the diets of the Castel Malnome community were probably based on the consumption of carbohydrates that could be related to C_3 plant exploitation, which should be broadly complemented by high protein foods such as meat and resources from freshwater environments (**Fig. 2**). This dietary scenario is consistent with nutritional requirements for people putatively involved in heavy physical work, as is suggested by the osteological evaluation, where a high protein intake in their diets could ensure the required strength.

36 Spurr 1983; Garnsey 1991.

37 Spurr 1983.

38 Curtis 1991.

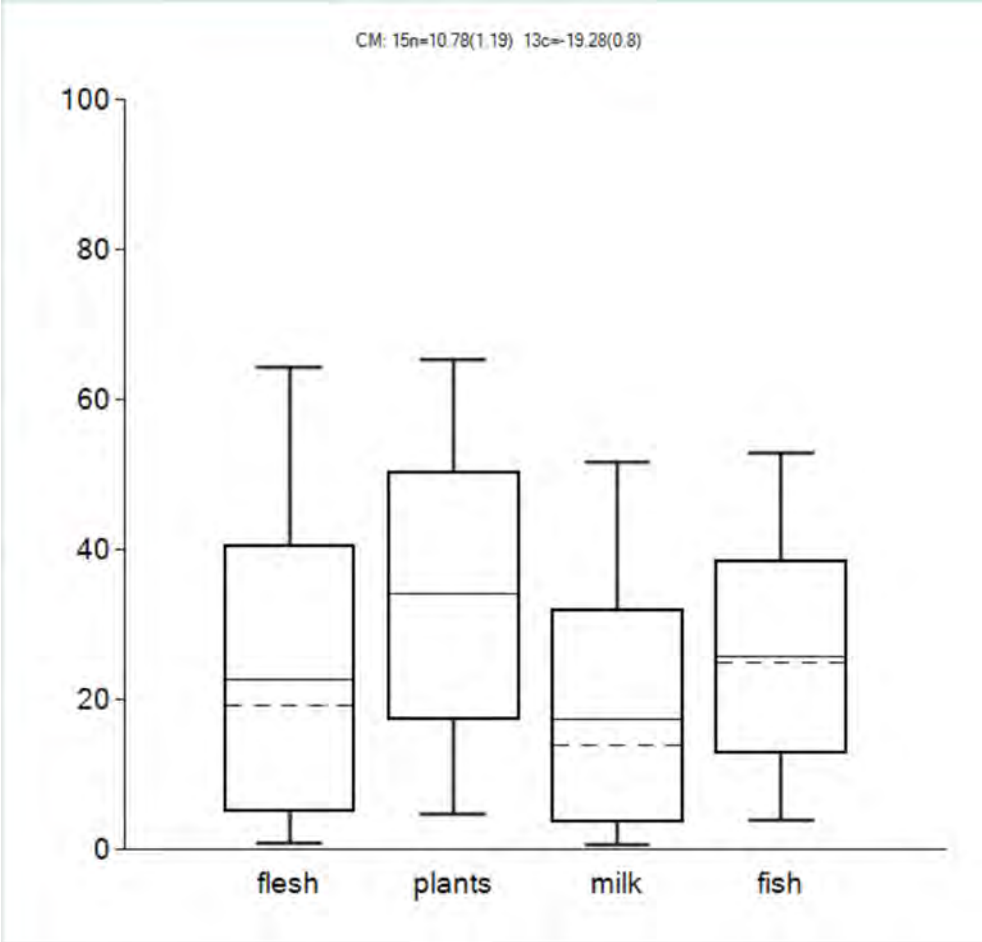


Figure 2. Quantitative diet reconstruction. The vertical axes represent the % of exploitation.

The individual in Tomb 213

Among people buried at Castel Malnome, skeletal biology analysis identified an old male individual (Tomb 213, 50-x years old) who probably suffered from gout;[39] osteolytic lesions consistent with the deposition of uric acid were identified in the short tubular bones of his feet (**Fig. 3**).

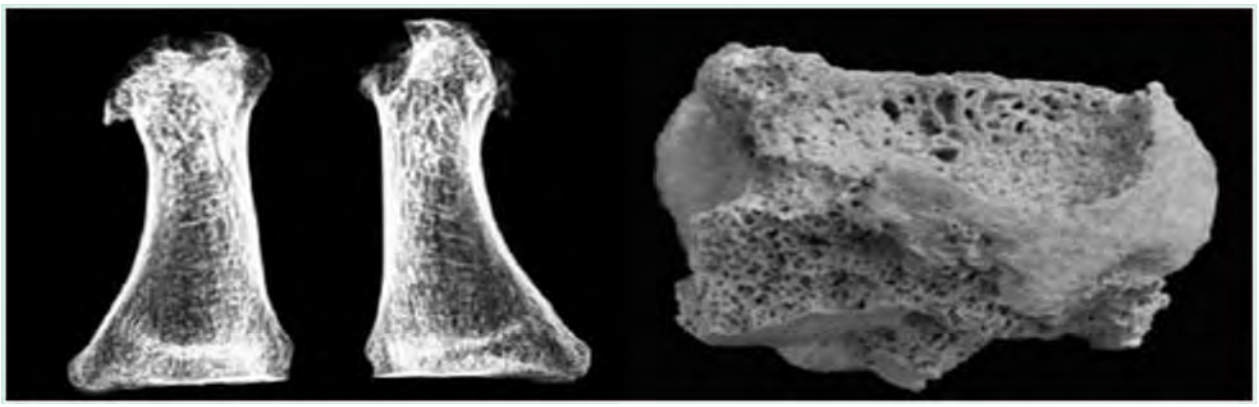


Figure 3. Bone lesions identified in the first metatarsal bone (on the left) and in the cuboid bone (on the right) of T.213 from Castel Malnome (Minozzi *et al.* 2016.).

39 Catalano 2016.

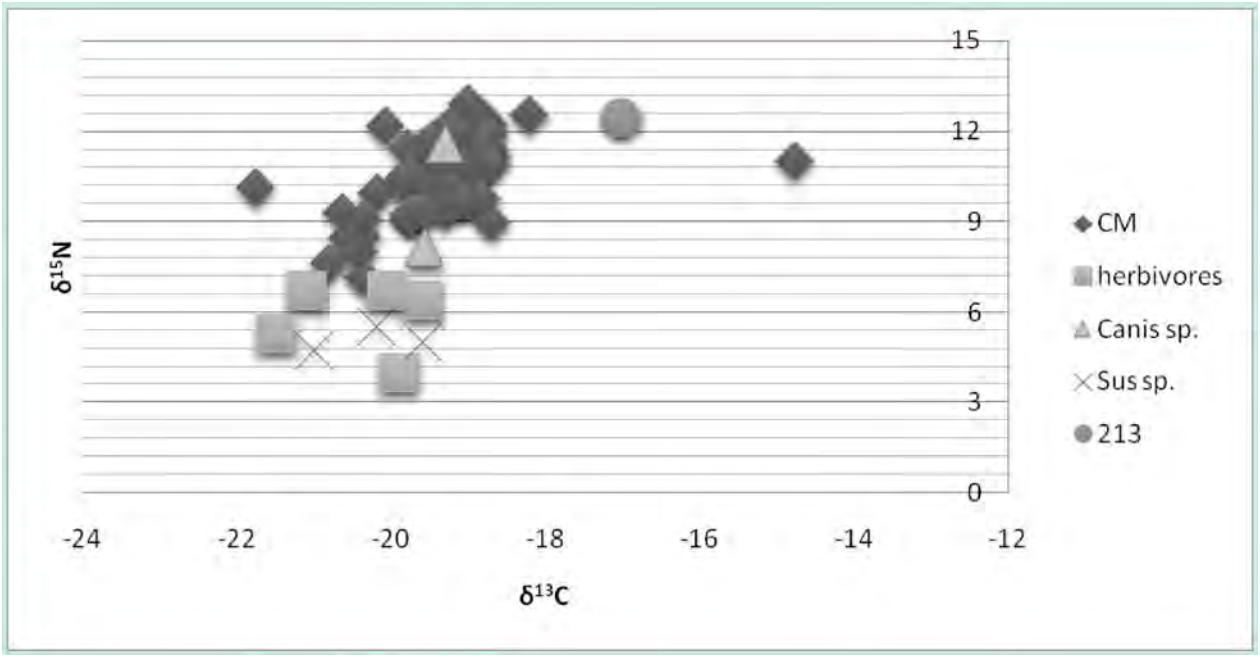


Figure 4. Graphical representation of individual isotopic values of the individual from Tomb 213.

The isotope evaluation seems to support the diagnosis of gout (CM 213: $\delta^{13}C$=-17.02‰, $\delta^{15}N$=12.44‰; Castel Malnome average value: $\delta^{13}C$=-19.28±0.8‰, $\delta^{15}N$=10.78±1.19‰; **Fig. 4**), as indicated by the Bayesian reconstruction (**Fig. 5**), which highlights a massive consumption of protein foodstuff, including purine-rich foods, which could be terrestrial or pertaining to the marine ecosystem (such as anchovies or mackerel, two of the widespread oily Mediterranean species).

Uric acid is the final product of the purine catabolic pathway in humans, and an imbalance between uric acid production and its disposal triggers elevated serum urate (hyperuricemia) resulting in the deposition of monosodium urate (MSU) crystals in the joints. This leads to gouty arthritic lesions.[40]

The individual in Tomb 132

The individual buried in tomb 132 is unparalleled in the funerary landscape of the Castel Malnome necropolis (**Fig. 6; Cat. no. 177**). The pit, dug in the ground and covered by tiles, contained the remains of a 30–35-year-old male, featuring a fracture of the right humerus and multiple costal traumas.

Furthermore, the skull displays a skeletal lesion that could be consistent with a putative congenital disorder due to a genetic etiology called Syngnathia.[41] This disorder is still extremely rare nowadays and it is characterized by the total fusion (ankylosis) of the condyles of the mandible to the temporal bone, causing the complete lack of jaw articulation, with a consequent impairment in the mouth rim opening. This pathological condition appears to be present in only five current cases, while the rare other cases display only the fusion of maxillary alveolar processes.

There are several hypotheses concerning its aetiology. The most plausible could be accounted for by the persistence of embryonic vessels close to the stapedius muscle of the inner ear; but inflammatory and autoimmune implications are also a possibility.

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40 Marchetti *et al.* 2016.

41 Catalano *et al.* 2009.

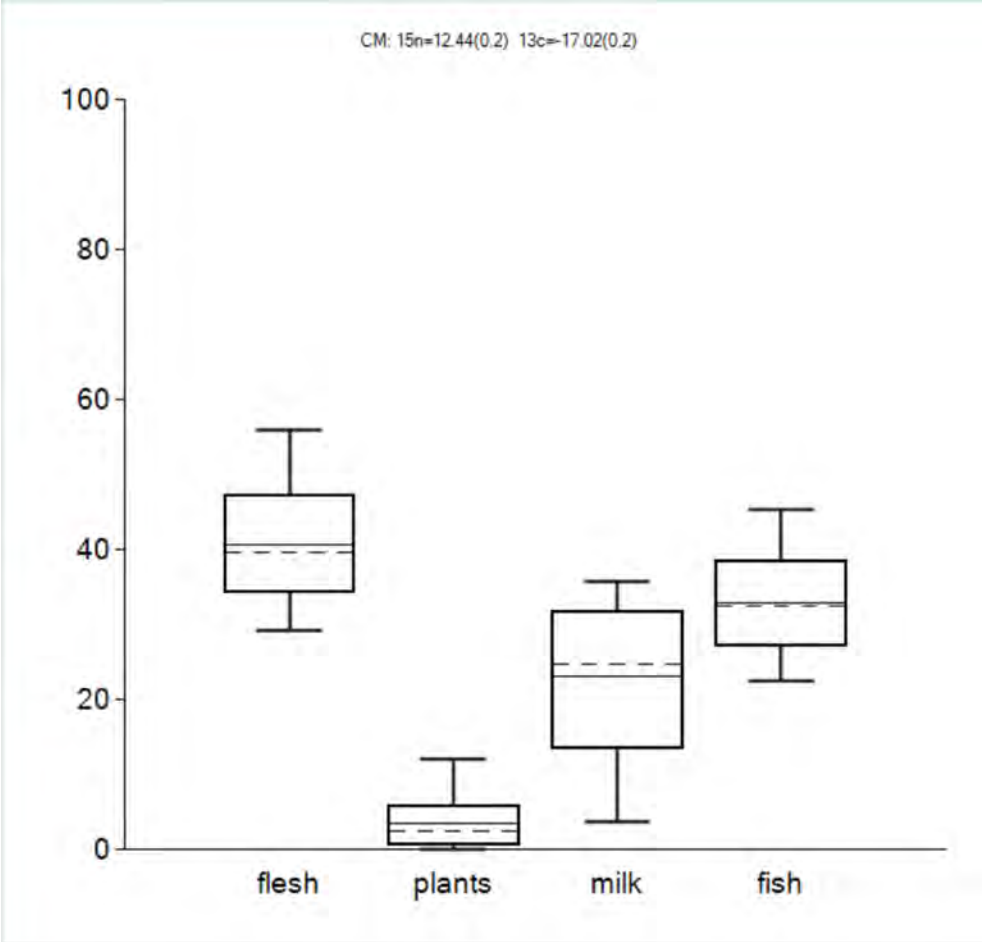


Figure 5. Nutritional reconstructions performed for T.213 sample.



Figure 6. Tomb 132 of Castel Malnome necropolis.

This pathological hypo-function made him unable to perform some basic functions such as breathing, voluntary feeding and phonation. However, he was subjected to a therapeutic intervention to overcome the total limitation of the nutritional activity: the removal of the anterior dental elements led to the establishment of a hole through which food supply was guaranteed. This evidence is remarkable, because he seems to have enjoyed specific care from the community which allowed him to reach adulthood, despite the evident pathological condition (**Fig. 7**).



Figure 7. Details of the T.132 showing the voluntary teeth avulsion.

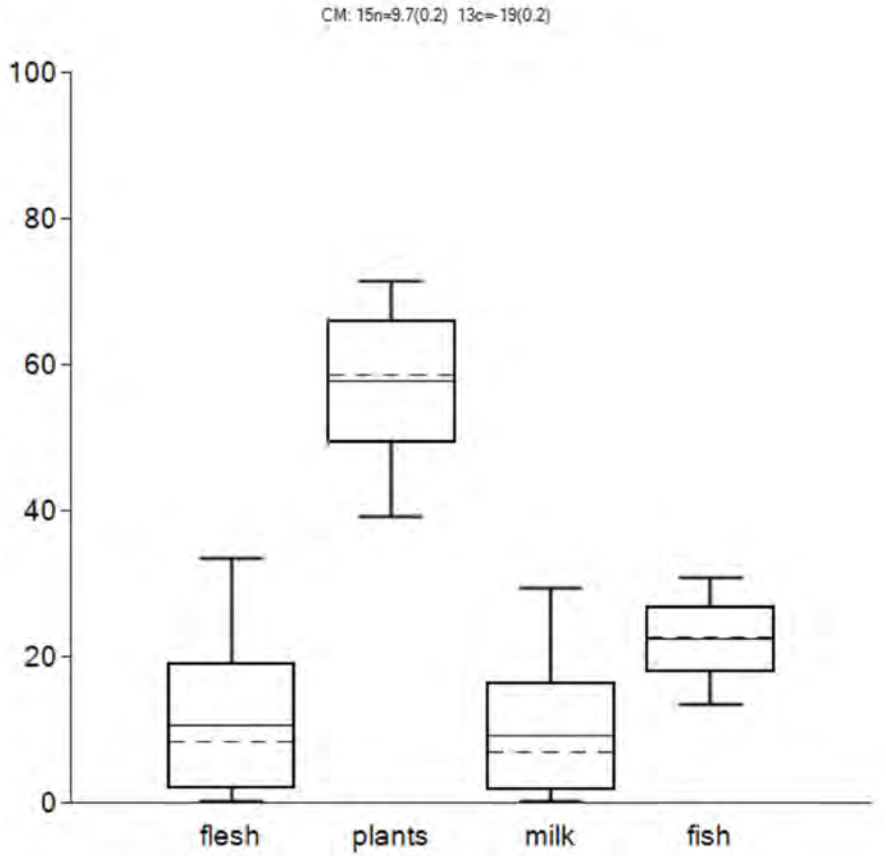


Figure 8. Nutritional reconstructions performed for T.132 sample.

Molecular analysis of food markers has revealed that his diet was different from that of the reference community, with a huge amount of plant-derived food consumption (**Fig. 8**). The food had to be consumed in semi-liquid form, due to the inability to chew, and the residual food would be responsible for the huge amount of dental calculus, mainly due to inadequate oral hygiene and the stagnation of food residues.

Epilogue

The molecular survey reported here revealed an expected dietary variability in Roman commoners, which could be presumed only in the case of people living at the edge of the city. Individual choices and specific constraints could also be responsible for the dietary restriction of some people. A larger sample in Castel Malnome, as well as a comparison with other Imperial necropolises from the Roman area, could broaden our knowledge of the ecological, social and biological conditions that governed the existence of some communities.

MODERN OSTIA

Between Past and Present. Ostia and Its Difficult Liminality

Marxiano Melotti

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the persistent "liminality" of Ostia from the Roman period to the present day. The term derives from the Latin word *limen*, meaning threshold, boundary, passage between different places or situations. Its use in the social sciences was popularized by the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep (1909), who introduced it in his seminal work on rites of passage to define their central phase, with its ambivalent and transitory character. Since then, liminality has become a powerful idea in socio-cultural analysis.[1] The concept was later used more broadly to define other spatial, social and cultural situations. Here we use the term to define the condition of Ostia: an urban agglomerate by the Tyrrhenian sea in the area of Rome that was once the city's great port (its name, from *ostium*, mouth, clearly refers to its location at the mouth of the Tiber, the river of Rome) and is now one of the twenty municipalities of the Italian capital – that furthest from the city centre (about 25 km or 15 miles).

Ostia seems to exist in-between, in a permanent state of liminality, crushed between the great city and the sea, prisoner of a complex system of parks, rural areas and communication infrastructures: the river, busy roads, port and airport, which isolate it from the surrounding area and the adjacent capital. This situation still connotes it as a space other than Rome, which tends to use it to stage representations of otherness that also serve its political narratives. Its degradation (not lacking in Rome) is presented as characteristic of an area also marked by the violent presence of Mafia families and Neofascist groups. Ostia – regarded as a place without culture, which must be brought here by the city – is seen as an a-cultural, pre-cultural and anti-cultural space in which numerous signs recall the "other" and "marginal" spaces in which the communities described by van Gennep and other anthropologists used to stage their rites of passage.

Obviously, this does not imply historical continuity: not just because it is always risky to hypothesize the persistence of cultural phenomena and social practices for over two millennia, but also because in this specific case we know for certain that such continuity is lacking. The ancient port city, the nodal element of the "global" dynamics of the empire of Rome, ceased to exist centuries ago and is now only an archaeological site, brought to light slowly starting from the early nineteenth century and then more quickly in the Fascist era (**Fig. 1**).[2] Equally, the new Ostia came to life only in the beginning of the twentieth century, but with a functional identity as the "Roman seaside", as a space of fun and pleasure initially aimed at the elites

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1 See Thomassen 2014. On the longstanding debate on liminality – "originally referring to the ubiquitous rites of passage as a category of cultural experience, liminality captures in-between situations and conditions characterized by the dislocation of established structures, the reversal of hierarchies, and uncertainty about the continuity of tradition and future outcomes" – also see Horvath – Thomassen – Wydra 2015, 2.

2 On the history of excavations at Ostia, see Bignamini 2001; Marini Recchia – Pacchiani – Panico 2001, and, with reference also to their ideological use by Fascism, Olivanti 2001.



Figure 1. Benito Mussolini visits Ostia Antica in the company of the Minister of National Education Giuseppe Bottai and the Director General of Antiquities Marino Lazzari, 14 May 1938. Photo: SIRBeC.

of the capital and later at its lower classes. In any case, its disordered urban development was fueled by the overcrowding of the capital, due in part to recurrent waves of migration. All this has made it a satellite periphery of Rome, re-creating its ancient submission in a new form. The new Leonardo da Vinci intercontinental airport, located in the adjacent Fiumicino area, now performs a function for Rome comparable to that of the port of Ostia in antiquity, but without any significant benefits for Ostia itself.

Within these dynamics, the archaeological area of Ostia is caught in a state of further liminality. Crushed between Rome and Ostia Lido, caged between the Tiber and the high-speed road that links them, broken up into several unconnected archaeological sites, it seems to have become a periphery of both Rome and Ostia Lido. This is compounded by the constitutive otherness of an archaeological site: a space of death in spatial, temporal and cultural discontinuity with the rest of the territory and the community that inhabits it. In this context, both the new Ostia and the archaeological site of ancient Ostia appear as spaces characterized by dynamic forms of marginality and liminality, variously marked by signs of love and death that, in contemporary society, often take the form of entertainment, tourism and violence.

This chapter addresses these dynamics in a spatial and cultural perspective, examining their effect on what, with over 230,000 inhabitants, is virtually Italy's thirteenth largest city by population.[3]

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[3] Data for the 10th Municipality of Rome (2020). With the consultative referenda of 1989 and 1999, Ostia attempted to break away from Rome to become an independent city named "Maritime Rome" – a name that, paradoxically, would have confirmed its weak identity and status as a satellite.

The sea and the liminality of Ostia

Est autem maritimis urbibus quaedam corruptela ac mutatio morum. With these words, in a famous passage of *De Republica* (2,1,1), Cicero ascribes to cities by the sea a "degree of corruption" and a worrying propensity to "change their customs". This image reflects the diffidence, typical of much of the Roman ruling class, towards complex urban spaces that were difficult to conceptually identify, like port cities that seemed to present a dangerous blend of liminality, marginality, mobility and a borderline nature. Such cities – continues Cicero – mix "new" languages and "new ideas", and import not just goods but also customs, effectively making it impossible to maintain the "integrity" of traditional customs. This in turn was thought to have a psychological impact on the inhabitants, caught up in "changeable hopes" and induced to "wander" in body and mind. There was even a "mania for trade and navigation" that went against the authentic values of Roman culture, represented by "the farming of fields and war". This is an interesting statement that shows that, at least at the time of Cicero, the Roman elite – despite an economic system and forms of personal wealth increasingly built on commercial exchange and, as we would say today, Mediterranean interrelations – continued to look with suspicion at those urban spaces and exchange hubs, like port cities, that underpinned the state organization. This attitude of the Roman ruling class towards maritime trade and more generally the commerce is well known. However, we must remember that, at least since the 2nd century BCE, these practices had become increasingly important in Roman social and economic dynamics and even many members of the senatorial elite were indirectly involved in them. Cicero himself, who had written some letters of recommendation for Roman merchants, had at least an ambiguous position: he despised the "sordid" merchants, but defended honest commercial activity and maritime trade, especially when the wealth that they created was invested in land ownership (*De Officiis*, 1, 151). According to Gabba,[4] Cicero's criticism of seaside towns, which incorporated a certain traditional rhetoric, aimed at enhancing the strength of Rome, which, thanks to its river port, benefitted from the advantages of maritime cities without having their defects.[5]

Even in a sophisticated and complex organizational, management and legal system like that which came to govern Ostia a century later, the "maritime" nature of port cities remained an ideologically distinctive feature. This critique also implied a concern about the ability to exert social control over spaces where the movement of goods and people also entailed a mobility of wealth and social roles, as well as abstract cultural values.

We should add that, in the ancient cultural imaginary, the sea is not just an element of contact and exchange, for better or worse, but also represents a sort of otherness serving to define the cultural space of the land, where fields are farmed and temples built. The port city and, more broadly, the beach itself are the spaces and boundaries that define and make visible a ritual, symbolic and, as we see in Cicero, ideological dichotomy between the world of culture and the "other" space of nature. This was an idea with deep roots in the Mediterranean collective imaginary that, even in the absence of proven forms of continuity between cultural systems, still conditions the way we look at many contemporary contexts. In the case of Ostia, the persistence or, more accurately, the re-establishment of this gaze, based on liminality and otherness, is very clear. In the Italian contemporary imaginary, Ostia is configured, from the early decades of the 20th century (in a constant succession of waves, also apparent in recent events) as an ambiguous and marginal space that makes it possible to examine and stage the contact with otherness and the other world. From this perspec-

4 Gabba 1980, 97.

5 On the complex attitude of Roman society towards trade, see Giardina 1989.

tive, Ostia is simultaneously the place of death and love, of fear and fun, in accordance with an apparently paradoxical dichotomic mythopoesis in which these different elements are linked by a subtle but pervasive idea of violence. It is the liminal space in which the sea seems to form an insuperable compression line, in contact with which the socially acceptable behaviours of the urban community seem destined to become ungovernable. Love is manifested as play, but may become violence and even death.

The new Ostia

The relationship with the sea has become the distinctive feature of Ostia, underlying the identity of the new urban space: Ostia is above all the beach, or the marginal space of the Roman community, where the citizens of Rome can abandon the cultural space of the city to find or rediscover the natural and "other" space of the sea. From a modern perspective, this essentially means entertainment and tourism. Obviously, we are not talking about the archaeological site of Ostia, now distant from the sea (a couple of kilometres from the new Ostia), nor about the village of Ostia Antica, which lies next to the excavations and which developed around the fine castle built by Giuliano della Rovere (later Pope Julius II), but about the "new" Ostia to the south, extending a few kilometres from the mouth of the Tiber.[6]

The new Ostia was effectively born in 1904, when a "Pro Roma Marittima" committee began to advocate the construction of an adequate port, recreating the old link between Rome and the sea.[7] In 1916, the urban planning document that turned Ostia into Rome's seaside resort was conceived. In 1921, the first stone of the railway station connecting Rome with the "reborn Ostia" was laid; thanks to this work, as a plaque reminds us, "after centuries of oblivion Rome came back to the Mediterranean Sea".[8] The new Ostia thus became a key element of Mussolini's vision of Fascist Italy: the port of Rome, but above all a residential district and seaside resort for the young and for party leaders, a rival, according to a nationalist rationale, to the Mediterranean's most important resorts. In 1924, Mussolini himself opened the Rome-Ostia train line.

In the same year the grandiose bathing establishment "Roma" was opened (**Fig. 2**). It was a vast building in the Art Deco style with allusions to the architecture of ancient Rome and clear references to some of its public edifices like Trajan's Markets and the Baths of Caracalla, as well as to the Basilica of Santa Sophia in Constantinople; it even had pillars with statues inspired by the Winged Victory (discovered in 1907 during the excavations at Ostia). The building, connected to the land by a pier 60 metres long, had a large hall for gymnastics and dancing and a luxurious restaurant. Along the beach were 100 luxury changing rooms and 400 simpler ones.[9]

This marked the start of Ostia's new history as a seaside resort and place of entertainment for tourists. Ostia also became, as recorded in chronicles and diaries, one of the places chosen by Mussolini to conduct

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6 On the history of the "new" Ostia, see De Nisi 1982 and Fabrizi 2018. On the history of its urban planning and its social and political context see Antonucci 2012. She identifies the process through which Ostia, from seaside resort and garden town with a clear identity, has become a disorderly town "similar to other peripheries without quality", owing to the lack of a coherent urban policy (254).

7 See Fabrizi 2018.

8 In keeping with this vision, we can recall a famous statement made by Benito Mussolini in 1925: "The Third Rome will spread over other hills, along the banks of the holy river [the Tiber], until the shores of the Tyrrenian sea": the new Ostia appears as a key element of an imperial politics. Nevertheless, even this striking perspective entails an ambiguous and dual image: Ostia is presented as a point of departure towards the Mediterranean (recovering its ancient function as harbour of the Empire) and as a peripheral space incapsulated in and absorbed by Rome, the capital and centre of the Empire.

9 On the new maritime Ostia and its bathing establishment see Coppola – Fausti – Romualdi 1997 and Creti 2008.



Figure 2. Benito Mussolini and the Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inönü during Inönü's State visit in Italy in 1932; the bathing establishment "Roma" in the background. Photo: Alamy Stock Photo.

his love affairs.[10] The Duce also enjoyed racing along the coast in his motorboat. Ostia, as well as taking on a rhetorical function as the new Empire's sea port, also becomes a place characterized by a series of risqué elements belonging to the erotic sphere. In this sense, the idea of the sea as a special place where bodies abandon their customary social dimension to take on another, temporary dimension connected with the sphere of transgression, sexuality and gossip also reappears.

All around, the new Ostia was built.[11] A complex and variegated world which, over the space of a century, ended up combining the elegant detached homes of the first decades of the 20th century, a memento of an ambitious urbanization process in part due to Mussolini, with more recent residential spaces, including large apartment blocks and council housing, often of very poor quality, testifying not only to successive waves of building speculation but also to urban policies of segregation aimed at creating a sort of controlled urban degeneration. In this context, spontaneous settlements and illegal camps also emerge periodically, reflecting the ebb and flow over time of the degradation of the Roman suburbs, from the settlements born

10 Mussolini's sexual vitality was one of the principal elements used to construct his image as a powerful male, so deeply rooted in Italian culture. On Mussolini and his Ostian escapades, see Fabrizi 2018, 140, 142-45. Here, for the first time, Mussolini met Claretta Petacci, who was his lover until his death. He noted in his diary: "Ostia, April 24 [1933] on a day of libeccio winds, while the sun, fleeting, laughed at times, she spoke to me for the first time. I trembled, but it was not cold. Sublime, wonderful, unforgettable moment" (Petacci 2009). Ostia is depicted as a mythical space in which the Siren awaits for her hero. Mussolini's private antics in Ostia did not go unnoticed. The lifeguard Nicola Schiano Moriello (Mancini 2007, 17-19) remembers that he had to accompany Margherita Sarfatti, another famous lover of Mussolini, to the Duce's motorboat, waiting offshore. Mussolini is depicted in an almost mythical way: standing on his boat, in the middle of nowhere, he would listen to Nicola and resolve the problems of the local fishermen and other poor people.

11 See Stabile 2012, especially the sections 'Roma al mare' (91-95) and 'Ostia città balneare' (96-98). See also Marcucci 2007.

to house those fleeing the bombings of Rome during the second World War to the new marginal groups of Romany people and illegal migrants, mostly of African origin.

This is an extremely varied community from a cultural, social and ethnic point of view that, even in the absence of any direct continuity, seems to replicate the multicultural nature of ancient Ostia. The modern Ostia of the resorts and the beaches has also effectively recovered that relationship with the sea that archaeological Ostia, relegated inland, can no longer boast. However, it should be said that, at least insofar as we can gather from archaeological, literary and epigraphic evidence, ancient Ostia was better able to integrate diversity than contemporary Ostia, where the level of conflict remains very high. Neofascist demonstrations against immigrants, vandalism of the symbols of the past (like the monument marking the spot where the "Communist" intellectual Pasolini was assassinated) and attacks on Romany encampments illustrate the difficulties of a community that feels unprotected and in which young people live in a context of widespread violence and degradation.[12]

Ambiguity and degradation between myth and reality

Modern Ostia, from an urbanistic and architectural point of view as well, reflects the ambiguity and duality mentioned above: on the one hand, a place of tourism and entertainment, with small detached houses, hotels, little restaurants and beach clubs; on the other, a space of degradation and disorder, where speculation and illegal construction reflect a social and cultural decline. The sea and the coastline become the (not purely symbolic) point of contact between these two worlds: in recent decades, organized crime has taken control of many organized beaches, thus introducing (or confirming), the fusion of the world of fun and that of violence. These same beach clubs have also been the stage for open violence, with arson and other forms of intimidation used by criminal gangs to take possession of these areas or counter the attempts of the municipal government to re-establish law and order.

The local news of recent years is full of episodes of serious violence, resulting from the presence of criminal groups, such as Mafia families connected to those of the regions of southern Italy, often in association with forms of cultural, social and political marginalization, like gypsy clans and Neofascist groups.

The journalist Federica Angeli, author in 2013 of an inquiry into organized crime in Ostia, which has had significant legal and political consequences, is still forced to live under police protection.[13] Indicative of latent conflicts and tensions that have never been quelled is the fact that in 2019 the Ostia town council ordered the removal of a mural depicting her, painted by school children. In short, the city is struggling to manage its own image as an ambiguous and dangerous space, and despite the desire to legitimately construct

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12 In this context, we could mention the 2017 and 2018 raids against the unauthorized vendors of foreign origin organized on the beach of Ostia by the Neofascist political movement known as Casa Pound. At the time, the municipal councillor and organizer of the raid stated "We are here to re-establish a principle of legality" (see Pacino 2018). This incident confirms the symbolic meaning of the beach as a liminal space in contact with alterity (social, ethnic, political), capable of effectively connecting different levels: reality, representation in the media, politics, violence. The beach (and with it Ostia) is re-established, both in actuality and in the collective imaginary, as a privileged space for the negotiation of identity and politics, and for interaction between marginal groups (immigrants, people from outside the EU, unauthorized vendors and Neofascist militants), as well as between these marginal groups and the rest of the community. The political and media construction of the macroterritory of Ostia as a liminal, marginal, and "other" space is periodically fed (in part by an objective and undeniable state of degradation). Consider the statement made by the leader of the (centre right) Lega party when visiting the gypsy encampment in the nearby area of Castel Romano in 2017: "A disgrace that should be razed to the ground (…). Scabies, mange, hepatitis, leptospirosis and 500-600 children who should be in school and instead are living in appallingly unhygienic conditions. We have a shared objective, a bulldozer to tear down this disgrace. I want it and they want it" (see Fatto Quotidiano 2017).

13 See Angeli 2017 and 2018.

a new identity, has difficulty redefining itself, suffocated by a collective mythopoesis at least a century old and periodically revived by violent incidents.

The city has largely fallen victim to a mechanism that the new media have only reinforced. Among the recent occurrences that have contributed most to consolidating this negative image we could mention the "head butt" with which a member of one of Ostia's main criminal groups tried in 2017 to intimidate a journalist who was asking awkward questions. The incident, caught on the crew's TV cameras, was widely publicized: an act of almost primitive violence that helped to confirm Ostia's image as an anti-cultural, if not pre-cultural, "other" space.

We should remember that in 2014 the scandal nicknamed "Mafia capitale" closely involved Ostia, leading in 2015 to the arrest of the president of the municipal council (a member of the centre-left Democratic Party) and to the administration being disbanded. Phone taps, published by all of Italy's newspapers, reported picturesque statements like "Ostia ce la semo presa" ("We've taken Ostia").

These are, I repeat, concrete criminal incidents, with their dead and wounded, that nonetheless form part of a trend in its cultural and media representation, and a literary and cinematic crystallization of the otherness of which Ostia has been a protagonist for decades. Among the numerous examples, we could mention the film *Amore tossico* (1983) by Claudio Caligari (greeted with ferocious criticism by the managers of beach clubs, shopkeepers and other entrepreneurs from Ostia, worried that it portrayed a negative image of a city of drug addicts, bag snatchers and beggars), *Non essere cattivo* (2015) by Claudio Caligari, *Lo chiamavano Jeeg Robot* (2015) by Gabriele Mainetti, and the novel *Suburra* (2015) by Carlo Bonini and Giancarlo de Cataldo, which became a film directed by Stefano Sollima in the same year and then, from 2016, a successful television series distributed worldwide.[14] In these productions, Ostia and, not coincidentally, its beach are used repeatedly as sets on which to stage the violence and marginality of the protagonists of the events recounted. The desolate space bordering the sea is a constant metaphor for the conceptual liminality that imprisons Ostia.[15]

One of the first examples of this use of Ostia and its beach is the film *Ostia* (1970) by Sergio Citti, with a screenplay by Citti himself and a well-known writer, poet and public intellectual, Pier Paolo Pasolini. It is a harsh tale of degradation and violence, in which two brothers, sons of an abused mother and an alcoholic father, go so far as to commit parricide and fratricide as they fight over a prostitute.[16] The final scenes of the movie reflect this idea of Ostia and its beach as ambiguous and repugnant spaces of deep degradation and paradoxical duplicity: the two brothers are on the beach in the middle of the night and fight on sand littered with wooden trunks and garbage. In one scene, imbued with a primeval and biblical atmosphere, one kills the other with a stick and then, shirtless, cleanses the blood from the body of his brother. It slowly dawns. The beach begins to fill up. Between the corpse and the garbage, a woman opens her beach umbrella and children start to play. The killer loads his brother's body onto a boat and then, once offshore, throws it into the sea. On the horizon is the skyline of Ostia with its depressing buildings.

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14 On Ostia and its relationship with cinema, and the numerous films set or shot here see Mancini 2014. Ostia's strong presence in cinema is obviously due in part to its proximity to Rome and its Cinecittà studios. The beach of Ostia also appears in some scenes in *Sapore di mare*, a light-hearted comedy about the summer flings of young middle class people, set (and filmed) in Versilia. Antonucci 2012 notes the relationship between the economic boom of the '50s and the development of Ostia as a space "protagonist of the moments of escape and ludic collective imagery" promulgated by the Italian film industry of the time (252).

15 On the cinematic representation of degradation in the periphery of Rome, see Ravesi 2017: with reference to Ostia and Amore Tossico, he writes: "The sea, the horizon and the shore are recurrent elements of the landscape that define insuperable thresholds for the movements of the protagonists" (4).

16 Perhaps not coincidentally, this woman's name was Monica, like the mother of St Augustine, who died in Ostia in 387 CE while waiting to return to Africa by sea. Her death, recounted by St Augustine himself (Augustinus Hipponensis, *Confessiones* 9, 8-12), helped to enhance the image of Ostia as a liminal space between life and death (see Melotti in this volume, pp. 388-90).

On a 1975 night Pasolini himself met his death in Ostia, in the run-down area of the Idroscalo, near the sea, killed (in a way that has never been fully clarified) by a young man whom he had invited into his car for paid sex, or, according to others, by a group of Neofascists. Sex and violence, homosexuality and politics, literature and reality are connected in a blend that, based on our cultural imaginary linked to the liminal dimension of the beach and other border spaces, continues to churn out media, literary and cinema products even today. This mingling of the real and the imagined is a constant in Ostia: in 2017, for example, at the opening of the film *Suburra*, a member of the Mafia clan featured in the film arrived to have his photograph taken with the unsuspecting actors.

Obviously, this image of a degraded and violent Ostia, following a complementary and dichotomic rationale, is accompanied by the idea of the beach and the sea as spaces of entertainment, tourism and eroticism.

Another film, *Domenica d'agosto* (1949) by Luciano Emmer, is an account of a day at the seaside of a simple and innocent Italy, shortly after the end of the war, that, thanks in part to the train to Ostia, rediscovers the sea and entertainment. In one scene we even see some ruins of the bathing establishment "Roma", blown up by the Germans in 1943. In the film *Mariti in città* (1958) by Luigi Comencini, the beach at Torvaianica becomes the setting for extra-marital affairs of husbands with holidaymaking wives. The image of the beach at Ostia as a place of popular entertainment, in contrast to the more upscale beaches frequented by the middle classes and the intellectuals, is a constant: examples are the music video *'Namo a Ostia beach* (2011), a parody of the single Mr Saxobeat by Alexandra Stan, and the film *Tutti a Ostia beach* (2013) by Enzo Basile. Also belonging to this same process of collective myth-making is a short video interview, filmed in 2010 and circulated on YouTube, which was later shown on Italy's main tv news shows and went viral on the internet, in which two girls aged 15 and 17, interviewed in their bikinis on the beach, celebrated the joys of life on the beach with its ice creams and beers in a strongly dialectal Italian: "Me so presa 'n Calippo" ("I had a Calippo ice cream") and "Pur io me so presa 'n Calippo e poi 'na bira" ("I had a Calippo too and then a beer"). This is the spontaneous testimony of a pre-cultural Italy that corresponds perfectly to the stereotype on which the image of the area was built.[17] An aspect of Cicero's *quaedam corruptela ac mutatio morum*…

The sea and the beach, precisely for their ambiguous and liminal nature, act as the common denominator of these two opposing (and only ostensibly incompatible) images of Ostia.[18]

Between the centre and the periphery: marginality, subalternity and complementarity

Clearly, Ostia's liminal and (seaside) nature is not just influenced by the symbolic conflict between nature and culture. This image of Ostia's urban (and tourism-orientated) space also comprises another important element that in part is already present in ancient Ostia: the rapport between centre and periphery. Ostia is

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17 We could also mention the song (and video) *Ostia Lido* (2019) by the Italian rapper J-Ax: an ironic representation of the beach at Ostia as a leisure space for the unsophisticated. "It doesn't matter if you dreamed of Puerto Rico. If we remain together, even Ostia Lido can be a paradise". Ostia beach is depicted as a popular and easy-going place where people go to make love, in opposition to the "cultured vacations".

18 In this context we could mention an event in the summer of 2019, which reflects both the convergence between criminal acts, media representation and the collective imaginary, and between different forms of liminality, marginality and otherness that connect sex and violence in the space of Ostia and particularly its beach: two foreign citizens, of Indian origin, risked being lynched by bathers after they took some photographs of some little girls on the beach at Ostia and attempted, according to witnesses, to lure them away. The arrival of the carabinieri prevented the lynching. Of course, the newspapers reported this incident with titles like 'Pedofili in spiaggia a Ostia' ('Paedophiles on the beach at Ostia') and 'Fotografano le bambine' ('They were photographing little girls') (see Messaggero 2019 and Valente 2019).

(and was) obviously a peripheral and satellite settlement with respect to Rome. In ancient times, however, this relationship of subalternity was counterbalanced by the central economic, functional, and indirectly also social and political, role of the port of Ostia: the political stability of the city of Rome and the governability of its lower classes depended on the grain arriving here; the goods processed in the territory of Ostia were one of the foundations of the wealth and power of Rome; and the port of Ostia was one of the principal points from which the power of Rome and the Roman culture irradiated into the Mediterranean. Ostia was thus simultaneously a peripheral space with respect to the centrality of the capital, a necessary space integrated into a complex system, and – as the port of Rome, the gateway to the city and the point from which its power and culture irradiated – also a space perceived as central in a Mediterranean perspective.

However, modern Ostia has lost this functional importance.[19] The international airport of Fiumicino (with its 43.5 million passengers in 2019) can of course be interpreted as the functional heir to the ancient port system of Ostia and Portus. Yet the airport's importance for the city of Rome has not led to an increase in the significance of the territories which host it: both Ostia and Fiumicino itself are effectively disconnected from the airport, to which they are linked at most as satellite towns and service centres. The marginality and subalternity of their rapport with Rome, in short, is now accompanied by a new subalternity to its airport.

The physical space occupied by the airport and the road network connecting it to Rome and to the Rome ring road also contribute to Ostia's spatial marginalization.[20] Even the large Via Cristoforo Colombo, designed by Mussolini as an "Imperial road" to bring Rome closer to its sea by connecting Ostia to the city and especially to its new EUR district, eventually altered the cultural landscape, consolidating a more or less exclusive rapport between Rome and Ostia as centre and periphery, preventing Ostia from building an effective system of intercommunications with the other towns in the area and becoming in turn a "centre" for them. The connections between Ostia and Rome are far easier and faster than those between Ostia and other places in its vicinity and along the coast. In other words, the area's road system (which largely reflects that of ancient Rome) has a single large centre, Rome, from which roads emanate outwards like rays, in accordance with a heliocentric model. Ostia is merely the end point of one of these rays. The sea, the Tiber and the airport (alongside a system of parks and nature reserves) end up becoming further elements of oppression, relegating Ostia to a state of metropolitan marginality.

Cultural policies for a feeble identity

This difficult relationship between the centre (Rome) and the periphery (Ostia) is also reflected in cultural and tourism policy, with repercussions on identity that end up impacting the cultural institutions present in the area, including the archaeological site. In 2015, in part to counter the effects of the "Mafia Capitale" scandal and send a signal that the centre was present in the periphery, the then mayor of Rome Ignazio Marino decided to bring some important art works belonging to great museums, all in the centre of Rome, to various peripheral areas. Ostia hosted six works, including a Rubens and a Caravaggio. On this occasion, he declared: "The presence of culture and art are very important antidotes against crime and illegality. We want everything to change here and for this part of the city to become something to be proud of: a healthy part of which Rome and Italy should be proud. We want everyone here to be able to walk with their head held high,

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19 On the rapport between the centre and the periphery in the Rome area see: De Angelis – Mignella Calvosa 2006; Ferrarotti – Macioti 2008. On the Idroscalo area of Ostia, see Leonardi – Maggioli 2015. On the rapport between the sense of belonging, identity and isolation see Petrillo 2018.

20 On the "difficult mobility, rooted in history" of this territory see Bruschi 2015b.

surrounded by legality".[21] This was a praiseworthy initiative that nonetheless reflected a centralist, elitist and paternalistic approach to territorial relations, in which the peripheral space was seen as an a-cultural or pre-cultural place that, to enter the world of civilization, required contact, if only fleeting, with the cultural sphere (Caravaggio's painting was on display in Ostia for just one day).[22] From this point of view, only the centre can civilize the periphery.[23]

Institutional communications take a similar approach. A Lazio region promotional brochure aimed at tourists contains a short chapter entitled "Ancient Ostia – the sea of Rome", in which the image of ancient Ostia is focused on Rome and the sea, leading to a loss of historical identity for the archaeological site and its inclusion in the conceptual space of Rome and its dynamics of consumption for leisure and tourism.[24] The same brochure presents the Fishing Village of Ostia in an exoticizing, primitivist and folkloric way, far removed from reality but in keeping with the area's pre-modern image. Once again, this is to the detriment of the archaeological site, which loses its character as an "other" space.

An archaeological site between marginality and a new centrality

The aforementioned organization of the territory also impacts the accessibility of the archaeological site of Ostia antica and, perhaps more importantly, its image. Within this system the archaeological site is at once a periphery of the periphery (as an area within the new Ostia and subject to all the spatial constrictions mentioned above), and a peripheral or satellite area of Rome, in a relationship of discontinuity with the new beach resort of Ostia. This is exacerbated by the fact that the archaeological site is "suffocated" between the Tiber and a heavily trafficked provincial road that strongly limits the possibility of building effective relations with the surrounding area.

In short, the territory is fragmented, poorly interconnected and above all now incapable of conceiving of itself as a whole. The complementary relationship between the sites of Ostia and Portus has been lost, separated by canals and other infrastructures (that once connected them); the functional historical relationship between Rome and the new Ostia has been lost, and the latter now functions only as a leisure district of the capital; the bond between the new and the ancient Ostia is now very weak: though adjacent to one another and part of the same administrative district, they are thought of as distinct and not interrelated. We should add that, paradoxically, ancient Ostia seems to play a marginal role in the process of defining a new identity for modern Ostia. Its archaeological identity is perceived almost as a further expression of the alterity that modern Ostia is trying to escape. This process does not necessarily have a negative impact on the archaeological site. However, it would be better for the site to succeed in reconnecting with the territory and the community that host it and from which it originates (as the archaeological superintendency has been attempting to do, with difficulty, for at least a couple of years).

Nonetheless, even in the absence of these relations, the archaeological site has maintained (or even strengthened) its own identity as an "other" place, from a spatial, temporal and ultimately cultural point of view. The more so because Ostia, like Pompeii, in addition to the generic alterity of an archaeological space connected with the world of death and of the past, is also characterized by its specific nature as a crystallized

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21 See http://ilquotidianodellitorale.it/caravaggio-in-mostra-ad-ostia-il-sindaco-di-roma-ignazio-marino-accolto-da-fischi-e-insulti/

22 See Savelli 2015.

23 On the difficulty of implementing effective cultural policies see Barca 2015 and especially the chapter 'Ripartire dalle periferie: uno slogan da riempire di contenuto' (24-29).

24 The texts in the brochure are by Alessia Petruzzelli. See Petruzzelli 2014.

"urban" space in which, among ruins and reconstructions, we can still easily single out functions of the ancient spaces and aspects of daily life in the ancient world that are comparable to the contemporary ones. This is true of the Thermopolium in Via di Diana, where visitors, despite a lot of misunderstandings, recognize and even imitate everyday activities in today's bars. In short, ancient Ostia, especially in a rationale of supralocal and international enhancement, continues to be a functional archaeological site even in the absence of a desirable closer rapport with its territory.

However, it should be said that the aforementioned territorial fragmentation negatively affects one of the specific aspects that contribute to Ostia's identity: its relationship with the river and with the sea. The city's nature as a port, with its maritime infrastructure, is hard to see. Even the Tiber, the true soul of the city, lies behind a barrier. The same can be said of the numerous other archaeological sites in the area, from the Necropolis of Portus to the Port of Trajan. It is not just the relationship with the sea and the Tiber that is missing but even an internal relationship connecting the various archaeological areas.

The issue of how to reorganize tourist access to the area's archaeological sites has been debated for some time.[25] In this context, we should mention some interesting activities. For some years there has been a river boat service linking the EUR district to ancient Ostia that in part restores the site's identity as a river port. Unfortunately, this service is discontinuous and unreliable.

Similarly, for some years Fiumicino airport, in collaboration with the Ministry for Cultural Heritage, has attempted to promote the nearby archaeological site of Ostia with small exhibitions. The otherness of archaeology is thus combined with the otherness of the airport, understood as a transitional infrastructural space that, just like an archaeological site, is in discontinuity with the surrounding territory. The spatial mobility of the traveller becomes temporal mobility. Unfortunately, as often happens with such initiatives, the presence of ancient statues ends up becoming a merely decorative feature that the viewer struggles to connect to the historical, and to an even greater extent territorial, context.[26] We should nonetheless appreciate the underlying intent, even if it is not clearly explained: to demonstrate the nature of Ostia and its port as an international hub, equivalent to today's large airports. The intended reopening of the Museo delle Navi in Fiumicino (hopefully to be connected to the airport) might be another piece in this process of reconstructing territorial relations.[27] Part of the same context is the initiative "Navigare il territorio", organized by

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25 See among others Bruschi 2015c, 116, who suggests a landscape archaeology system that is not a traditional archaeological site but a "palinsesto urbano altamente permeabile e strategia di ricerca di un nuovo ciclo di vita per l'area ostiense" ("highly permeable urban palimpsest and a strategy aiming at a new life cycle for the Ostia area"), based on the integration of archaeological sites and nature reserves, and on the reinterpretation of criticalities as positive features, by reusing abandoned buildings or moving from illegal construction to diffuse hospitality. Pavolini 2015 offers interesting methodological suggestions for a renewed use of the territory, "diversa dall'oggi" ("different from today"), in which "le diverse realtà antiche ancora esistenti non riescono ad essere percepite come un *continuum*, né potrebbero esserlo" ("the various ancient features that still exist cannot be perceived as a continuum, nor be one"). Pavolini suggests a system of protected bike lanes or trails and forms of didactic communication, including virtual ones. This is the direction taken by the project for the multimedia displays of the new Museo delle Navi and the construction of bike lanes in the area, capable of combining the "other" dimension of archaeology with that of the natural environment. Bruschi 2015b, 61, as part of a complex project to reorganize the accessibility of the whole area and mobility within it, sees the area of Portus, between the airport and the new harbour of Rome at Fiumicino, as suited to becoming a destination for large numbers of tourists. Bike lanes and electric shuttle buses would connect the natural and archaeological features of the area, otherwise difficult to access and unconnected.

26 The use of art and archaeology in airports, metro and railway stations implies a new idea of the museum, more interconnected with the territory and the community; it provides identity and brings culture to transitional spaces that are often seen as "non places"; at the same time, it reflects an idea of antiquity as an accessory, as a visually striking background or decorative element in support of commerce and tourism. See Melotti 2011.

27 This museum, inaugurated in 1979, displays the remains of five ancient Roman ships, which came to light, between 1958 and 1965, during the excavations for the construction of Leonardo da Vinci Airport. It was closed in 2002 and its "imminent" reopening has been periodically announced. As noted by Pavolini 2015, 35: "un rinnovato Museo delle Navi qualificherebbe culturalmente

Aeroporti di Roma in collaboration with the Site of Ostia Antica: a free shuttle bus, intended not only for passengers but also for citizens and especially students, connecting the airport with the archaeological sites of the imperial ports of Claudius and Trajan.

It is worth saying that ancient Ostia's marginal nature (and its difficulty in establishing a strong system of relations) is also the result of a political choice. Historically, Italy has considered Pompeii more important than Ostia: compared to Ostia's roughly 300,000 yearly visitors, the archaeological site of Pompeii (with its 3.8 million visitors a year) is the jewel in the country's archaeological-tourism crown, attracting not just the lion's share of its institutional resources but also the attention of the media. This is partly because the excavations at Pompeii entered the history of international tourism much earlier, already at the time of the Grand Tour, and partly thanks to the specific collective myth-making process surrounding the site that, thanks also to its casts of victims and erotic paintings, has become a special place, linked to the fascination of death and sex. The Italian state, even very recently, has confirmed Pompeii's status as a national icon, as also indicated by the frequent visits of prime ministers and culture ministers. The archaeological site of Ostia, by contrast, has been marginalized. For years the site has lacked adequate funding, resulting in a state of relative decay that has made it resemble the surrounding territory and forced it into a peripheral dimension, far from the cultural centrality that it could and should have in the collective imaginary. Before the current administration, the site's management was heavily criticized, signalling the unease of the local community.[28] This marginality can in part be attributed to the fact that the site was considered a sort of "invention" of Fascist archaeology, embarrassing during the post-war era. Additionally, in keeping with its function as a satellite of Rome, it has paid a price for its vicinity to the capital and its extraordinary archaeological legacy. In short, Rome has marginalized ancient Ostia, the capital's "competitor" for tourism, instead enhancing the otherness of the new Ostia, as a useful draw for tourists and bathers, as a well as an instrument for shifting onto the periphery the other dimension of the capital, where we find the same degradation, the same violence and the same criminality that the collective and media imaginary tend to locate in Ostia.

Clearly, the site could and should demand a central role, both within the dynamics of the territory (as a reference point for the Ostia area and central element of its historical and cultural memory) and in its relations with Rome (as a focal element of a complex and variegated cultural landscape, in which hierarchies based on distance from the centre are meaningless, and as a fundamental part of the process of constructing the city's identity in its historical relations with the space of the sea and with the Mediterranean) and with the other great cultural institutions of Italy and the Mediterranean. In this context, Ostia's liminality, as the port and gateway of Rome, far from being a limitation, should be its strong point. In short, Ostia should renew its dialogue with the Mediterranean.

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l'aeroporto e avrebbe sicuramente un grande riscontro a livello turistico" ("a renewed Museo delle Navi would confer cultural value on the airport and would certainly attract large numbers of tourists").

28 Comments made on the internet are often unreliable and exaggerated, but they do reflect the collective perception of the site. See for example: www.romafaschifo.com/2012/08/ostia-antica-potrebbe-portare-milioni.html. The new administration of the archaeological site is working to relaunch and reorganize the site, with public cultural initiatives aimed at engaging the local community and promoting a sense of "active citizenship" (such as talks on civil rights and the fight against the Mafia, or the conference "Cultura e legalità: idee per Ostia", which saw the participation of the president of the municipal council, the prefect and the head of the Carabinieri). For the superintendent Mariarosaria Barbera it is "necessario aumentare la consapevolezza generale dei fenomeni che indeboliscono il tessuto sociale ed economico di Ostia e del litorale romano" ("necessary to increase public awareness of the phenomena that weaken the social and economic fabric of Ostia and the Roman coast") (http://www.ostiatv.it/cultura-e-legalita-due-conferenze-negli-scavi-di-ostia-antica-per-ragionare-sul-futuro-di-ostia-0075988.html).

Catalogue

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I The Harbour of Rome

Maritime Ostia

1. Cybele antefix



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3423.
Material: Terracotta relief.
Dimensions: H. 23.5, l. 16 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Piazzale delle Corporazioni, 1912.
Condition: The front part is intact apart from the broken lower left angle, some chipping at the top; the covertile base is broken and mostly missing, emended with modern repairs.
Date: The first half of the first century CE.

The relief decoration shows the goddess Cybele or the Magna Mater sitting on her throne with a high rectangular back, in a ship with reefed sails and six oars at the sides. She wears a richly draped chiton and mantle, and a diadem/*polos*. The goddess holds a sceptre in her left hand and is flanked by two heraldically sitting lions. The prow of the ship is in the form of a swan's head and the ship has a pronounced *rostrum*. The scene may show the legendary arrival of the goddess at Ostia from her native Phrygia. A group of similar antefixes, with minor variations, have been found in the area of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, and elsewhere in Ostia.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Vaglieri) 1912, 437; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 92; Helbig 1972, 129, cat. 3158; Vermaseren 1977, 135-36, cat. 427, pl. CCLXIX, and other similar antefixes, cats. 429-33; Descoeudres 2001, 434, cat. XIV.10 with earlier bibliography. On the excavation of the area, Shepherd – Olivanti 2008, 78-81. See also the article by Hänninen, p. 348. [R.B.]

2. Emblema, the central image of a mosaic floor



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 143.
Material: Mosaic.
Dimensions: H. 56, w. 48.5 cm.
Provenience: Isola Sacra necropolis, 1929-1930.
Conditions: The lower left angle missing, small patches missing at centre and upper margin; consists of three fragments.
Date: Third quarter of the second century CE.

This *emblema* depicts a marine *thiasus*, the procession of various hybrid creatures typical of marine mythology. In the centre, there is a nereid, possibly Amphitrite, turning her back to the spectator, and looking at herself in the hand-mirror with a radiate border, in reference to the marine origin of the goddess of beauty, Venus. She is nude apart from golden armlets, bracelets and a diadem. Next to the nereid is Triton, the son of Neptune and Amphitrite, who is depicted with two fish tails, riding a

sea-goat. He holds a branch, as a riding crop, in his uplifted right hand. At the bottom, there is another merman (or ichtyocentaur) with the lower body of a lobster swimming with a dolphin. The composition probably derives from a larger Hellenistic composition.

Bibliography: Calza 1940, 178-79, fig. 88; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 112, cat. 24, fig. 55; Helbig IV, 141, cat. 3176; Bragantini 2005, 1159-61, fig. 4; Germoni 2013, 44-45; Germoni 2014, 12-14, fig.; Pellegrino 2017, 50-53, fig. 30. [A.K.]

3. Relief depicting the Portus harbour



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 49132.
Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 33, w. 78, th. 7 cm.
Provenience: Isola Sacra necropolis.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second–early third century CE.

The relief shows, in the left corner, a ship arriving at the Portus harbour. It is depicted in great detail, including its technical features: the rudder, the swan's head at the stern, the sails and the rigging. The side of the ship is decorated by engraved zigzag patterns and dots. There is a dolphin in the sea in front of the ship. The ship encounters at the harbour the Portus lighthouse depicted with three floors that narrow towards the top. On the ground-floor, a rectangular door opens towards the sea. The lowest floor is rectangular, in *opus quadratum*; the ones above that are cylindrical, and the upper floors have three arched windows. There is a fire burning atop the highest floor. A beardless youth with flowing curly hair stands on a plinth in the right corner, in marked contrapposto, holding a rudder in his left hand. In his right hand he holds a *patera*, from which a bull, shown smaller in scale, is eating. The youth is half-enveloped in a himation mantle, barefooted, and wearing a roughly conical, small headdress with two vertical divisions.

Maria Giuseppina Lauro, who published the first field report of the excavation, suggested that in the centre there is a realistic depiction of the lighthouse of Portus, and the youth to the right might be a personification or the Genius of the harbour, depicted as standing in front of a sacrificial bull, with a turreted headdress, the *patera* and the rudder.

Various different interpretations can be proposed on the basis of the idea of the youth as a personification or *genius loci*. The personifications of rivers and harbours are mostly shown as elderly men. The harbour of Portus – a reclining, bearded man leaning on a rudder and a dolphin – can be seen in Nero's inaugural coin of the Claudian harbour. The Tiber, too, is normally shown as a bearded man with an oar on his shoulder and holding *cornucopia*, leaning on the she-wolf or prow. Under the Emperor Antoninus Pius, 153-154 CE, bronze coins were struck in Alexandria depicting the meeting of the river gods Tiber and Nile, both holding rudders, to celebrate the centenary of the *annona* import to Rome, and between them towers the goddess Euthenia/Annona holding corn-ears and a rudder. The youthful figure on the relief, however, also bears resemblance to many city geniuses. For comparison, the *genius coloniae* of Puteoli was portrayed in a *clipeus* of Hadrianic date as a togate youth of Antinoan aspect, with *cornucopia* and a garland on his head.

In the Torlonia relief (Cat. 4), two similar youthful harbour geniuses or personifications of uncertain identification can be seen on top of pillars in the background; at the left, a figure characterized by a lighthouse headdress and *cornucopia*, mostly identified as a female, but plausibly a youth in a toga, and at the centre a mantled youth, resembling the figure in the relief of Isola Sacra, holding a *cornucopia* and a wreath in his hands. There is another comparison to the mantled youth in a *follis* of Maximinus Daia (310-312 CE), where the *genius populi romani* is depicted with a mural crown, holding a *patera* and *cornucopia*, showing a common model for the depictions of geniuses. In the so-called Sarcofago dell'Annona, four female figures – one with mural crown, oar/*rutellum* and *tessera annonaria*, one with lighthouse and ship's prow, one with rudder and *cornucopia*, one with elephant headdress, ears of grain and *modii* – represent similar personifications of various aspects of the Ostian harbour. Such youthful harbour geniuses and personifications may have belonged to a series of statues on the pillars, possibly surrounding the hexagonal harbour basin. The youth

in the relief from Isola Sacra might thus be the oar-bearing, turreted genius of the city of Portus/Ostia, depicted at the crossroads of the land and the sea, turning his gaze in the direction of the sea, the great Mediterranean.

Another, more specific reading of the image is based on the numerous iconographical similarities between the relief and a medallion from the reign of Commodus. The medallion celebrates the successful arrival of the grain fleet organized by the Emperor from Africa to Ostia in 190 CE after the devastating famine of the previous year. It shows a large cargo ship, with Serapis at the stern, sailing to port with other, smaller ones, a lighthouse, the Emperor sacrificing at an altar, and a fallen bull, with a *patera* beside it. The legend states *VOTIS FELICIBVS*. The ships may represent the imperial fleet, *classis Africana Commodiana Herculea*, and the sacrifice of the bull celebrates the fulfilment of a *votum* and the successful mission; set in this framework, the youthful figure in the Isola Sacra relief could commemorate such an event, and celebrate the grain imports between North-Africa and Ostia that were developed even further until the Severan rule.

However, the image presents some iconographic peculiarities that suggest the possibility of yet alternative, more complex readings. The form of the headdress of the youth is not a typical wide mural crown, although it is rather summarily carved and broken at the top, leaving the exact original form somewhat unclear. Its tripartite form, with projecting central part and slightly curved side wings, could also be seen as a stylized version of the *pschent*, the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, worn by pharaohs and, in a miniature version, by Horus and the Hellenistic Harpocrates. The Egyptianizing headdress would further associate the youth with iconographies of Antinous-Osiris wearing an Egyptian crown. There are indications that the divinized Antinous was venerated in a particular way by the *lenuncularii* in Ostia, and the death of the youth in the river Nile, commemorated with annual celebrations involving ceremonial rowing on the river, clearly motivates such a connection. Thus, a riverine genius bearing an oar and Egyptian style headdress could, plausibly, also personify their *corpus*.

Another uncommon iconographic feature in the image that may further strengthen the Egyptian connotation is the position of the bull. The animal is depicted as placidly eating from the *patera*, not being conducted to sacrifice, while a libation is poured from the plate. Bulls, or humans with bull's horns, are general symbols of rivers in Greek iconography, and such a figure could be a general reference to a river and river traffic. However, the particular and rare detail of the bull eating could have a more precise reference. It could depict the gesture of feeding the bull in the oracular Apis cult practiced in Memphis: if the bull refused to eat the food given by the consultant, the omen was bad, and if it accepted the offer, the omen was good (Plin. *nat*. 8.71.185). The bull would in this case be interpreted as Apis, strengthening the pictorial references to Alexandria, the most important trading partner of Ostia, and its patron god Serapis (Osiris-Apis). Since the relief also depicts a merchant ship, symbolizing maritime trade and Ostia's commercial contacts, the narrative could even be about taking a favourable omen for the sea voyage in Alexandria, and its happy conclusion.

In the end, a number of possible identifications can be suggested for the elusive identity of the youth: if the headdress is read as a mural crown, the figure may refer to the *genius* of the Imperial river-port city itself, or of its grain imports. If the headdress is interpreted as an Egyptian crown, the reference could be to a professional association with a strong Egyptian connection active in the Portus harbour, like the *genius* of the *lenuncularii*, *codicarii,* or the Alexandrian *navicularii*, who also had a strong presence at Portus, centred around the temple of Serapis there.

Bibliography: Lauro 1993, 171, fig. 7, 173; Germoni 2011, 246, Site 21, findspot on p. 234, fig. 12.2, no. 21. An *opus reticulatum* wall of a tomb was found with travertine door-jambs. The relief was attached above the entrance of the tomb. For the coins representing river and harbour gods on coins, as well as coins depicting the harbours of Claudius and Trajan, see Boyce 1958, Tuck 2008, and Weiss 2013. For the medallion of Commodus, see Bricault 2019, 255-56, fig. 152-63. For the *genius coloniae puteolanorum*, see Demma 2007, 150-51, 157-60, 332-35. For the *follis* of Maximinus Daia, see *RIC* VI, London 209 (b). For Antinous and the *corpus lenuncularіorum traiectus Luculli*, see Bruun 2016b. [A.K. & R.B.]

4. Relief depicting the Portus harbour



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3931 (original Museo Torlonia).
Material: Plaster copy, original made of Greek marble.
Dimensions: H. 75, w. 122 cm.
Provenience: Portus, Imperial Palace area, found in 1863-1864.
Date: Late second or early third century CE.

In the so-called "Torlonia Relief," two ships are seen approaching the harbour. On the pier, the unloading of *amphorae* is taking place. On the background, there is a five-storey lighthouse and a triumphal arch, seen sideways, topped by an elephant *quadriga*. Various divinities are present in statuary form: Neptune, Bacchus and two harbour *genii*; an apotropaic eye hovers over the ship on the right. A statue in heroic nudity stands on the lighthouse, winged Victories are seen on the top of the main mast of the larger ship and on its stern, the prow is decorated by a figure of Bacchus, and at the side of the stern, possibly a floating maenad and a satyr are seen with a Cupid. The sail is decorated with two images of Romulus and Remus suckled by the she-wolf. On board, a couple is offering a sacrifice at an altar. This scene has been interpreted by most scholars as a portrayal of the Portus harbour. It may have been a votive offering given to the temple of Dionysus/Bacchus in Portus to thank the god for a safe return from the sea, as the letters *V L* can also be seen on the sail of the ship depicted in the relief – these probably stand for *votum Libero* or *votum libens (solvit)*.The depiction combines several important aspects of a commercial harbour such as the task sailors on board, working methods used at the harbour, including pilot boats, amphora carriers and the use of cranes for loading and unloading ships. The group of three women emptying *amphorae*, on the right, have been interpreted as mythological nymphs or Danaids, but they could also, more mundanely, refer to the operation of washing wine amphorae for reuse. Overall, the depiction shows how maritime trade and the deities depicting the prosperity it brought blend into daily life at the harbour.

Bibliography: *CIL* XIV 2033; Visconti 1883, cat. 430; Visconti 1884-1885, tav. XC; Cavedoni 1864, 219-23; Gasparri 1980, cat. 430; Levy 1983, 243; Ojeda 2017. See also the detailed description and analysis of J. Th. Bakker in https://www.ostia-antica.org/portus/forum-vinarium-torlonia.htm. Felici 2019 [R.B.]

5. Portrait bust of Trajan



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 17.
Material: Fibreglass copy, original white marble from Marmara.
Dimensions: H. 50 cm.
Provenience of the original: Ostia, *retrobottega* of the third taberna of the theatre (II, VII, 2), 1913.
Date: Second century CE.

The portrait shows Trajan's distinctive hairstyle: longish hair falling down in straight locks and hanging heavily on his forehead. His hair resembles that of the Republican-era general and politician Pompey, who, in turn, had based his appearance on Alexander the Great. Emperor Trajan renewed the harbour of Ostia's Portus building the hexagonal harbour basin, which made him an important figure in the city's history. The colossal head would have belonged to a monumental statue that depicted the divinized Emperor and was probably exhibited in some public building in Ostia. The classicizing sculptural traits point to the Hadrianic era.

Bibliography: Calza – Squarciapino 1962, 57-58, cat. 17; Calza 1964, cat. 89; Helbig 1972, 74-75, cat. 3085; Descoeudres 2001, 426, cat. XII.12 with earlier references. On the marble, Decrouez – Ramseyer – Descœudres 2002, 45, cat. 5. [R.B.]

6. *Sestertius* coin



Present location: Medagliere del Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 92329.
Material: Bronze.
Condition: Intact.
Dimensions: Diam. 33.8 mm, 22.9 g.
Provenience: Collezione Francesco Gnecchi.
Date: 112-114 CE. Mint of Rome.

The obverse of this *sestertius* depicts Emperor Trajan wearing a laurel wreath, with a mantle on his left shoulder, and legend *Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) Nerv[ae Tra]iano Aug(usti) Ger(manici) Dac(ico) P(ontifici) M(aximo) [Tribunicia potestate] C(onsuli) VI P(atri) P(atriae)*. The reverse features the new, hexagonal basin he had had constructed in Portus between 100-112 CE, with the legend *Portum Traiani*, Trajan's harbour and S C (*senatus consulto*).

Bibliography: RIC II, 288, n. 632; S. Boccardi (in Parisi Presicce *et al.* 2017), 421-22, cat. 27k. [R.B.]

7. Relief depicting the unloading of a ship



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. 3666 (original Museo Torlonia).
Material: Plaster cast of marble original.
Dimensions: H. 35, w. 48 cm.
Provenience: Portus.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

The relief shows a ship unloading at harbour. The sails of the ship have been furled, and its bow has a *rostrum*, a sharp prow characteristic of larger seafaring ships and warships. Two beardless, nude carriers are descending from the ship on a plank, carrying on their shoulders amphorae of African form. On the pier, they encounter a table behind which a bearded official, probably a *tabularius,* is seated on a chair with a high backrest. The table is decorated by panels with central discs and has a stack of *tabulae* on it – i.e. archive documents or wooden writing tablets. Two men stand behind the table, one gesticulating with his hand. The other seems to be greeting the man carrying the first amphora and either handing him an elongated object, possibly a scroll or a tessera, or taking one from him. The latter solution seems preferable, since the other carrier too holds a similar object in his right hand. According to diverse hypotheses, this token might be a document for counting the loads, for certificating their provenience, or a receipt of the payment for the *saccarius* (for references see Martelli 2013, 17-18). Behind the men on the pier stands a building in *opus quadratum*, with an arched doorway, crowned by a pediment. The scene can be interpreted as depicting the state officials' control at the Ostia harbour, perhaps for paying duties or taxes.

Bibliography: Gasparri 1980, 428; Pavolini 1986a, fig. 26; Descoeudres 2001, 408, cat. VII.2, Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 209, cat. R54; Martelli 2013, 17-18, fig. 10. See also the article by Larsson Lovèn in this volume, p. 273. [R.B.]

8. Three porter figurines



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Terracotta.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First–second century CE.

Three figurines are hollow, mouldmade in two parts. They depict porters (*saccarii*), whose outfit is always depicted as it appears in these statuettes:

a short tunic, sandals strapped around the ankle and a turban-like headscarf. The latter apparently either provided support for the sack at the neck or protected the head. A wide band is used as a belt and may have also helped support the back when lifting the sacks; sometimes wrist bands are also indicated. Martelli (2013) has also proposed to recognize a part of the porter figurines as African or Oriental by their physiognomic traits.

The porter's profession was very common in Ostia, as grain, for instance, was carried in sacks – first from the ocean-going ships to warehouses and then to riverboats or wagons. Porters were not slaves, however; they were day labourers with their own guild. Dozens of similar figurines have been found all around Ostia, some from grain warehouses and some from residential buildings.

1) Inv. 3261 (h. 14, w. max 5.3, depth 3.6). *Bibliography*: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 89; Pavolini 1986a, 97, fig. 43; Descoeudres 2001, 408, cat. VII.3-4; Martelli 2013, cat. G1.2: 1, fig. 1; 41-42, fig. 26, 44. Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 212, cat. R64.
2) Inv. 3262 (h. 13, w. 4.5, depth 3). *Bibliography*: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 89; Pavolini 1986a, 97, fig. 43; Descoeudres 2001, 408, cat. VII.3-4; Martelli 2013, cat. G2.2: 60, fig. 28; 62. Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 212, cat. R64.
3) Inv. 3512 (h. 14.3, w. max 5.3, depth 4.2 cm). *Bibliography*: Martelli 2013, cat. G2.1: 1, fig. 1; 59, pl. 5; 60-61, fig. 28.

See also the article by Larsson Lovén, p. 228. [R.B.]

9. Transport amphora (type Dressel 1 B)

Present location: Ostia grotto, inv. 16125.
Material: Terracotta.



Dimensions: H. 118 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First century BCE.

This wine amphora, produced in central Italy, was meant for transporting Italian wine abroad. The shape of the amphora is ideal for ship transport. When they were stacked on top of each other, the spikes of the upper amphorae were positioned between the shoulders of the lower amphorae. This prevented the cargo from moving around in the cargo hold. The spike doubled as a third handle when pouring the wine. This type of amphora is related to the greatest export boom of Italian wine in the late Republican period. This large and heavy amphora type can be found all around the Roman Empire; imitations of it were also produced.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 409, cat. VII.13. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 66-67. [A.K.]

10. Transport amphora (type Africana II D)



Present location: Ostia grotto, inv. 15508.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 110 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late third–early fifth century CE.

Africana II D type amphora with cylindrical body, small foot, small rounded handles attached to the neck, bulging rim, rounded in section. The export of Italian wine and oil dried up in the second century CE when large quantities of both products began to be imported from Gaul, Spain and Africa. This type of African amphora is dominant among

finds from Ostia dating to the third century CE. These amphorae were mainly used to transport oil or *garum*, a kind of fish sauce, which is why they were sometimes reused as water pipes, for instance.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 410, cat. VII.15. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 68-69. [A.K.]

11. Transport amphora (type Kapitän II)



Present location: Ostia grotto, inv. 15590.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 76 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Date: Third–fourth century CE.

In the third and fourth centuries CE, the trade areas, trade routes and production in the western Mediterranean started to decline, while products from the eastern Mediterranean became more common. This type of amphora, produced in the eastern Mediterranean, is one sign of the changing direction of trade – it was the most common amphora type in Ostia in late antiquity. These amphorae probably contained wine.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 410, cat. VII.16. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 68-69. [A.K.]

12. Weight/counterbalance



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4079.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 1.3 cm, diam. 1.4 cm, weight 13 gr.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial age.

The small circular weight has flat bottom and convex sides. On top, a ridge sets apart the knob, perforated for suspension. The small, only 13-gram weight was used as a counterweight when weighing money or jewellery. It would originally have been part of a set of weights of different sizes.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 418, cat. VIII.27. Cf. a similar bronze weight from Pompeii, Allison 2006, 174, cat. 1180, fig. 43.4. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 87. [R.B.]

13. Large stone weight



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 32202.
Material: Limestone, lead, iron.
Dimensions: H. 7, d. max (centre) 17, d. max (top) 14, d. max (bottom) 12 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, near a *cippus* boundary stone on the bank of the river Tiber.
Condition: This weight originally had an iron lifting handle, but the lead inlays to which the handle was soldered are now the only remaining indication of this.
Date: Second half of the first century – second century CE.

The counterbalance has an oval form, flat on top and a slightly concave base; the sides are convex. On top, on one side, are inscribed letters *EXACTA ART*, at center *X*, and on the other side, faintly *IV P* and other illegible letters (*CAST*?). An *X* at the centre indicates the weight – it translates into 10 *librae* (*decussis* = 10 × 329 g), adding up to a total of 3,290 grams. The text *exacta (ad) Art(iculeianam normam* or *-iculeanum*) indicates that the weight has been calibrated according to a standard weight decree issued by Articuleius. If the other set of letters can be read *CAST* this could refer to *ad Castorum (aedes)*, a place where standard measures were kept in Rome. The weight could be calibrated by scraching off some of the stone, or adding lead to the sockets.

Bibliography: Pavolini 1991, 114, fig. 48; Descoeudres 2001, 419, cat. VIII.32. Cf. Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 303, cat. 376; Corti – Pallante – Tarpini 2001, 284-85, fig. 207.9. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 86-87. [R.B.]

14. Steelyard



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4221.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. (stem, extant) 11 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Broken at one end; the counterweight is missing.
Date: First–second century CE.

Small steelyards like this (*statera*) were suspended by the upper hook. The item to be weighed was hung on the two hooks at one end of the beam, and frequently there would also have been a scale pan – this would be used for small items that could not be suspended from the hooks.The other end of the beam was balanced by a moving bronze counterweight. The end with the counterweight on this steelyard has broken off and the weight has been lost. The numbers *V*, *X* and *VII* have been engraved on the steelyard to indicate different weights; other numbers have gone missing with the broken part. A small steelyard of this kind would have served for weighing small quantities of precious materials, like coins.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 93; Pavolini 1991, fig. 49; Descoeudres 2001, 418, cat. VIII.22. Cf. similar steelyards from Pompeii, Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 299, cat. 369; Allison 2006, cat. 669, fig. 43.1, and steelyards from Modena area, Corti – Pallanti – Tarpini 2001, 273, fig. 200. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 87. [R.B.]

15. Relief depicting a bakery



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana inv. 3496 (original in Vatican Museums, inv. 1343).
Material: Plaster copy, original made of marble.
Dimensions: H. 54, w. 138 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Date: First century CE.

P(ublius) Nonius Zethus Aug(ustalis) / fecit sibi et / Noniae Hilarae conlibertae / Noniae P(ubli) l(ibertae) Pelagiae coniugi / P(ublius) Nonius Heraclio.
"Publius Nonius Zethus, an Augustalis priest, made (this monument) for himself and for Nonia Hilara, fellow freed slave, and for Nonia Pelagia, freedwoman of Publius and wife. Publius Nonius Heraclio."

This is a copy of the front panel of a funerary urn holder that had, on top, eight circular concave slots for cinerary urns. On the panel, between lateral Corinthian pilasters, a bakery is depicted. The person buried in the tomb, P. Nonius Zethus, was presumably a baker – and a successful one, judging from the expensive monument. According to the inscription, he was also a priest of the Imperial cult (*Augustalis*). He commissioned the tomb for himself as well as for Nonia Hilara, who had been freed from slavery together with him, and for his wife, Nonia Pelagia (who, on the basis of her name, had been freed by the same P. Nonius). One more name is mentioned at the end: Publius Nonius Heraclio.

The image on the left depicts a mule rotating a millstone it is tied to. There were several stone-carved millstones of this kind in all Ostian bakeries – indicating that the flour was milled there for local consumption. The image on the right features the tools of a baker. Three *modius* measures of different sizes for grain and flour are in the centre. There are also rods called *rutellum* under two *modii* – they were used to level the grain in the measure. A flour sieve and possibly a mould of some kind are hanging at the top, and a basket can be seen on the bottom left.

Bibliography: CIL XIV 393: Amelung 1903, 778, cat. 685, pl. 84; Helbig 1963, cat. 316; Zimmer 1982, cat. 25. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 89. [R.B.]

II The City of Ostia

Early Ostia

16. Kylix fragment



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 16288.
Material: Red-figured pottery.
Dimensions: Max. 10 × 20 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum area.
Condition: Four joining fragments of rim and body of the vessel.
Date: 370-360 BCE.

Rim fragment of a kylix, probably from the same vessel as the next object (Cat. 17). On the exterior, on the right, there is a palmette situated under the handle of the vase. On the right, there is a maenad, turned to the right, dressed in a *chiton* decorated with cross-shaped patterns, wearing a necklace and an earring, on her forehead, a *taenia* band in added white, and carrying a *thyrsus* in her right hand. Her left, fragmented hand is holding a rounded object or a fold of the mantle. On the interior of the cup, the border of the central tondo is partly visible (square meanders interrupted by squares with diagonal crosses).

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. XXIII; Zevi 1973b, 356-57, cat. 517c; Adembri 1996, 51-53, cat. 16, fig. 16; Descoeudres 2001, 402, cat. III.19. See also the article by Pavolini, p. 65. [R.B]

17. Kylix fragment



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5559.
Material: Red-figured pottery.
Dimensions: Max. 5 × 10.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum area.
Condition: Joining fragments of base and foot, the decoration worn off at places.
Date: 370-360 BCE.

A fragment of the central part of the inner surface of the floor of a *kylix* (probably of the same vase as the previous one, cat. 16). The flaring foot is black on the exterior, the interior of the foot is reserved with a black circle; on the exterior of the cup, there are palmettes. At the centre of the interior of the cup, there was a tondo enclosed in a decorative band consisting of a meander interrupted at intervals by a square crossed by an X-shaped cross with dots at the angles. Inside the tondo, a bull is advancing to the right. A female figure, Europa, partly draped in a mantle, is reclining on the bull's back, leaning her left elbow to the head of the bull, and raising the right hand upwards.

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. XXIII; Zevi 1973b, 356-57, cat. 517a; Adembri 1996, 51-53, cat. 15, fig. 15; Descoeudres 2001, 402, cat. III.18. Cf., for the image, a kylix from datable to the first half of the fourth c. from Poggio Sommavilla necropolis, tomb 32, at Museo Civico, Rieti, Lazio. See also the article by Pavolini, p. 65. [R.B]

18. Skyphos fragment



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 16551.
Material: Pseudo-red figured pottery.
Dimensions: max. 7 × 4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum area.
Condition: One rim fragment.
Date: Late fourth century BCE.

On the exterior, in red paint applied over the black gloss, an owl between olive branches (only the branch on the right is partially preserved). The branch has two flowers rendered with three dots. *Skyphoi* imitating Attic *glaux skyphoi* appear widely in the Italic area in the fourth century BC,

rarely also decorated in applied red paint, in particular in the Etruscan area.

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. XXIII; Zevi 1973b, 348, cat. 502; Adembri 1996, 50-51, cat. 14, fig. 14; Descoeudres 2001, 402, cat. III.21. Cf. Johnson 1955, 119-24, pl. 38, fig. 45 and p. 123, with further parallels. See also the article by Pavolini, p. 65. [R.B]

19. *Genucilia* plate



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5207.
Material: Red-figured pottery.
Dimensions: H. (preserved) 4.5, d. (rim) 15 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum.
Condition: The plate is intact, foot broken and missing.
Date: 325-275 BCE.

Shallow plate with a low depression at centre, the rim is flaring with a wide, overhanging lip. A pattern of seven waves runs to the left along the rim of the plate, in the tondo a female figure facing left in the centre. The woman has a complex, Greek hairstyle covered by a decorated hair net, *sakkos*. One lock of hair and a pendant earring consisting of three elements protrude from under the net. At her forehead, there is a diadem with two spikes, decorated with a line of dots; a dotted line also marks a necklace.

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. XXII.3; Lauro 1979, 51-66. Cf. Olcese – Coletti 2016, 245, cat. 3; 2018, 102-03, fig. 2.7. The productions of the Caeretan area are particularly close in decorative details, and datable to 325-300 BCE. See, for example, Paul Getty Museum, inv. 80.AE.75, *CVA* USA 34 (2000), 41-42, n. 40, pl. 513, 1-2. See also the article by Berg, p. 281. [R.B]

20. Revetment plaque



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3382.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 27.5, w. 24.5, th. 3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum.
Condition: A fragment with original upper and left side margin of a decorative element.
Date: Fifth–fourth century BCE.

This revetment plaque belongs to the roof edge decoration of a temple (*sima*). Along the upper margin, a line of white strigils in relief, decorated by a central, vertical red line. Below, a horizontal, fascia decorated with white palmette, on dark bluish-black background. At its right side the upper part of a palmette may be recognized. There are two perforated holes for attaching the element. While Andrén dated the fragment to the first half of the fourth century BCE, Damgaard has recently reproposed to date it to the early fifth century BCE.

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. XX; Zevi 1971; Andrén 1940, 369, cat. 3; Mingazzini 1947/49, 77-79; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 88, fig. 49; Andrén 1980, 97-98, pl. XXXVc; Descoeudres 2001, 400, cat III.5; Zevi 2002a, 4; Damgaard 2018, 93, 96-105, fig. 2-12. See also the article by Blid in this volume, p. 104. [A.K.]

21. Antefix with a silen



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3381.
Material: Terracotta.

Dimensions: H. 19, w. 30 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum area.
Condition: Tips of two rosettes are missing at the right side.
Date: Middle Republican period.

The decoration on this antefix represents the relief head of a silen, framed by a radiate wreath of rosettes. The silen is bald and wears a spiral-cord across his forehead. The pointed ears are folded inwards at the forehead. The bushy beard and moustaches end in symmetrical spirals and bear traces of red paint, as do the ears, the top of the skull and some of the rosettes.

Bibliography: Andrén 1940, 369, cat. 1, pl. 113, 400; Mingazzini 1947/49, 77-80, fig. 4; Calza 1953, 75, pl. XXII.1; Calza – Squarciapino 1962, 88, fig. 49; Helbig 1972, 135-36, cat. 3167; Andrén 1980, 94-96, pl. XXXVd; Descoeudres 2001, 400, cat. III.8; Zevi 2012, 540; Van Haeperen 2019, 213, fig. 233. [A.K.]

22. Antefix with a maenad



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3383.
Material: Terracotta relief.
Dimensions: H. 17.5, w. 14 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum area.
Condition: Integrally preserved, surface worn at places.
Date: Middle Republican period.

The relief decoration of the antefix represents the head of a maenad with unbound curly hair. The image is framed by a radiate wreath of rosettes intertwined with grapes or ivy flowers. The figure wears on the top of her head a thick, plain diadem, large disc shaped earrings and a *bulla* shaped necklace.

Bibliography: Andrén 1940, 369, cat. 2, pl. 113, 401; Mingazzini 1947/49, 77-80, fig. 5; Calza 1953, 75, pl. XX.1; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 88, fig. 49; Helbig 1972, 135-36, cat. 3167; Andrén 1980, 94-96, pl. XXXVc; Descoeudres 2001, 400, cat. III.7; Zevi 2012, 540; Van Haeperen 2019, 213, fig. 233. [A.K.]

23. Brick stamp



Present location: Private collection.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: L. 15.2, w. 11.5, th. 4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Fragment.
Date: 154 CE.

The custom of stamping the bricks with the name of the person who owned the clay deposit began in the first century BCE. The name was in the possessive form. It is a good example of the supervision, large-scale and systematic nature of Roman building activity. In the first century CE, the information included on the stamps increased: they would often include the names of the supervisors at the brickyard and sometimes even the year of production – in the form of the names of the consuls for that year. In 123 CE, including the consuls' names appears to have become mandatory, since the stamps made in this and the following years always include the year. However, not all bricks were stamped – only a given share of each batch. The stamps acted as identifiers for the brick batches at the clay deposit, in transport and at building sites. They were also a kind of guarantee of good quality. Usually, the clay deposits were owned by members of the highest Roman elite, and the women of these families also took part in the business.

C · NINIDI · FELICIS · OP · FIG · DOLIA
L · AVRELIO · COMMOD

C. Ninidi [= Nunnidi] Felicis op(us) fig(linum) dolia(re) L. Aureli{o} Commod(i) / L. Aurelio Commod(o sc. consule?)

Typically for brick stamps, many abbreviations are used in this text. Gaius Nunnidus Felix was an officinator, the person in charge of making the bricks. '*OP FIG DOLIA*' is an abbreviation of *opus figli-*

num doliare, which refers to clay products, in this case bricks. The text *L. Aurelio Commod(o cos.)*, 'in the year of the consulship of Lucius Aurelius Commodus', dates the stamp to 154 CE, the year this future emperor was consul. An alternative interpretation is that the letter 'o' in the name Aurelio was simply a typo, which were common on the stamps. In this case, the text *L. Aureli Commod(i)* would merely indicate the owner of the brickyard instead of the brick's year of manufacture.

Many brick stamps feature a pattern called the signum in the centre. Here, it is a rooster, although the significance of the animal remains unclear. [P.T.]

24. Brick stamp



Present location: Private collection.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: L. 15, w. 13.5, th. 3.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Fragment.
Date: Early third century CE.

EX · PRAED FVLVI PLAVTIANI [FIGLIN]
ATOR APPIVS BENER[IVS ·]
Ex praed(is) Fulvi Plautiani figlinator Appius Benerius.

This stamp indicates that the brick comes from a brickyard owned by Fulvius Plautius, *ex praed(is) Fulvi Plautiani*. The brick maker (*figlinator*) Appius Benerius is not known from other stamps. However, the brickyard owner Gaius Fulvius Plautianus was an important man during the reign of his cousin, Emperor Septimius Severus. He was the praetorian prefect in 197-205 CE and came into possession of several brickyards for a time. However, Plautianus fell out with the emperor and his son, Bassianus, who later became Emperor Caracalla. Ultimately, Plautianus lost the emperor's trust, and in 205 CE, his assets were confiscated and he was sentenced to death. On the basis of these events, the stamp can be dated to the final years of the second century or the first few years of the third century CE. [P.T.]

Ostian homes

25. Statue of Amor and Psyche as children



Present location: Museo Ostiense, inv. 180.
Material: White Luna marble.
Dimensions: H. without base 71, with base 80 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Domus di Amore e Psiche (I, XIV, 5), 1938.
Condition: The feet of Amor and the the lower part of the dress of Psyche are broken and missing; the wings of Amor may have been inserted in a hole in his back, and are missing.
Date: Beginning of the fourth century CE.

This sculpture depicts Psyche, the beautiful daughter of a king, and Amor, the son of Venus. Amor is depicted nude, while Psyche wears a mantle around her lower body; both have circular headbands and Psyche also has armlets. Originally, both figures had wings. The statue was found in one of the most impressive houses in Ostia, named after the sculpture as the House of Amor and Psyche. The two embracing child figures stand on a low, cylindrical moulded plinth. The motif of Amor and Psyche is very popular in sculptures, and was based on a Hellenistic original. The late date of this version is revealed by the heavy and stiff treatment of drapery and hair and the largish, flat hands of the figures; their faces, on the contrary, have been modelled very delicately. The most famous version of the story of Amor and Psyche, an allegoric tale of the difficult union between the curious and impulsive Soul and the attracting and eluding Love, first separated but finally reconciled through the divine intervention of Venus, is included in the

novel *Metamorphoses*, or *The Golden Ass*, written by Apuleius of Madaura in the second century CE. This African-born writer may even, according to one hypothesis, have lived in Ostia.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 42-43, cat. 17, fig. 26; Helbig 1972, cat. 3054; *LIMC* VII, s.v. Psyche; Chamay 2001, 98; Descoeudres 2001, 428, cat. XIII.6; Pensabene 2007, 625, cat. 21, pl. 172.4-5. See also the article by Poulsen in this volume, pp. 112-13. [R.B.]

26. Decorative table leg (*trapezophoros*)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3949.
Material: Bronze, silver.
Dimensions: H. 76 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, back yard of the wool fullery (I XII, 3) located on Cardo Maximus.
Condition: Table-top missing, corroded on all surfaces.
Date: Second century CE.

This pillar-shaped bronze leg is likely to have originally supported a table-top in marble or in exotic wood, inserted in the crossed metal supports (*trapezophoros*, *abacus*, *monopodium*). The stem rests on a rectangular table-like base, which stands on four short, drop-shaped feet. The sides of the base are decorated by mouldings. The quadrangular *herma* ends in a female bust; it has tangs projecting to the sides, and also nude feet, at the bottom. The Caryatid-like woman has wavy hair that is carefully combed in a classizising style, with engraved, wavy curls tied together with a silver-inlayed ribbon, hanging down to the neck. The front of the pillar is decorated with silver inlays: a wave-pattern frames the sides and the top, and below the bust, there are two pendent ivy sprouts.

Small one-legged tables of that kind, made of bronze, or even silver and gold, or, more often, of coloured marble, were sometimes decorated with sculptures. Such tables were luxurious status symbols in interior decoration, and people may have displayed valuable vessels and other family heirlooms on them on special occasions. Often, such marble table legs were sculpted in the form of exotic foreign captives, such as youths in Oriental dress, thus symbolically reduced to table service. In this case too, the caryatid as a Carian captive woman might be a distant reference. In this case, the ivy sprout may identify the figure as a maenad.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 96-97, fig. 51; Descoeudres 2001, 428, cat. XIII.7. Although herms and caryatids frequently decorate bronze furniture legs, exact parallels on bronze *monopodia* are rare. Some figurative bronze *monopodia* have been found in the Vesuvian area, for example, a *monopodium* with legs in the form of Cupid riding a dolphin, inv. Pompei 13371, see De Carolis 2008, 105-06, cat. 82, in the form of a sphinx and satyr herm, see Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli 1990, 158, fig. 113, or in the form of a Victoria holding a trophy, Ruesch 1911, 415, cat. 1895. For Dionysiac herms as marble *trapezoforoi*, for example, a table from villa rustica, Fondo Prisco, *NSc* 1921, 418, fig. 2. For *trapezoforoi*, in general, see Graillot 1919 and De Carolis 2007, 169, type E2. As stylistic models, the marble Danaid herms from the temple of Apollo on the Palatine could be cited. On the meaning of caryatids, see Schneider 1986, 103. 125, and the oriental youth as a supporting figure, cat. SO1-68, pl. 48.2-3. See also the article by Poulsen in this volume, p. 119. [R.B.]

27. Wall painting



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 10108.
Material: Stucco.
Dimensions: H. 45, w. 91 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Porta Laurentina necropolis, tomb 17-18, 'Tomba della sacerdotessa isiaca', 1938.
Condition: The colour has evanished at places.
Date: Second half of the second century CE.

The painting depicts a banqueting couple. A man is lying on a large dining couch or bed in the centre of the image. He is leaning his elbow on a pillow and using his other hand to take food from a three-legged table. The wooden table is black and has decoratively turned legs with apparently animal heads as decoration. The dining couch also

has turned legs that are probably made of bronze. There is a low, yellow footstool in front of the couch, and the man has placed his sandals on it. The man's wife is sitting in front of her husband in a chair called the *cathedra* and eating. A decorative bronze *candelabrum* stand is on the right side of the dining couch. On the left side is a wooden cabinet with two panel doors. A banqueting couple is a common motif in funerary images.

Since no textiles or wooden furniture have survived, we have only frescoes and reliefs to tell us about the interior decoration of Ostian houses. This funerary image suggests a high standard of living, since all the elements of interior decoration portrayed in it are luxury items.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1938, 55; Felletti Maj 1953, 17, in *RIASA* n.s. II, Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 109; Helbig 1972, 146, cat. 3183. See also the article by Poulsen in this volume, pp. 119-20. [R.B.]

28. Relief with mosaic makers



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3325 (original Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 132).
Material: Plaster cast, original made of Luna marble.
Dimensions: H. 44.5, w. 48 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Part of the front panel of a sarcophagus, only the upper edge is original.
Date: Third century CE.

Two men are sitting and breaking stones into smaller pieces with a hammer, perhaps to make rectangular stone *tesserae*, cubic elements used for mosaics. In the right lower angle, a basket, perhaps with finished product, has fallen and spilt over. Two other men are carrying sacks, perhaps with finished *tesserae*, on their shoulders, while a fifth person – possibly an overseer, with his right hand up in a commanding gesture and holding a rectangular object in the left, he may wish to either measure the stones or guide the carriers.

Bibliography: Calza 1935, 421, fig. 14; Zimmer 1982, 158, cat. 81; Amedick 1991, 137, cat. 89, fig. 115,3; Descoeudres 2001, 415, cat. VIII.5; Galli – Pisani Sartorio 2009, 258, sez. 10.5; Martelli 2013, 13, fig. 5. See also the article by Poulsen in this volume, p. 119. [R.B.]

29. Mosaic *emblema*, bird composition



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 36584.
Material: Stone cubes, mortar.
Dimensions: H. 44.5, w. 45 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, under the Domus 'Caseggiato delle Taberne Finestrate' (IV, V, 18).
Condition: Intact.
Date: End of the first century BCE – beginning of the first century CE.

This *emblema* features seven birds. Three doves, two grey and one white, are drinking at a water basin that stands on three globular feet. The doves are a reference to Venus, whose beauty routines also included washing herself in a pool of water. The theme of the upper part of this central image from a mosaic floor is a common one in antiquity: doves at a water bowl. Pliny mentions the famous Greek original made by Sosus of Pergamon in the second century BCE in his works, and writes that the mosaic depicted the doves and their reflections on the surface of the water and metal in a particularly lifelike manner. This version is a somewhat cruder execution of the theme. Behind the basin stands a high pedestal on which a golden apple or pomegranate is set. These are also symbols of Venus, the apple of courtship and victorious Venus, the pomegranate of fertility. In the lower left angle, a wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*) is pecking at a chestnut, a further symbol of fertility. A black-eared wheatear (*Oenanthe hispanica*) holds a twig in its beak, probably building a nest. In lower right angle, there is an Alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*). In the upper right angle, yet another bird, possi-

bly a dove, is flying. The pictorial complex points strongly to the world of female beauty, sexuality and fertility. The emblema is framed by yellow, black and white lines and a black-and-white guilloche. It was composed on a large brick, and set at the centre of rectangular room *a*, with a white mosaic floor bordered with double black bands.

Bibliography: Tammisto 1997, 76-80, 382-84, pl. 34, fig. DM6,1; Germoni 2013, 48-49; Germoni 2014, 12-13, fig.; Tomassini 2016, 4-5, fig. 5; Pellegrino 2017, 32-33, fig. 9. [A.T.]

30. Decorative lamp stand



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4148.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 14, w. 35 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), 1915.
Condition: Shaft broken and missing, surface worn, dots of the panthers are empty, their filling is missing.
Date: Early first century CE.

This lamp stand features legs shaped like goat's hooves. There are three panther's heads at the bends of the legs; behind their ears, grapes can be discerned. The spots of the panthers are now holes, but some dark, coloured material may have originally been inlaid in them. Both panthers and goats were animals associated with Dionysus/Bacchus. At the junction between the base and the stem, relief ovuli, leafs and lotus flowers.

Metal stands of this type, known as the *candelabrum*, stood on three legs and had a small round platform or hook at the top. They were used as movable stands for oil lamps. The stands were luxury items usually made of bronze and rarely of gold. The skilfully decorated stands were among the furniture shown off at parties and banquets – they were status symbols for their owners. The three legs usually took the shape of a lion's paw.

Bibliography: Calza 1915a, 251, fig. 9; Calza 1915b, 169, fig. 42.1. Type II of Pernice 1925, 184-85, fig. 56; Testa 1989, 131. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 124-25. [R.B.]

31. Decorative lamp stand



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3953.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 99 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition:
Date: Second century CE, with later additions.

This lamp stand still retains its shaft, which was originally of adjustable length. The platform on which the lamp was placed, formed like a capital, was on the upper part of the shaft with a circular section. It was inserted into the lower part of the shaft with quadrangular section, and movable. The decoration of the legs features a rare motif – three elephant heads bear the shaft, their trunks resting on globes. The heads are fairly stylised, and since the object is not as carefully made and prestigious as the other parts of the lamp stand, they seem to be later additions. In Ostia, elephants as a decorative motif may have been a direct reference to the owner's trade connections to Africa.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 93 (erroneously as 3593); Helbig 1972, 131-32, cat. 3162. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 124-25. [R.B.]

32. Door key



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4538.
Material: Lead.
Dimensions: L. 16, w. max. (bit) 5.9, w. (shaft) 2.2, th. 0.6 cm.

Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, although slightly corroded on all surfaces.
Date: Uncertain.

The object consists of a shaft of semi-circular section and a rectangular bit with four round and one cross-shaped perforations. This object is probably an out-door key because of its size. A large number of keys of different sizes have been found in Ostia.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 428, cat. XIII.4. On Roman keys, see Manning 1985, 89-90; Allison 2006, 31-32. [R.B.]

33. Ring key

Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4545.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 8, w. 2.3, diam. ring 3.1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second-fourth century CE.

The shaft is circular in section, starts from a flat ring with a raised collar, and ends in a grooved and dented bit. This may be a key to a jewellery casket or some other small box. It could be worn as a ring, although the most typical ring-keys have the key inserted in a 90-degree angle, not in the same plane, as in this case.

Bibliography: Cf. similar ring keys found at Pompeii, for example, Allison 2006, fig. 63.19-21, tumbler key datable to the first century CE, numerous examples from Kaiseraugst, in Riha 1990, pl. 9, 170-72, pl. 10, 173-186, and a late antique example datable between the fifth and sixth centuries from Hières-sur-Amby, Larina, at Musée Maison du Patrimoine, inv. 96.22.32, see Porte 2011, vol. 1, 176-77, cat. Ba048, fig. 226. [R.B.]

34. Ring and four keys



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4089.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: Diam. ring 6.8-7.2, th. ring 0.3; l. of the keys 2.7-4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late imperial era.

These four keys are first joined in a small bronze ring (d. 2.5 cm), that is kept on a thin key ring that is set in a larger ring (d. 6.8-7.2 cm); they may have been worn on the wrist or a belt. The keys have shafts that are circular, void cylinders, their bits have various forms, and they have 1-2 raised collars at the scaft just under the suspension ring. This type of cylindrical key with a hollow shaft came into use only in the later imperial era.

Bibliography: For references, see Cat. 116. [R.B.]

35. Decorated lock plate



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4026.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: Diam. 8.5, l. of the keyhole 1.1 th. 0.1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Small pieces broken and missing at lower margin; green and brown patina on all surfaces.
Date: Imperial era.

The lock plate is made of thin bronze plate, perforated at the centre for the lock. There are holes around the margin to attach the plate with nails. It was decorated by six hemispherical bosses around the circumference. Small aligned, embossed dots form a circle around the centre, half circles around the six protuberances, and they also line the margin of the plate. This lock plate was probably attached to a largish box or safe.

Bibliography: Cf. similar circular embossed lock plates at Pompeii, see, for example, Allison 2006, 137, cat. 819, fig. 62.3, pl. 60.2. [R.B.]

36. Small key on a chain



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4543.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. key 3.4, w. bit 1.4, th. Shaft 0.5, l. chain 16 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial era.

The key has a bit with four raised tines that form a cross, fit for a tumbler lock. The shaft ends in a small ring, from which a chain starts. The chain consists of eight elements in the form of a figure-of-eight (each l. 2 cm), open at center. This chain with a key may have been worn on a belt.

Bibliography: For similar small keys with raised tines, see Allison 2006, fig. 63.19-21. [R.B.]

37. Model of *horrea*, a warehouse



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3648.
Material: Plaster.
Dimensions: W. 82, depth 75 cm.

The model reconstruction, prepared for the 'Mostra Augustea' exhibition in Rome in 1937, shows typical Ostian *horrea* magazines of the second–third century CE. This model represents part of a larger storage structure. There were many large storage complexes in Ostia, used to store products heading to Rome, in both the Ostia city area and the area surrounding the Portus harbour. Their structure was based on rows of small rooms that could be arranged around a central courtyard. Sacks of grain emptied directly onto the floor of these rooms. The structure of the floors of the storage cells should be noted: their floor level was raised to leave an airy and insulating empty space underneath. This helped protect the grain from moisture rising from the ground. Stairs or ramps led to the second floor, which hosted more storage rooms. Porters carried the sacks up on their back, one by one, and back down again later, when they were repacked.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 95, fig. 16; Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 205, cat. R42. See also the detailed analysis by Cecamore in this volume, pp. 130-31. [A.K.]

38. Model of Ostia's *insula*, a block of multi-storey buildings



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 2126.
Material: Plaster and wood.
Dimensions: 74 × 58 × 20 cm.

This model including a miniature of the Insula di Giove e Ganimede represents a block of multi-storey buildings along Via di Diana, a good representation of Ostia's intensive construction phase in the early second century CE. This type of building would have apartments on 3-5 floors around a shared central courtyard that acted as a lightwell. On the ground floor, there would also be commercial premises (*tabernae*) such as stores and bars on the street side. The Via di Diana, located to the east of the Forum, is one of the most famous streets of Ostia. The buildings along the street have several storeys, and they are particularly well preserved.

Bibliography: See the detailed analysis by Cecamore in this volume, pp. 134-35. [A.K.]

39. Model of a *latrina* in the Caseggiato dei Triclini



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 1587.
Material: Plaster and wood.
Dimensions: 49 × 80 × 80 cm.

The Caseggiato dei Triclini, 'house of the dining rooms,' was built during the reign of Hadrian, around 120 CE. It has been identified as the guildhall of the builders (*fabri tignuarii*). Its central courtyard features the base of a statue at the back, with a dedication to Septimius Severus (198 CE), and a list of the ca. 350 guild members on the sides. The house is named after the four dining rooms (*triclinium*) on the east side of the courtyard. The rooms have built-in dining couches on three sides for the guild's shared meals. The building's good location near the Forum indicates that the builders had a rich and prominent guild.

On the southern side of the Caseggiato dei Triclini, accessible from the Via della Forica which leads from the Forum to the Terme del Foro, is a public lavatory, a *latrina*, with a total of 20 marble seats along three walls. The lavatory was built, presumably in the fourth century CE, on the site of two earlier trading houses, by removing the wall between them. Revolving doors were added to facilitate entrance and passage. The large cistern to the east of the lavatory provided water to the lavatory, the Caseggiato dei Triclini and the Terme del Foro.

Bibliography: See the detailed analysis in the article by Cecamore in this volume, pp. 133-34. [A.K.]

40. Water pipe joint



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 192.
Material: Bronze, lead.
Dimensions: L. max 144, internal d. max. of the pipe 18 cm, h. max. of the tap 29 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, water reservoir area under the Terme di Nettuno.
Condition: Lead pipes broken at both ends.
Date: Around 50 CE.

This large water pipe is made up of two fragmented pipes attached to the central fitting. The fitting consists of two horizontal cylinders, into which the waterpipes were inserted, and a central vertical cylinder. Into the vertical cylinder an inner cylinder is inserted, topped by a pierced knob: on turning the knob, the tap would close or open the flow of water between the two branches of lead pipes. Taps and complex parts of the water supply network, such as fittings, were cast of bronze. The actual water pipes were made of lead by folding a sheet of metal into the shape of a pipe and soldering the seam shut. A name was often stamped on the lead pipes – this could refer to the manufacturer of the pipe or the owner of the water supply line and the building. The stamp on this pipe reads *[Clau]di [C]ae(sari) Aug(usti) Ti(berius) Claudius Aegialus fe(cit)*, "Emperor Claudius's freedman Tiberius Claudius Aegialus made", possibly in reference to the person responsible for the construction of the conduit. The historian Tacitus mentions a rich and influential freedman of this name who was active in business during Nero's reign (Tac. *hist*. 1.37). Such a very large tube would have been part of the public, main conduit lines of water. It was found from the area of the Baths of Neptune, but predates the baths; it came from a backfilled cistern belonging to the Baths of Claudius previously located on the site.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Vaglieri) 1911, 451-52, fig. 3; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 18; Fassitelli 1972, 115; Bruun 1991, 325, cat. 7; Ricciardi – Santa Maria Scrinari 1996-97, I, 89, 114; II, 249, fig. 446; Bruun 1998, 265-72; Descoeudres 2001, 419, cat. IX.1; Bruun 2019, 126, 129, figs. 1, 5. Cf. the Pompeian bronze taps in Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 324, cat. 412-15; 326, cat. 418-19, taps in general Fassitelli 1972, 124-25; Galli – Pisani Sartorio 2009, 116. See also the article by Hänninen in this volume, p. 147. [R.B.]

Administration

41. *Fasti*, or official calendars



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 1366 (original Ostia Lapidario, inv. 11800, fragment J).
Material: Copy, original made of marble.
Dimensions: H. 147 cm, w. 58 cm, th. 4 cm.
Provenience: The original was found in reused fragments in a *domus* along the Via dell'Ara Rotonda (I, 11), 1932.
Condition: The original is recomposed of twelve fragments; the upper part is intact, while fragments are missing at lower left side.
Date: The section in the exhibition mentions events from 108-113 CE.

The official lists of Ostia's magistrates were engraved in marble, as was the custom. The lists of names may have originally been on display at the Forum or in a temple – possibly the temple of Vulcan, since the priest of Vulcan was in charge of updating the calendar. Listed under each year were the two Roman consuls for that year – the years were, in fact, kept according to the names of the consuls – and certain important national events. In Ostia, the two duumvirs, the chief magistrates of the city, were also listed in the tablets, along with certain significant, mostly religious local events. Surviving calendar fragments are datable between 49 BCE-175 CE. In the fourth and fifth centuries CE, the *fasti* were dismantled, and their pieces were used as construction material for new buildings.

The section J in the exhibition is almost a whole block. It covers the consuls and *duumviri* of the years 108-113 CE. It starts on 31 March with the *lusio* of 340 pairs of gladiators. Among the most notable events that are mentioned are the inauguration of the Baths of Trajan on 22 June 108 CE on the Oppian Hill in Rome, and the inauguration of the Aqua Traiana aqueduct ten days later. Notable events from 112 CE include also the inauguration of Trajan's Forum in Rome and the death of Trajan's sister, Marciana. The restoration of the temple of Vulcan in Ostia is listed under the same year.

Bibliography: CIL XIV 4543; Bargagli – Grosso 1997, 36-38, fig. 10-11; Descoeudres 2001, 424, cat. XII.1; Parisi Presicce *et al.* 2017, 427, cat. 29. See also the article by Zevi in this volume, pp. 153-54. [R.B.]

42. Diptych, folding tablet



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 4362.
Material: Ivory.

Dimensions: H. 23.5, w. 11, depth 0.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, in a channel below the Casone del Sale.
Condition: Eroded at margins; the other half missing.
Date: Mid-fifth century CE.

This ivory tablet once formed one half of a two-part diptych. The left side of the diptych has survived, but the right side is missing. The back of the surviving tablet has a recess for wax, which makes it possible that the object was a prestigious writing tablet. The portrait of an emperor, senator or some other high-ranking official was engraved on the cover, as was customary. The diptych was presented as a gift to the political supporter on the occasion of the recipient being appointed to office, for instance. The inscription at the top of the tablet features the name *C. L. Severo*, which may stand for Gaius Livius Severus. This probably refers to Emperor Libius Severus, who reigned in 461-465 CE. At the bottom is the text *Modes(tus)*. The entire text can be interpreted as follows: "To Gaius Livius Severus, his patron, Modestus (gave)."

Severus wears a *toga contabulata* over a long tunic (*tunica talaris*) that is decoratively embroidered with two vertical stripes and has a decorative square on the left sleeve. He is also wearing the boots worn by senators. He is standing under a shell-shaped canopy that is supported by columns.

Bibliography: NSc (Vaglieri) 1910, 111-12, fig. 14; *CIL* XIV Suppl. 5307; Delbrück 1929, 256, cat. 65 a, pl. 4; Volbach 1952, 33; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 99; Helbig 1972, 134-35, cat. 3166; Chamay 2001, 95; Descoeudres 2001, 425, cat. XII.3; Boin 2013, 213-16. [R.B.]

Ostian identities

43. The urn of Larcius Felix



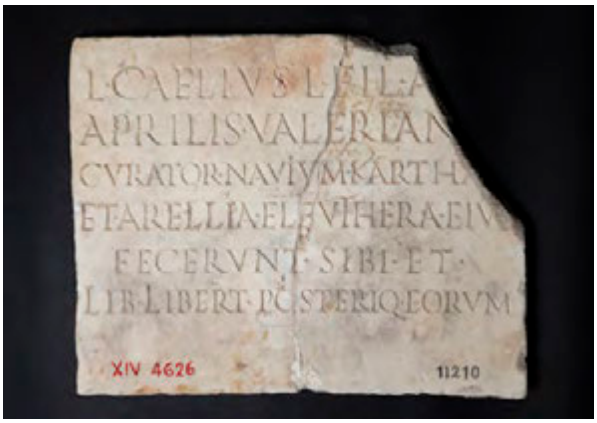
Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 62566.
Material: Luna marble.
Dimensions: H. 33, diam. rim 29.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, necropolis south of Porta Romana, Area 12, US 29, room B, RP 19, 2015.
Condition: Intact.
Date: 150-225 CE.

D(is) M(anibus) G(ai) Larci Felicis fecit Attia Tryfosa coniuci bene merenti.
"To the spirits of the dead. Attia Tryfosa made this for her husband Caius Larcius Felix, who well deserved it."

This funerary urn is dedicated to the memory of Larcius Felix by his wife Attia Tryfosa. The epitaph is written in a framed table on the front side of a cylindrical marble urn. It is framed on both sides by reliefs of race chariots (*biga*) drawn by three horses, each guided by two Cupids. In funerary contexts, depictions of chariot races around the arena refer to the eternal, cosmic cycle. The Cupids driving the chariots are a reference to the afterlife, as is the Cupid sleeping next to a fallen bottle, covered by a wicker case, under the epitaph. The sleep and the fallen liquid refer to the irreparable loss suffered by the bereaved family. The back of the cylindrical urn is decorated with a simple wave pattern. The urn was found without a lid, and its contents were somewhat mixed. However, the cremated bones of the deceased were found in the urn, and analysis of the bones indicates that the deceased was a man, 30-40 years old. The degree of burning on the bones suggests that the temperature of the funeral pyre was 500-700 °C.

Bibliography: Cébeillac-Gervasoni – Mimmo – Bruno 2019, 247-48, no. 5, fig. 5; Nava *et al.* 2019, 263-66, figs. 5-7; Germoni *et al.* 2018, 241, fig. 23. See also the article by Bennett & Laurence in this volume, p. 180. [R.B.]

44. Inscription



Present location: Ostia Deposito 20, inv. 11210.
Dimensions: H. 27, w. 34 cm.

Material: Marble.
Provenience: Ostia, *Decumanus*, between Via dei Molini and Forum, 1913.
Condition: Recomposed of two fragments; the upper right angle is missing.
Date: Second century CE.

L(ucius) Caelius L(uci) fil(ius) A[rn(ensi)] / Aprilis Valerian[us] / curator navium Kartha[g(iniensium)] / et Arellia Eleuthera eius / fecerunt sibi et / lib(ertis) libert(abusque) posteri(s)q(ue) eorum
"L(ucius) Caelius Aprilis Valerian[us] son of (Lucius), member of the Arnensis tribe, curator of the ships of Carthage, and Arellia Eleuthera, his (wife), have made (this grave) for themselves, for their freedmen and women, and for their descendants."

L. Caelius Aprilis Valerianus was a Carthage-born official working in Ostia. He lived in Ostia until his death, also constructing a funerary monument for his family there. He was either a representative of an association of Carthaginian shipowners or, more pragmatically, a caretaker of Carthaginian ships who made sure that the ships were properly equipped. The tombstone is a testament to the large role Carthaginian shipowners played in supplying food to Rome.

The fact that the tombstone was found from the main street of Ostia, far away from any cemeteries, illustrates how people in later Antiquity found new uses for many of the tombstones and marble sculptures used to decorate graves in the city's cemeteries. During the reconstruction phases of the city, especially from the late third century to the sixth century CE, tombstones often ended up as material for walls or floor tiling.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Vaglieri) 1913, 353, n. 3; *CIL* XIV Suppl. 4626; Descoeudres 2001, 407, cat. VI.9. See also the article by van der Ploeg in this volume, p. 185-86. [G.v.d.P.]

45. Front of a sarcophagus depicting a married couple



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 1508.
Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 55, w. 88, th. 9 cm.
Provenience: Portus, Episcopio.
Condition: There is a hole in the middle, between the figures.
Date: Third century CE.

Portraits of married couples were common images on sarcophagi. In this case, the busts are inside a tondo; the upper angles have been filled by small marine centaurs blowing seashells as horns. The lower angles are only partially preserved, showing tops of *cornucopiae*. At sides, strigilated areas originally flanked the image. The woman wears a tunic and a mantle; her hairstyle is inspired by those of third-fourth century empresses (the so-called *Scheitelzopf* hairstyle). The man is wearing a toga that was in fashion in the third and fourth centuries CE, the so-called *toga contabulata*. Tertullian criticised the garment in his contemporary book 'On the Mantle' (*De pallio* 5), as he considered this type of toga to be unnecessarily complex: servants had to press the pleated folds of the toga the previous day and clamp them together for the night.

Bibliography: Calza 1977, 61-62, no. 77, pl. LVIII. See also the articles by Prusac Lindhagen and Mustakallio & Hänninen in this volume and p. 194. [R.B.]

46. Decorative plaques depicting captive barbarians



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3413 a & b.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: of the whole plaque: H. 34, w. 39.5, th. min 2.3, th. max 3.3 cm. Extant: a) H. 34, w. max 21.5; b) H. max 34, w. 39.5.
Provenience: Ostia, Decumanus Maximus.
Condition: Fragments of two similar plaques. 3413 a) One fragment of the right margin of the plaque. b) Three joining fragments of a plaque. One more fragment is visible in the archival photo, now missing.
Date: First half of the first century CE.

These relief plaques depict the taking of prisoners of war on the northern front of the Roman Empire,

probably in Gaul. The fragments come from two similar plaques. At the centre of the image, there is a victory trophy made from a tree trunk. Hanging from its branches are the barbarians' weapons and a *carnyx*, the dragon-headed warhorn especially common among the Gaulish peoples. There are a pair of people on each side of the trophy – each pair is made up of a Roman soldier leading a chained barbarian prisoner. The short-haired and beardless Romans are wearing short tunics and togas, whereas the long-haired and bearded barbarians are naked save for long, fringed capes. The barbarians have their heads bent and their hands tied in front of the body, with chains possibly hanging around their necks, too.

Terracotta plaques like these were made using a mould and used as decoration on the eaves of public buildings. The plaque has its maker's signature: *M(arcus) Anton(ius) (E)paphra.*

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 89; Helbig 1972, 123-24, cat. 3150. Cf. Von Rohden 1911, 131-32, and Pl. LXXV, 2. Tortorella 1981, 68, Fig. 9. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 202-03. [R.B.]

47. Statuette of a barbarian



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3510.
Material: Terracotta, light beige without slip.
Dimensions: H. 14.5, max 5.4, depth 4 cm.
Provenience: In the *macellum*, "da una stanza ad E del piazzale pavimentato di marmo e di mosaico", 30.7.1938.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second century CE.

The hollow, mould-made figure is depicted in a long-sleeved tunic, trousers, and a long cape over his left shoulder, attached on the right shoulder with a brooch. The margin of the cape is decorated on the exterior with fringes, and on the interior with an impressed zig-zag pattern. His uncombed, long hair, moustache and pointed beard point to barbarian identity. On the head, there may be a scarf or a low cap. The man is holding his hands over his stomach, which links the figure to the monumental sculptures on Trajan's Forum, which depict captive Dacian warriors. They often had their hands crossed in front of them, as if tied or ready to be tied. The clothing, especially the long, fringed cape, is also consistent with the probable Dacian origin of the person depicted in the sculpture.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 90; Descoeudres 2001, 425, cat. XII.7. Images of Northern barbarians in minor arts are rare, and mostly limited to military decorations and appliques; for chained and conquered barbarian figurines in bronze, see Toynbee 1964, 120, pl. XXXII c, d and 23 examples in Walter 1993. Terracotta figurines are very rare. For example, in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, there is a terracotta statuette of an armed barbarian warrior of the Northern type (inv. AN1970.1059), datable to first-second centuries CE; in the Louvre, a terracotta figurine of an armed Galatian warrior (inv. Myr283), and an elephant crushing a Galatian warrior (inv. Myr284), from Myrina, datable to the second century BCE. For an overview of the Northern barbarians in minor arts, see Ferris 2000, 171-72 and n. 73. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 204-05. [R.B.]

48. Bronze appliqué, African youngster



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3558.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 10.2, w. 6.5, depth 3.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), (I, III, 1), room 15, 1915.
Condition: Intact but for some superficial abrasion.
Date: Second century CE.

This youngster is depicted turning his head to the left. The figure can be identified as African by his facial features and short, curly hair. He is wearing a short, hooded cape with finely decorated edges.

The hood is down, but the figure is grasping it with his fingers, possibly about to put it on. An undertunic – also made of fine, thin and rich fabric – is visible under the cape. In Roman imagery, dark-skinned, hooded children are often lantern-bearing slaves.

Its size and shape suggest that this bronze sculpture was used as a decoration on the lower part of the headrest of a dining couch (*fulcrum*). The dining couches had rests at one or both ends, and the upper part of the rests usually depicted the bronze head of a mule, the draught animal of Bacchus. The lower part would feature a mythological bust – a satyr, a maenad, Cupid or Bacchus.

Bibliography: Nsc (Calza) 1915a, 255-57, fig. 20; Calza 1915b, 166-69, fig. 41; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 102; Snowden 1970, 80, cat. 53; Helbig 1972, 136-37, cat. 3169, 1; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 154, n. 9696. Among rare confrontable images, Babelon – Blanchet 1895, 442, cat. 1016; at Museo Nazionale of Chieti there is a *fulcrum* with a bearded Ethiopian figure, see Faust 1989, 114, 168, cat. 80-81, pl. 19.2. A bronze statuette, also a decorative appliqué for furniture, depicting a young kneeling African, wearing a tunic and a hooded *cucullus*, probably shown blowing off a fire from a lantern, in the Louvre, Paris, see Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 178-79, cat. IV.4. For a bronze figurine with similarly elaborate workmanship, and inclination of the head in Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, see Bradley 2004, pl. 12. On Roman decorative bronze busts in general, see Barr-Sharrar 1987. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 205. [R.B.]

49. Plastic head lamp



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2731.
Material: Beige, fine grained clay (10 YR 6/4 light yellowish gray), covered by dark blackish-brown (2.5 Y 3/1 very dark grey), uneven slip, fingerprints from dipping visible.
Dimensions: H. 6, l. max 9.8, w. 5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Via dei Molini (*Giornale* 1914, vol. 7: "9-24 gennaio 1914, Via dei Molini, a sud del lato ovest di questa strada [pencil addition:] Via di Diana? – lucerna formata da una maschera virile manico anulato ed un altro anello per sospenderlo, arte mediocre. Lung. attuale. mm. 95").
Condition: Broken at base, the base, foot and nozzle missing.
Date: Second-third century CE.

The plastic lamp has a grooved ring handle at the back, and at the top a similar ring for suspending it; between then, a depression and hole for filling the lamp. The decoration of this lamp features the head of an exotic figure, depicted as a caricature. The dark brown glossy lip enhances the impression that an African figure is depicted. The eyes are almond shaped, finished by grooving, the nose pointed and upturned, with nostrils marked by two grooves, cheeks swollen. The lips are full, and rendered in sharp, high relief. Around the filling hole and at eyebrows, lines of parallel lines impressed with a pointed tool. The nozzle, now missing, was not set into the mouth, but onto the chin of the figure.

Bibliography: For similarly rudimentarily modelled head lamps, see an example from Carnuntum, in Landessammlungen Niederösterreich, datable to the second century CE, Alram Stern 1989, cat. 565 and an example at the Museo Nazionale di Roma, Barbera 1993, 210-12, cat. 10. Barbera recognizes the latter as a local imitation of the products of the central Tunisian workshops, datable to third-fourth centuries CE. The present example may similarly be a locally produced imitation of north African wares. In fact, the rendering of the facial features, eyes with raised, dotted pupils, and eyebrows marked with short impressed lines, have similarities to the works by the African Gududio and Saturninus workshops, see Salomonson 1980, 114-15, fig. 12a-d; 14a-b. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 207. [R.B.]

50. Statuette of African figure



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3237.
Material: Terracotta (7.5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow), light opaque slip (10 R 6/4 light yellowish brown).
Dimensions: H. 8.5, w. 4, depth 3.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.

Condition: Broken, only the face and chest remain, back missing.
Date: Imperial era.

The statuette is mouldmade and hollow, and it represents a grotesque African figure. The facial expression is either suffering or fierce, withdrawn in the wrinkled visage. The nose is wide, and ears bulging. The head is turned to the side, the chest bulges awkwardly in front, the rib cage is evinced in relief. The sculpture belongs to the tradition of grotesque statuettes with physical deformities or illnesses, such as hunchbacks or dwarfism. The interpretation of the figure as a humorous grotesque, whose function was to heal and provide protection against evil, is underlined by the presence of traces of red paint.

Bibliography: For pathological figures with a prominent rib cage and hunchback, Mitchell 2013, 285, fig. 10, 288, fig. 13. For pathologically thin African figures, see Fentress 2011, 67-68, pl. 6-7. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 206-07. [R.B.]

51. Lamp decorated with an exotic figure



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2733.
Material; Terracotta (10 YR 7/4 very pale brown).
Dimensions: H. 4, l. 8, w. 4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Superficial erosion, and flaking at the foot and around the filling hole.
Date: Third century CE.

The miniature lamp stands on a conical, full foot with a flat resting surface; at the back there is a handle-shield with a palm leaf on top, rendered by grooving the leaves as herring bone patterns. The crudely moulded facial features are generically exotic and different, non-Roman. This is indicated by the thick, curly hair rendered in rows of superimposed curls, and the accentuated, caricatural facial features. The pupils of the eyes are impressed with a circular point, and the large eyebrows are accentuated by a series of short grooves. The nose is wide with very visible nostrils, the area between the nose and the large lips is moulded with vertical grooves. The nozzle is set at the chin of the figure, and its tip is blackened by use. The edge around the filling hole is broken.

Bibliography: For parallels and discussion, see cat. number 49 above. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 207. [R.B.]

52. Neck of a wine pitcher



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3286.
Material: Ceramic; uneven transparent reddish slip.
Dimensions: H. 7.9 cm, w. 4.5, depth 6.4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Only the neck, rim and beginning of the handle of the vase are extant.
Date: Second–third century CE.

The rim has two parallel grooves under the lip. The neck depicts an old man with a large aquiline nose, frowning eyebrows, flowing and wavy beard and moustaches, and rounded ears. Mould-made plastic wine pitchers of this type, with the neck made in the shape of a grotesque face with the body either in the form of a flat, biconical *lagynos* or another caricatural face, were originally produced in the Middle East in the late Hellenistic time, but they were later widely imitated, especially in North African workshops in the third and fourth centuries CE. They depict exaggerated and amusing figures that are somewhere between a foreigner and a mythological creature. They are frequently linked to the domain of Dionysus and depict satyr-like 'old drunkards' in a humorous fashion.

Bibliography: Cf. Salomonson 1980, 123, fig. 38 (with shorter beard) and more generically comparable examples 109, fig. 3a; 118, fig. 21a-b. A head vase with similar facial traits in Carandini 1970, 781, fig. 50-52 (beardless figure). See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 204-08. [R.B.]

Production and work

53. Fish hook



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4252.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 7.4, w. 5.1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial era.

The hook is formed of a thin bronze plate of rectangular section, pierced at the top, twisted, and bifurcated to form two hooks. Roman paintings with beach and harbour scenes often depict fishing with a fishing rod. Fleets of boats fishing with nets and lines also operated off the coast of Ostia. One boat found in the area (*Fiumicino 5*) was provided with a tank to hold live fish, a type of boat mentioned by Macrobius (*naves vivariae*, *Sat*. 3.16.10). Pliny the Younger also notes that Ostia produced excellent soles and prawns, although the sandy seabed was not particularly favourable for fishing (*epist*. 2.17). In fact, fishing was so efficient that the fish stock in the area seems to have collapsed as early as the early Imperial era. Pliny the Elder also reports (*nat*. 9.62-63) the attempt of the commander of the fleet of Misenum, Optatus, to import parrot wrasses and scatter them offshore at the mouth of Tiber.

Bibliography: While single hooks are numerous in Roman times, double hooks are not common, see Berti 1990, tav. cat. 254, 255; Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 115, cat. 62. Such an element might, however, also conceivably have been an element of a steelyard, see Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 299, cat. 370; Corti – Pallante – Tarpini 2001, 274. For fishing in Ostia, see Boetto 2010. [R.B.]

54. Emblema, the central image of a mosaic floor



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 145.
Material: Stone and glass paste tesserae on a tile support.
Dimensions: H. 57, w. 46 cm.
Provenience: Isola Sacra.
Condition: The panel consists of four non-joining fragments that represent ca. ¾ of the picture, with the upper right angle.
Date: Late first – early second century CE.

In this mosaic, recognisable species include at least the spotted sea bass (*Dicentrarchus punctatus*, it. spigola macchiata) on the bottom row. Above the sea bass, on the left, the very partially preserved fish could be a white grouper (*Epinephelus aeneus*, it. cernia bianca). Above it, in the center, the fish of which only the red tail is visible could be, for example, a red scorpionfish (*Scorpaena scrofa*, it. scorfano rosso). The reddish fish above the sea bass, on the right, is a red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*, it. triglia di fango). The gray fish partly visible behind its tail may be a gilt-head bream (*Sparus aurata*, it. orata). In the upper right angle, the upturned, agonizing fish is probably a striped red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*, it. triglia di scoglio). Behind the mullet is the snakelike and sharp-toothed Mediterranean moray (*muraena Helena*, it. murena). Two more fish, probably of the same species, can be seen, in the upper left angle; they are possibly wrasses (*Labridae*, it. tordo).

The fish imagery served a culinary function, since all species in the images were edible. Fish were valued very highly as food. The Roman elite enjoyed raising fish in the fishponds of their gardens on a hobby basis. These ponds would have vases incorporated into the walls as nests for the

fish. In the background of this mosaic a terracotta jar is visible – it may represent a fish nest, or be a vessel for culinary purposes.

Bibliography: Calza 1940, 180-81, fig. 90; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 113, cat. 26; Helbig 1972, 141, cat. 3176 Bragantini 2005, 1156-57, fig. 1; Germoni 2014, 12-14, figs. [A.T.]

55. Window glass fragments



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 13040.
Material: Glass.
Dimensions: 13.5 × 13 × 1 cm; 13.5 × 11 × 0,5 cm; 8.5 × 6.5 × 0.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Procoio di Pianabella, Aldobrandini properties, 1962.
Condition: Three fragments.
Date: Imperial era.

Although glass had been invented in the areas of the Middle East and Egypt as early as around 1500 BCE, it was the invention of glassblowing around the start of the Common Era that quickly made glassware more common. This favoured the production of window glass along with glass vessels. At the end of the first cetury CE, large glass windows were being installed in buildings such as bathhouses. These window glass fragments appear to be recycled glass for a rectangular viewing window on the lid of a sarcophagus. Such sarcophagi were used among the Neopythagoreans of the first century CE.

Bibliography: Agnoli 1999, 245; Descoeudres 2001, 428, cat. XIII.2. [R.B.]

56. Relief depicting lamps



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 1349.
Material: White marble of large grain.
Dimensions: H (pres.) 45, w. 60 cm.
Provenience: Decumanus Maximus, 1941.
Conditions: The lower margin is broken and missing.
Date: Late first–early second century CE.

The relief features four oil lamps in a circle – originally there were eight lamps. The lamps have round nozzles and a crescent-shaped ornamental handle. The crescent decorations touch one another, forming a circle, and there is also a connecting part between the shoulders of the lamps. It is, indeed, possible that the relief depicts one lamp with multiple nozzles (a *polylychnon*) instead of eight separate lamps. This lamp type, as single examples, was common in the late first and early second centuries. With regard to the possibility that a lamp with multiple nozzles was represented, although they were common, *polylychnon* lamps of this particular shape have never been found. The relief may be a sign for a lamp workshop, and it also reflects the professional pride of lamp makers.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 22, cat. 15; Descoeudres 2001, 415, cat. VIII.4; Schoevaert 2018, 400, relief 17. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 213-14. [A.K.]

57. Relief, masonry shop sign



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 48421.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 45, w. 60 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Via dei Balconi.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial age.

The relief features a series of tools: a ruler (probably one Roman foot, ca. 29 cm), a compass, a hammer, two trowels and a blade for cutting. This relief was inserted in a wall on the Via dei Balconi. A row of small trading houses lines the street, and

it is possible that this was an advertising sign for a mason's workshop.

Bibliography: Pavolini 1986, 65, fig. 23; Descoeudres 2001, 415, cat. VIII.3; Schoevaert 2018, 402, relief 23. A similar stone relief depicting constructor's tools was inserted in a wall in Pompeii, complete with the name of the mason, *Diogenes structor*, confirming its identification as a shop sign, see Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 131, cat. 393. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, p. 226. [R.B.]

58. Plumb



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4581.
Material: lead.
Dimensions: H. 4.6, d. max. 2.8 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial era.

The plumb has the form of an upturned cone with concave walls. At the bottom it ends in a globular knob, and at the top, there is a cylindrical knob pierced horizontally and vertically to allow it to be suspended. Such an instrument, *perpendiculum*, was suspended from a line and used by a builder to indicate a vertical direction for wall construction. If the plumbline was suspended from the top vertex, in an A-shaped wooden straight angle, it formed an *archipendulum* that could also control horizontal levels. Suspended from a *groma*, such plumbs were also used in land surveying.

Bibliography: For parallels and Roman plumbs in general, see Lafaye 1907, 397-98; Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 305, cat. 381; 310; Corti – Pallante – Tarpini 2001, 310, fig. 226.1; Galli – Pisani Sartorio 2009, 73. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 218. [R.B.]

59. Relief depicting a shoemaker and spinner, part of a sarcophagus



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3439 (original Museo Nazionale Romano, inv. 184).
Material: Plaster copy, original made of marble.
Dimensions: H. 51, l. 70, th. 11 cm.
Provenience: Found near Casone del Sale (the Ostiense Antiquarium building), 1877.
Date: Late first–early second century CE.

The front of a sarcophagus decorated with a relief. A man on the left is sitting on a low table, making a shoe. There is a cupboard with two panelled doors in front of him, with two pairs of completed shoes on top of it. The shoemaker wears a tunic and a cloak. The man on the right has lighter clothing, wearing only a short, sleeveless *tunica exomis* fastened over one shoulder. This kind of tunic was a typical cheap work garment, often used by workers involved in heavy outdoor work. The man is holding a spindle in his right hand and spinning yarn. With his left hand, he is taking more wool, which appears to be hanging on the wall. On the right side of the sarcophagus, a man dressed in a loincloth is shown dancing in Alexandrian style and holding a double stick in his both hands; his head is missing. Another man dressed in a wide mantle is playing a tambourine. Between them, on an altar or a table, there is a long wand. The central panel on the front of the sarcophacus features the following epitaph in Greek: "We, Lucius Atilius Artemas and Claudia Apphias, dedicate this sarcophagus to Titus Flavius Trophimas, incomparable and trusted friend, who always lived with us. We have given his body a place to be buried together with us, so that he will always be remembered and will find rest from his sufferings. The straightforward one, the cultivator of every art, the Ephesian, sleeps here in eternal repose." All three individuals are freed slaves of eastern origin, possibly all from the

city of Ephesus. The Latin first parts of their names come from their masters, whereas the Greek latter parts are their own old slave names. The relief probably depicts the friends Lucius Atilius and Titus Flavius. Spinning was work typically done by women, but men could also practise the profession. It has, however, also been suggested that the relief portrays a ropemaker instead.

Bibliography: Fiorelli 1877, 313-14; Paribeni 1932, 154, cat. 364; Zimmer 1982, 30, 132, cat. 47; Amedick 1991, 149, cat. 173, pl. 117, 1-3; Descoeudres 2001, 415-16; Clarke 2006, 216-17, fig. 126; Schoevaert 2018, 398, relief 10. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 226-27. [R.B.]

60. Spindle



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5233.
Materiale: Bone.
Dimensions: L. 8.9, diam. disc. 3.7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Pin broken at one end.
Date: First–second century CE.

This spindle consists of two separate parts: the stick and the whorl. There is a hook-like slit in the lower part of the stick, and the yarn to be spun was fixed into this slit. The upper part of the stick, narrowing towards the top, has broken off. The stick was inserted into the whorl – a disc with a hole – and the whorl helped the spindle rotate in much the same way as a spinning top.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 99. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, p. 228. [R.B.]

61. Relief depicting a surgeon



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 5204.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 25.5, w. 58 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 100, 1930.
Condition: The upper margin is missing.
Date: Around 140 CE.

The tomb that Scribonia Attice built for herself, her husband M. Ulpius Amerimnus, her mother Scribonia Callityche, Diocles, and her freedmen, is a brick building in the Isola Sacra necropolis between Ostia and Portus. The marble inscription and the two terracotta plaques inserted into its façade contain information about this married Ostian couple, freedmen themselves, who worked together. The man was a surgeon and the woman a midwife. The man's memorial plaque depicts a patient sitting on a stool, on the right, with a surgeon bending down in front of him, washing or treating the patient's foot in a bowl. The surgeon is dressed in a Greek-style himation mantle that leaves one shoulder nude. His open instrument case is portrayed on the right and contains a surgical scalpel, and three other splints and spatulas.

Bibliography: Calza 1931, 535-36, fig. 19; Gummerus 1932, 53, cat. 186; Calza 1935, 415, fig. 2; Calza 1940, 250-51, fig. 149; Thylander 1951, 162-63, *IPO* A 222; Floriani Squarciapino 1956/58, 184-86, pl. I.2; Helbig 1972, 14-15, cat. 3004; Kampen 1981, 143, cat. 16, fig. 59; Chamay 2001, 105; Descoeudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.13; Helttula 2007, 155, cat. 133; Schoevaert 2018, 401, relief 19. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, p. 226 and 228. [R.B.]

62. Relief depicting childbirth and a midwife



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 5203.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 28, w. 41. 5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 100, 1930.

Condition: Intact.
Date: Around 140 CE.

This memorial plaque for a midwife named Scribonia Attice depicts two women assisting in childbirth. The delivery is taking place in a special birthing chair with a hole in the seat and low backrest. The assistant is behind the woman in labour, supporting the parturient's upper torso, while the midwife herself is sitting on a low stool in front of the woman. The woman giving birth is completely naked, and her hair is open. This was a magical aid used in childbirth: all knots, such as hair buns and belts, had to be symbolically opened. This relief is the only surviving image of the use of the birthing chair in antiquity.

Bibliography: Calza 1931, 534-35, fig. 18; Calza 1935, 415, fig. 1; Calza 1940, 248-49, fig. 148; Thylander 1951, 162-63; Floriani Squarciapino 1956/58, 183-84, pl. I.1; Helbig 1972, 14-15, cat. 3004; Kampen 1981, 69-72, 140, cat. 16, fig. 58; Chamay 2001, 106; Descoeudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.14; Schoevaert 2018, 400, relief 18. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 226-27. [R.B.]

63. Spatula (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4261.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 16.5, w. max 1.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First-second century CE.

This multipurpose instrument, called the *spathomele*, was a common object used by professional doctors and ordinary people alike. One end of the spatula widens into an olivary resembling a cotton bud, and the other is flat and shaped like a leaf, in this case with small lateral wings.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 94; Pavolini 1991, fig. 92; Descoeudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.17. The object belongs to the spatula type with side wings, Riha 1986, 76, type D. [R.B.]

64. Forceps (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4235.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 22.7, max. span 6.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), 21.5.1916.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second-third century CE.

This rare and specialised medical instrument is possibly a pair of *uvula forceps*, used to operate on the uvula or tonsils as well as in other procedures in the area of the throat and mouth. The forceps may also have been used in surgical operations. The jaws of the forceps are serrated, and the shanks are of different lengths and have globular and disc-shaped moulded decorations.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 94; Pavolini 1991, fig. 92; Descoeudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.19. For *uvula forceps*, see Milne 1907, 135; Tabanelli 1958, 91-92. Cf. also Bliquez 1994, 58; *idem* 2014, 244; Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 253, cat. 319; Ortalli 2000, 525; Galli – Pisani Sartorio 2009,156. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 226, 228. [R.B.]

65. Tweezers (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4245.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 11.5, max. opening 1.1, width of the arm 0.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia. Magazzino annonario (V, 11, 5), 20.7.1939.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First century CE.

The tweezers are fused as one piece; they have stepped shouders. At top, two raised rings, a baluster element and globular knob. Decorated tweezers like these were likely to have been medical instruments.

Bibliography: Pavolini 1991, fig. 92; Descoeudres 2001, 417, cat. VIII.20. Cf. Riha 1986, 37, type C. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-85. [R.B.]

66. Surgical instruments



Present location: Karolinska Institutet, Solna
Material: Bronze
Dimensions: Seven instruments, l. 7-19 cm.
Provenience: Roman world.

This is a surgeon's instrument case containing two spatula probes, a cyathiscomele, a spoon, two bone levers to lever fractured bones into position and to lever out teeth, and to the right one branch from a bone forceps. A bone forceps with its spoon-shaped blades was formed of two crossing branches, used for the extraction of foreign bodies. The Roman surgical instruments were donated to the Karolinska medical research institute in the 1930s or 1940s.

Bibliography: Cf. Senn 1895; Bliquez 1994, pls. XXI-XXIII. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 226, 228. [A.K.]

67. Sarcophagus



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 955 (original Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. 1299).
Material: Copy, original made of marble.
Dimensions: H. 54 cm, l. 178 cm, w. 54 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Date: Last quarter of the third century CE.

The sarcophagus depicts three ships arriving at the harbour. In each ship, there is a helmsman holding the rudder and two sailors controlling the sails; they are all nude. In between, there is also a smaller boat, possibly a rescue boat for the man swimming in the water. Alternatively, it could be a pilot boat and the man in the water a harbour diver (*urinator*). The diver's task was to dive for items that had sunk to the bottom of the harbour during loading. There are also five dolphins in the sea. On both sides of the image, there are buildings: on the right, the Portus lighthouse, and on the left, a terraced porticus, with three people looking at the ships. On the ground floor, a servant in a short tunic is standing and holding a tray of food. On the sides of the sarcophagus, there are typical images of the weapons, shields and spears, of defeated barbarians.

The sarcophagus highlights the importance of the sea and ships in Ostia, but the imagery can also be interpreted as a metaphor for the cycle of life from birth to death, which is much like a ship's journey from one harbour to another. More realistic interpretations have been offered, as well: the man on the terrace could be the owner of the ships, and the episode of the man fallen in the sea could refer to a real event.

Bibliography: Platner 1842, III, 231, cat. 12; Amedick 1991, 55, 58, 130, cat. 57, pl. 46.2-4, 47.1, 48.1-2, 49.3; Stubbe Østergaard 1996, 77-79, cat. 33; Ensoli – La Rocca 2000, 480, cat. 99; Descoeudres 2001, 406, cat. VI.3. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, p. 229. [R.B.]

68. Slave's collar



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4158.
Dimensions: H. 2, l. 20.5 cm.
Material: Bronze.
Provenience: Side-room of the bar on Via di Diana (I, II, 5), 16.4.1916.
Date: Fourth century CE.

The text on the collar reads as follows: *Tene me ne fugia(m), fugio*, "Hold me so I don't run away; I am running away". A few similar objects are known from the Roman world. They were probably put on slaves who had already tried to escape

as a punishment, according to the legislation of the Constantinian era that limited brand marking on slaves.

Bibliography: Paribeni 1916, 418-19, fig. 7; *CIL* XIV 5315; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 95; Descoeudres 2001, 415, cat. VIII.2; Trimble 2016, 458, n. 58, Parisi Presicce *et al*. 2017, 170, cat. III 8 (Germoni). See also the article by Joska & Vuolanto in this volume, pp. 243-44. [R.B.]

69. Italian relief-decorated terra sigillata bowl



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5205.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 17.5; diam. max 20.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, near the tomb of C. Cartilius Poplicola, 1951.
Condition: Composed of several joining rim and body fragments; about half of the vessel is preserved.
Date: 10 BCE–15 CE.

The mould-made vessel has high sloping walls, and an out-turned rim with a wide vertical, concave band under the lip, decorated above and below by rouletting. The form resembles a *modiolus* (CF 170-71, R 3), but its large size makes it functional as a crater rather than a cup. The main zone features dancers who are wearing short, sleeveless double-belted tunics, and flaring *kalathiskoi* on their heads. The women are barefooted and seem to dance on tiptoes in procession, their right hands are pressed on the heart while the open left hands are raised, the flowing drapery indicates movement. In the field between them, there are rectangular boxes suspended by ribbons, hanging from a horizontal garland. On the ground, reed-like flowers grow between the dancers. The handle, missing, was decorated at a lower attachment by a bull's head in relief. This bowl features the signature *TIGRAN*, which suggests that it was made by M. Perennius Tigranus, a freedman probably of Armenian origins (named after the Armenian king Tigranes). He became the largest ceramics producer in Arretium in around 15-20 CE. His workshop was probably founded by his master, M. Perennius, for whom Tigranus had first worked as a slave. After having been freed and given his master's name, Tigranus continued the operation of the workshop, succeeded by other freed slaves. Similar relief-decorated ceramics of Tigranus represent the pinnacle of Italian sigillata production.

Kalathiskos dancers were popular first in Classical Greece, particularly in the Ionian area, and were revived in Augustan neo-Attic art. Interestingly, the motif is particularly popular in the Black Sea region, probably native to Tigranes, and there connected with the cults of local goddesses, in particular Aphrodite *Ourania*. The subject may thus have been chosen by the producer also as an expression of his cultural background.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91; Helbig 1972, 127-28, cat. 3156; Descoeudres 2001, 410, cat. VII.18. Similar *kalathiskos* dancers appear in another bowl of Tigranus in the Metropolitan Museum, in this case with musical instruments in the field, *tympana* and *cymbala*, see Alexander 1943, pl. XXVI.1a–c. For *kalathiskos* dancers, see Habetzeder 2012, on terra sigillata vessels, see *ead*., 40, pl. 2. See also p. 247 and the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 66-68. [R.B.]

III Everyday Life in Ostia

Family life

70. Feeder



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5795.
Material: Black-glazed pottery.
Dimensions: H. max. 6.5, d. max. 20, d. foot 7.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Castrum.
Condition: Intact apart from minor abrasion of black gloss, top broken and missing.
Date: Second half of the fourth century BCE.

This black glazed vessel type, with a thin tubular beak and high lateral ring handle, is called a *guttus* (drop bottle) or a feeder. This variant does not have the more usual trumpet shaped beak, but a narrowing, plane one. On the basis of its shape, the pitcher may have been a baby's feeding bottle, or an oil filler for lamps, or a perfume dispenser. It has a low foot, and the convex walls are decorated by vertical grooves. It had an opening at the top.

This vase is one of the early ceramic finds from Ostia, found under the street level in the excavations of the Castrum area.

Bibliography: Calza 1953, 75, pl. 24.8; Olcese – Coletti 2018, 103. Cf. *CVA* Capua, Museo Campano, 3, pl. 15.5; *CVA*, Ostschweiz Ticino, 1, 8, pl. 5.21. Type Morel 1981, 8160. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, p. 65. [R.B.]

71. Toy pig, a rattle



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4649.
Material: Terracotta, glass paste.
Dimensions: H. 5.5, l. 10 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, east side of Vico di Dioniso, 21.9.1949.
Condition: The point of snout and tail missing, a hole (d. 1 cm) through the back, some beads missing from the decoration.
Date: Second half of the first – first half of the second century CE.

The body of the pig was turned on a potter's wheel. The back of the animal features a floral pattern of clay *à la barbotine* with inlaid light blue, green and white glass beads. The eyes are incised circles; along the top of the back, there is a line in added clay, crested to imitate hair. The pig is likely to have been a toy rattle. A hole has been cut on its back on purpose so that the rattling object could be removed. The rattling sound both amused the baby and averted evil spirits.

Bibliography: Floriani Squarciapino 1950, 91-92; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91; Pellegrino – Zaccagnini 1999, 99, cat. 111; Descoeudres 2001, 452, cat. XVI.39. Cf. a similar pig found in a child's tomb along the Via Tiburtina, with a coin of Antoninus Pius, Messineo 1999, 117, fig. 14, with further parallels. See also the article by Dasen in this volume, pp. 307-08. [R.B.]

72. Funerary altar of Aulus Egrilius Magnus



Present location: Museo Ostiense, inv. 1375.
Material: Luna marble.

Dimensions: H. 114, w. 61, depth 45 cm.
Provenience: Burial find near Ostia, 1922.
Condition: Intact with minor superficial abrasions.
Date: 50-75 CE.

The rectangular funerary altar is crowned by a pediment formed by two volutes that encircle four rosettes, from which two lotus-buds grow; the pediment is a separately carved element. Its sides feature a pitcher and a plate, vessels used for funerary offerings; the backside is plain. The portrayed boy stands on a low plinth that bears an inscription.

Dis Manibus/ A(ulo) Egrilio A(uli) f(ilio) Pal(atina tribu) Magno vix(it) /
ann(os) quinque meses novem dies novem
"To the spirits of the dead. To Aulus Egrilius Magnus, son of Aulus, of the Palatina tribe, who lived for five years, nine months and nine days."

Aulus Egrilius Magnus was a freeborn child, but his father was probably a slave freed by the well-known and wealthy Ostian Egrilius family. In the image, the boy is wearing a tunic with short sleeves, with an engraved thin vertical band, *clavus*, originally painted red, and the red-bordered juvenile *toga pratexta* to indicate his freeborn status; he also has a ring on his ring finger and the soft shoe-boots of adult Roman citizens, *calcei*. In his left hand he holds an object that has been interpreted as a papyrus roll, but its rectangular form and vertical parallel groovings seem rather to represent wax tablets; at any rate, they symbolize the erudition he would have reached in his life. With his right hand he grasps by the horn a goat, which has been interpreted not only as a pet, a common motif in children's funerary images, but also as a possible reference to Dionysus/Bacchus or the mysteries of Orpheus; it might also be an animal destined for sacrifice. The altar is among the earliest such monuments dedicated to children in Roman Italy.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1927, 406, cat. 76; *CIL* XIV, Suppl. 4899; Calza 1964, 64, cat. 109, fig. 63; Gercke 1968, 25-26, cat. R21; Helbig 1972, cat. 2997; Meiggs 1973, 191; Kleiner 1987, 114-16, cat. 12, pl. IX.1-3; Goette 1989, 460; Rawson 1997, 220, fig. 9.8; Chamay 2001, 118; Descoeudres 201, 440, cat. XVI.2. On the marble, Decrouez – Ramseyer – Descœudres 2002, 44, cat. 1-2. See also the articles by Joska & Vuolanto in this volume, pp. 265-66, and the article by Salomies, pp. 160-61, for the Egrilii family. [R.B.]

73.-74. Two dolls



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Carved bone.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: On both dolls, head and torso preserved, limbs missing.
Date: Second–third century CE.

Many dolls carved of bone are known from the Roman world, usually found in girls' graves. The dolls always depict adult women with hairstyles carefully made in the fashion of the time. These dolls had articulated legs and arms, now missing. The high, elegant hairstyle has been created with just a few lines. The dolls have navels, which indicates that the figures are naked. One of the dolls has a bronze ring representing a necklace around its neck.

1) Inv. 5242 (h. 9.5, w. 1.4, th. 0.7 cm). Stylized head with high hairdo, indicated with incised lines.
2) Inv. 5243 (h. 6.8, w. 1.9, th. 0.9 cm). A bronze ring around the neck, imitating a necklace. The hair, a kind of *Melonenfrisur* parted at centre, is indicated by deep diagonal lines, and the facial features are engraved.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 98; Helbig 1972, 133-34, cat. 3165. Cf. quite similar doll bodies from the Palatine East excavations, St. Clair 1996, fig. 10. See also the articles by Joska & Vuolanto and Dasen in this volume, pp. 266-67 and 308. [R.B.]

75. Wax tablet



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 2860.
Material: Copy, wood and wax.
Dimensions: H. 14 cm, w. (open) 24, th. 3 cm.

Wooden tablets, tied together at one side like book covers, served as notebooks, missives and documents. The frame protected the lower, wax-covered writing surface inside.

Bibliography: Galli – Pisani Sartorio 2009, 168, sez. 6.6a. For the use and types of wax tablets, see Božič – Feugère 2004, 22-25. [R.B.]

76. Stylus



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 56447.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. 8.5, th. 1 cm
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The elliptical finial is broken and missing.
Date: First century CE.

A stylus with swollen stem, an offset pointed tip at one end and, at the other, an elliptical finial. Pointed instruments of this kind were used to write texts – anything from letters and school exercises to more permanent archive documents – on the wax tablets. It was also possible to erase the texts using a wide spatula-like implement or the globular part at the other end of the stylus.

Bibliography: The stylus belongs to the type Béal 1983, A.XVIII. For their use, see Božič – Feugère 2004, 30-31, fig. 26. [R.B.]

77.-82. Terracotta figurines

Small, human-shaped terracotta figurines were mass produced with moulds, and had many uses. Some were cult images of gods and kept at home altars. Figurines depicting gods were sold at temples, where visitors would buy them and dedicate them to the temples. Some figurines depict ordinary people, and may have been kept at home as decorations, or put into graves as gifts. Often the images are caricatural, so they may have been humoristic, or used to ward off the evil eye.

77. Hooded child



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3516.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 10.5, w. 13.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Via Ostiense necropolis, 1911.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First century CE.

A child is sitting in a hunched position, deep in thought or asleep, tightly wrapped in his cape, on a rod supported by two altars. He is wearing a hooded *cucullus* mantle. There is a pig's or boar's head on the altar on the right, possibly depicting a sacrificed animal. The child could be a servant, a lantern-bearing slave. However, he has been interpreted as the child Telesphorus, who was the son of Asclepius, the god of healing, and himself a healing and protective figure. His name means the bringer-to-the-goal (*télos*) that would be the healing achieved during the therapeutic sleep. This cult was practiced especially in Pergamum. The hooded spirit (*genius cucullatus*) was a deity also known to the Etruscans and Gauls. The spirit was the protector of travellers and the passage to the afterlife. These two mythical figures, one eastern and the other western, may have blended together in the figure of the hooded child. In this case, the figure was put in a grave and became the protector of eternal sleep.

Bibliography: NSc 1911 (Vaglieri), 86, fig. 7; Floriani Squarciapino 1958, 21, n. 46; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 90; Helbig 1972, 124, cat. 3151. Similar statues have reportedly been found in the Palatine temple of Cybele (Floriani Squarciapino 1958, 21). See also the article by Joska & Vuolanto in this volume, p. 265. [R.B.]

78. Male statuette of a *togatus*



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3507.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 16.5, w. 7.2, depth 6.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First century CE.

The man depicted in this statuette is portrayed more or less as a caricature; as a short, plump and balding figure leaning strongly backwards in a dignified manner. The figure is holding a scroll in his hand. The details of the toga are portrayed realistically, especially the pocket-like over-fold (*sinus*) on the stomach. Originally, the sculpture was painted, the toga white and any visible skin pink. The toga was the official outfit of Roman citizens, and others – slaves and foreigners – were not allowed to use it. Although wearing the toga was uncomfortable, citizens had to use it at official events and festivities.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 89; Descoeudres 2001, 425, cat. XII.6. For the significance and parallels, see Martelli 2019. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 270-71. [R.B.]

79. Statuette of a matron



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3511.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 16, w. 6.5, depth 4.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

This figure most likely depicts a married female Roman citizen, a matron, as indicated by the long, girdled and long-sleeved tunic worn by the figure. Over the tunic, she is wearing a palla, a type of mantle worn outside. A decorative embroidered ribbon is hanging at the front of the tunic, reaching down almost to the hem. The woman's hairstyle resembles those of Empress Julia Domna from the early third century, with the hair styled into the shape of a calotte.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 89; Descoeudres 2001, 425, cat. XII.8. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 271-72. [R.B.]

80. Statuette of a matron



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 54580.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 12.9, w. 4.6, depth 4.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Pianabella necropolis, building 7, 1997-98.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second century CE, Antonine period.

The woman portrayed here is sitting on a chair with armrests (*cathedra*) in a dignified manner, which makes it likely that the sculpture depicts a married, high-ranking matron. Her high, carefully styled hair, with the curled hair piled on top of the head, has traces of yellow colour. The clothing is also suitable for a matron: a girdled floor-length undertunic with long sleeves and a decorative band at the hem. The decorative band may be an *institia*, one of the symbols of a matron's outfit, although they were rarely depicted in sculptures. Over the tunic, drawn over the back of the head, the woman is wearing a mantle

known as the *palla*, which has also been decoratively hemmed with a zig-zag pattern. She is holding a small object, a wreath, a mirror or a fan in her hand.

Bibliography: Pellegrino – Zaccagnini 1999, 95, cat. 85, fig. 26 and n. 87 with parallels; Descoeudres 2001, 451, XVI.35.2. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 271-72. [R.B.]

81. Caricatural female statuette



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 54652.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 17.5, w. 7, depth 5.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Pianabella necropolis, *columbarium* 1 (of Popilii).
Condition: Intact.
Date: First–second century CE.

This naked female figure is depicted caricaturishly, standing on a circular base. She has short legs that turn inwards at the knees, a round belly and sagging breasts. The figure has carefully styled hair, with low curls framing the face and a low bun at the back. The hair has been painted yellow. She has snake-shaped bracelets decorating both arms. The face is portrayed in an idealised and natural fashion, unlike the caricaturish body. On the basis of the portrayal, the figure may be a comically depicted old courtesan, recalling the series of terracotta statuettes that depict elderly women in the poses typical of Aphrodite. The image may also have connections to the so-called Baubo figurines, as their Romanized counterpart. This figurine was found in a tomb near a cinerary urn.

Bibliography: Pellegrino – Zaccagnini 1999, 86-87, cat. 50, fig. 13; Descoeudres 2001, 452, XVI.37.2. For caricatural elderly female terracotta figurines, see Lentini 2005, 213-15; Mitchell 2013, 282-83; Pilo 2014, 174, fig. 9-10. [R.B.]

82. Male caricature statuette



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3508.
Material: Very hard terracotta with tiny white partcles (5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow); covered by glossy reddish-brow uneven slip (5 YR 4/3 reddish brown - 2.5 YR 5/8 red).
Dimensions: H. 11, w. 8.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Broken at waist and arms, covered by hard greyish incrustations.
Date: Imperial era.

This man is depicted as a caricature: he is thin and sharp-nosed, with deep wrinkles on his forehead. He has a short chin-beard, curly hair and possibly a wreath on his head. He is bald, or else he had a close-fitting calotte at the back of his head. He is wearing a short, hooded cape that covers his shoulders, with a peculiar t-shaped cut at the front. The edges of the hood were decorated with short lines, which probably depict embroidery, rather than the fringes associated with barbarians. Such capes (*cucullus*, *paenula*) originated in Gaul, but became popular with travellers all around the empire during the Imperial era. There is a hole at the top of the head. The figure, characterized by the hooded cape, can be interpreted as a traveller or slave. The remains of a wreath on the head could also point to the interpretation as a reveller.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91. The hard, red clay and stylistic traits point to Northern Africa as the place of production. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 205. [R.B.]

Jewellery

83. Brooch



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4198.

Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: Diam. 3.7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, the pin is missing at back.
Date: Second–third century CE.

This circular, mould-made brooch is decorated with openwork designs. On the outer circle, there are three seashells. Three curved, plant-themed trumpet-shaped elements spread out from the centre of the brooch. The tripartite central *triskele*-motif is considered to express constant, periodically recurring movement, and it is typical of Celtic ornamentation. The brooch is of a type produced in Roman Britain. Wearing such a brooch was part of ethnic outfit and identity, not typical of the Roman garments; the rare example might have been worn in Ostia by someone who came from the Northern Empire. The design unites traditional Celtic motifs with the Classical seashell, referring to Venus. Brooches could be worn regardless of sex, but the shell motif points to this being a female ornament.

Bibliography: NSc 1913, 180, fig. 3; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 103. For the use of *triskele* brooches in Roman Britain, see Allason-Jones 1995, 24; Johns 1996, 183. For a detailed analysis, see the article by Germoni in this volume, pp. 276-77. [R.B.]

84. Ring with a sole-shaped decoration



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 59959.
Material: Gold.
Dimensions: Diam. 2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra necropolis, sarcophagus of the Muses, 2008.
Condition: Intact.
Date: 175-225 CE.

The upper part of this signet ring is shaped like a foot clad in a sandal. It has the Greek phrase μιστικ written on it in cursive using the perforation technique. The word can be derived from the term *mystikòs* and refers to someone initiated into the mysteries, the secret cult rituals. The ring was found in the tomb of a small boy.

Foot stamps of this type were commonly used for the maker's marks in terra sigillata ceramics.

Bibliography: For a detailed analysis, see the article by Germoni in this volume, p. 277. [P.G.]

85. Ring with a stone



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 59960.
Material: Gold, emerald/periodite.
Dimensions: Diam. 2.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra necropolis, sarcophagus of the Muses, 2008.
Condition: Intact.
Date: 175-225 CE.

Two framed emeralds or periodites were set in this ring, which was found together with the gold ring decorated with a foot. Green was the most common colour in gems in antiquity, and Pliny discusses the healing powers of green 'emeralds' extensively. Green was associated with nature and growth, and therefore considered to have positive health effects.

Bibliography: For a detailed analysis, see the article by Germoni in this volume, pp. 277-78. [P.G.]

86. Snake ring and bracelet





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4136, 5200.

Material: Bronze
Provenience: Ostia.
Date: Republican era–imperial era.

Most of the jewellery owned by common people was made of iron or bronze. Jewellery often doubled as a protective amulet, as well. Snakes repelled evil, while also referring to the family continuum. Snake jewellery was used especially by the followers of the cult of Dionysus/Bacchus and women initiated into the cult of Isis. However, snakes were also a universal symbol of good luck and were used in amulets without any particular religious significance.

1) Snake ring, inv. 4136 (diam. 2 cm, intact). The ring is composed as an open circle ending in snake heads at both ends; they overlap so as not to meet.
2) Snake bracelet, inv. 5200 (diam. 6.2 cm, intact). Bracelet in the form of a snake, head and tail, rendered by engraving, as are the scales, are at opposite ends, coiled around 1 ½ times.
Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 103. Cf. Riha 1990, cat. 2964, pl. 77.

See also the article by Germoni in this volume, p. 276. [P.G.]

Bathing and beauty

87. Two strigils (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 4472, 4473.
Material: Bronze.
Provenience: Ostia.
Date: Imperial era.

Strigils are associated primarily with male sporting activities. They were used to scrape the mixture of oil and sand off one's skin after the sporting activity but before actually bathing. In the Roman world, strigils were associated especially with bathhouses and their sports grounds (*palestrae*). Women may also have used strigils in beauty care. Doctors, on the other hand, used strigils as spoons for heating oil-based medical mixtures, for instance.

1) Inv. 4472 (L. 19.5, w. max. 1.4 cm, intact). The blade (*ligulus*) is curved and the handle (*capulus*) consists of two metal plates that leave a void in the middle. They are decorated with engraved linear lines and two x-shapes on the handle.
Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 94; Pavolini 1991, fig. 91; Descoeudres 2001, 420, cat. X.1. Cf. Riha 1986, 25, strigil type B, with rectangular, separate handle.
2) Inv. 4473 (L. 25.5, w. max 2.3 cm, point broken). The blade is shorter, and the rectangular, solid handle is incised and dotted with geometric guilloche decorations. The handle has an elliptical hole for suspension and is decorated with mouldings.
Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 94; Pavolini 1991, fig. 91; Descoeudres 2001, 420 Cf. Riha 1986, 24, strigil type A, with rectangular handle, fused in one piece.

See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 281. [R.B.]

88. Unguent bottle, *aryballos* (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3575.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 7.9, diam. rim 3, diam. foot 2.6, diam. max 6.7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), room 15.
Condition: Intact. Suspension chains broken.
Date: First–third century CE.

The globular bottle has a low ring foot, narrow neck and wide thickened lip. It has two small ring handles at the neck, with single ringlets of the suspension chains still attached. It is decorated with three groups of five raised, concentric circles; in between the circles, there are two smaller circles filling in the spaces between the larger circles. This kind of round *aryballos* was already one of the symbols of athletes in classical Greece and continued to be used in Rome (*ampulla olearia*). The narrow mouth with brimmed lip was well suited for applying the oil to the skin drop by drop and transporting valuable scented oils to the *palestra*. The bottle would be attached by a chain to a carrying ring that also held the rest of the bathing kit.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1915a, 252, cat. 5, fig. 11; Calza 1915b, 169, fig. 42, 7; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 94; Pavolini 1986, 220, fig. 91; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 153-54; Descoeudres 2001, 420, cat. X.3. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 281. [R.B.]

89. Cosmetic jar (*pyxis*) (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4306.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: H. 3.6, diam. rim 2.9, diam. base 3.4, th. 0.4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, missing base and lid.
Date: First–second century CE.

The exterior of the cylinder is carved with relief decorations; the inside is left as a natural bone surface. Small cylindrical jars were used to store cosmetic creams and medicinal ointments. The engraved images are related to the world of Venus. Amor, armed with a sword and shield, is rushing towards a hare, seen partially inside an open cage, nibbling on a bunch of grapes. It has evidently been captured using the grapes as a bait. The hare was an erotic symbol *par excellence*; thanks to its proverbial fertility, it was the symbol and sacrificial animal of Aphrodite. In the imagery of classical Greece, Eros is often seen hunting rabbits, as a metaphor for the erotic quest. Hares were often gifts given by lovers to their beloveds. The armed Cupid may also allude to the metaphor of love as war, common in poetry. The grapes, on the other hand, allude here to abundance and the comforts of life and the world of Dionysus/Bacchus.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 99; Helbig 1972, 133-34, cat. 3165. Cf. numerous parallels to Amor on pyxids in Groh 1990, pl. 5.12-13. One shows a Cupid and a hare that hides behind a basket (in the Archaeological Museum of Pula), id. 80, cat. 17, pl. 7. See also the similar *pyxis* with two Cupids playing the flute, from Pompeii, MANN inv. 77589, Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 217, cat. 295, and one produced in the Palatine workhops, St. Clair 1996, fig. 6. Cf. Béal – Feugère 1983, 118-19. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 280. [R.B.]

90. Cosmetic jar (*pyxis*)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 56454.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: H. 4.4, d. rim 3.5 cm, d. base 3.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, knob of the lid missing.
Date: First–second century CE.

A cylindrical jar with straight vertical walls, grooved lines at top and bottom. The flat lid is also decorated with lathe-made circular engravings; knob missing.

Bibliography: The *pyxis* belongs to type Béal 1983, A.VI; Béal – Feugère 1983, 117, fig. 2, type 1a. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 280. [R.B.]

91. Unguent bottles (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Glass.
Provenience: Ostia.

1) inv. 5158 (H. 10.4, diam. rim 4.4, diam. base max 5.8 cm, intact). A perfume bottle of the 'candlestick' type with disc shaped body of thick green glass, second century CE, inv. 5158 (Isings 1957, f. 82 a 2, De Tommaso 1990, f. 34, cf. Vessberg 1956 type III).
2) inv. 5161 (H. 15.5, diam. rim 3.8, diam. foot 9.5 cm, intact). A 'candlestick' *unguentarium* with bell-shaped body and high conical neck (Isings 1957, f. 82 a 1, De Tommaso 1990, f. 53, Vessberg 1956 type IV, inv. 5161, 2nd century CE). A parallel to the bottle has been found, for example, in a female tomb with rich toiletries datable to the mid-second century CE found in Callatis (Mangalia), belonging to an elite woman, probably a priestess, probably produced in that area, although the form was produced also in the Eastern Mediterranean (Radulescu – Coman – Stavru 1973; Chiriac – Botan 535).
3) inv. 5162 (H. 18.2, diam. rim 4.9, side foot 3.7 cm, intact). Glass bottle of rectangular shape, inv. 5162 (so called Mercury bottle, Isings 1975, f. 84, second century CE, possibly from the Rhine area), used also for medical preparations like *collyrii* for the eyes.
4) inv. 5602 (H. 8, diam. rim 1.7, diam. body 1.5 cm, intact). Drop-shaped glass bottle of the form Scatozza 1986, f. 47, used for powdery substances like eye-liners, see Ciarallo 2004, inv. 5602 (1st century CE). See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 280. [R.B.]

92. Tweezers (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4246.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 7.6, w. opening 1.3, w. arm max 1, w. arm min. 0.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Insula dei Dipinti (I, IV, 4), September 1919.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First–second century CE.

The tweezers are made by bending a metal band, forming a ringlet at top. The arms become larger towards the tips, which are turned inwards. Tweezers were common objects in Roman households, where the more simple examples were used for small cosmetic and medicinal needs.

Bibliography: This very common example belongs to the cosmetic tweezer type G of Riha 1986, 37. For the same type in medical *instrumentaria*, see Bliquez 1994, 61. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-85. [R.B.]

93. Spoon (Pl. 2)



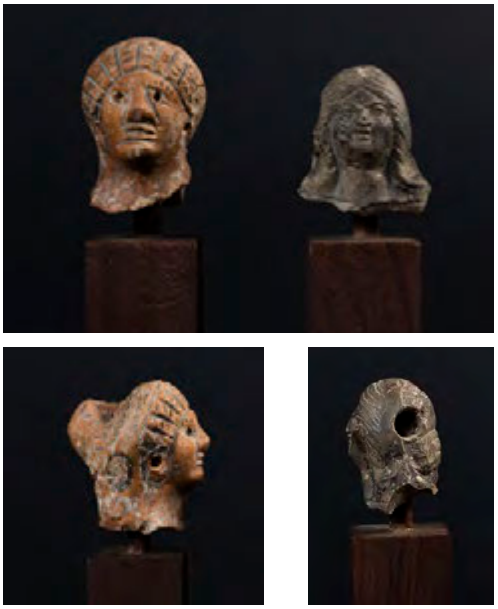
Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4239.

Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 17.8, w. spoon 3, w. handle 0.4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial era.

The spoon has a 'violin-shaped' bowl with small lateral wings at the junction with the handle; the handle ends in a sharp point. Spoons were versatile objects that were useful both in dining and for cosmetic purposes. The pointed end of the handle was also used in both dining and cosmetic operations.

Bibliography: Cf. a spoon of similar shape in Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 181, cat. 44 (Antiquarium Comunale di Roma, inv. AC 1935). See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 280. [R.B.]

94. Two heads of female figurines



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Terracotta.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Both broken at neck, body missing.
Date: Second–third century CE.

These two fragmentary statuettes depict women portrayed with the hair fashion of the second and third centuries CE.

1) Inv. 3246 (H. 4.5, w. 3.2, depth 4.3 cm, end of the first–beginning of the second century CE). The head is made of reddish clay with traces of glossy slip. The coiffeur is high at the forehead, vertical and horizontal incised lines define the rows of curls that compose it. At the back, the hair is gathered in a wide bun. The pupils of the figure are rendered as holes made by a pointed tool, the eyebrows are marked by small parallel lines. At the ears, there are two pierced holes.
2) Inv. 3247 (H. 3.8, w. 3.4 cm). The head is made of brown clay and covered by dark slip. The facial features and locks of hair have been defined by a pointed tool. The hairdo resembles the styles of Empresses of the third and fourth centuries CE, the so-called Scheitelzopf hairstyle, in which the wavy hair is brought down to the shoulders as a stiff panel, and then collected at the back of the hair as a a loose vertical chignon.

Bibliography: See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 282-84. [R.B.]

95. Hairpin (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4300.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. (extant) 8.3, w. 2.3, th. stem 0.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The stem is broken and its point missing.
Date: Second half of the first century CE.

This hairpin has the decorated finial in the form of a female bust. The figure is set on a small rectangular plinth, moulded by four superimposed lists. The woman's dress is indicated by a few diagonal engraved lines. The hairdo is high and composed of superimposed rows of curls, which date the piece to the Flavian era. The type gains popularity among the stock figures on bone hairpins from the end of the first century CE onwards. Although the woman might sometimes be interpreted as Venus herself, as a rule, the emphasis on the contem-

porary style of her hair fashion show that it was rather the woman who owned and used the pin that was portrayed.

Bibliography: The hairpin finials in the form of a female bust are among the most common decorative types, Béal 1983, 221; 235: type A XXI 8; Riha 1990, 97, type 12.1.1; in particular inv. 1360, pl. 40. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-85. [R.B.]

96. Hairpin (Pl. 1)

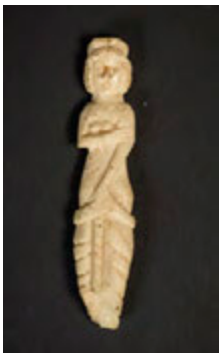


Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4301.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. (extant) 7.8, w. max 1, th. stem 0.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The pin is broken and the point missing.
Date: First-second century CE.

The finial is decorated by a bust, the head with short hair and torso with a sleeved tunic. Although it is rendered very rudimentarily, it seems to portray a young boy rather than a woman or girl, as would be usual. The matron who used it may have emphasised that her children were her 'jewels', like the famous Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi.

Bibliography: See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-85. [R.B.]

97. Venus-shaped handle (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4316.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. (extant) 8.1, w. 1.6, th. 0.7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The object is broken at the base.
Date: Second-third century CE.

The handle depicts Venus rising from the bath half-nude, modestly covering herself with her hands, enveloped in a mantle from the waist down. Such a pose, Venus *Pudica*, is known from several large marble sculptures, like the Capitoline Venus. This object is flat on the underside. It is missing its lower part, which may have been formed as a bone spatula. It may conceivably also have been a toilet knife handle, with attached metal blade, to which parallels are known from the Northern Empire.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 98; Helbig 1972, cat. 3165. For knife handles in the form of Venus *pudica*, see Fries 2008, 36, cat. 15 (completely nude, and carved also on the back side); Pearce 2020. From Ostia, another similar handle in the shape of a nude Venus *pudica* has also been found, inv. 4315. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 284. [R.B.]

98. Mirror frame (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4182.
Material: Lead.
Dimensions: H. 5.7, w. 5.8, th. 0.2, diam. of the circular hole 4.6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Casa di Diana.
Condition: Frame intact, apart for some flaking at the inner, circular margin; glass missing.
Date: Second half of the second century-beginning of the third century CE.

Four Bacchic heads are depicted on the four corners of the square, mouldmade lead frame – these appear to be Dionysus/Bacchus with a *thyrsus* (upper left corner), two sileni or Papposilens and Pan with the crooked staffs (*pedum*). The underside is smooth. The mirror originally had a very small, convex glass lens at its centre. Such mirrors are most widespread in the Danube region, and were

probably produced in the Southern Carpathian area, close to the local lead ore deposits.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1914, 254, fig. 3; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 96. The mirror belongs to type XV of Fitz 1957. It has direct parallels found in Aquileia, Ravenna and Motto (Aemilia), see, for example, Corti 2015, 190-91, fig. 3 and Buora – Magnani 2015, 21, cat. 32-33, pl. VI with further references. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-85. [R.B.]

99. Mirror frame (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4180.
Material: Lead.
Dimensions: H. 9, w. 8.5, th. 0.2-0.3, diam. of the circular hole 4.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Handle broken, on the back side spikes for attaching the glass bent or broken.
Date: Fourth century CE.

The round mirror frame is made of lead and decorated with two circles of raised relief dots. The inner circle is also the stem of a olive wreath in herring-bone pattern. The attachment for the handle, fragmented, survives. On the backside, bent pins for attaching the glass disc. There is a *Chi Rho* symbol, or Christogram, at the upper edge of the mirror, which indicates that the owner was a Christian. Although short Greek or Latin texts referring to the beauty of the user of the mirror are frequently found on similar mirrors, Christian symbols are rare. Hooks used to attach the convex mirror glass can be seen at the reverse side. Such mirrors were most widespread in the central-oriental parts of the Empire, and Northern Italy.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 96. For mirror frames with similar raised dots, also on the exterior set as rays, cf. an example from the Via Nomentana and another from the Gorga collection, Rome, see Messineo 1999, 120-21, fig. 20 and 23a. For mirror frames with a similar herring-bone pattern, though without the dots, see Baratta 2015, 266, cat. 1, fig. 1; *ead*. 2016, 72, fig. 2 a and 3 a. For augural texts on late antique mirrors, see Németh – Szabo 2010. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 284-86. [R.B.]

Bars and restaurants

100. Front of a sarcophagus depicting the harbour and a bar



Present location: Museo della Civiltà Romana, inv. MCR 3526 (original Museo delle Navi, Fiumicino, inv. 1340).
Material: Copy, original made of marble.
Dimensions: H. 26, w. 140, depth ca. 5 cm.
Provenience: Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 90.
Condition: Upper left angle missing, right side broken and missing.
Date: 275-300 CE.

This image, the front relief of a sarcophagus, is divided into two parts, separated in the middle by the four-storey lighthouse of Portus. On the left, a large sailing ship is entering the harbour, guided or towed by a small pilot boat. A scene from a tavern by the harbour is portrayed on the right side of the lighthouse. A bar counter decorated with a dolphin can be seen on the left of this scene. There are drinking cups on three shelves over the counter, and the arched opening of a water basin is visible at the bottom. A barmaid with a fashionable hairstyle and a long-hemmed and long-sleeved tunic is taking a cup to the customers. The woman could be the *copa* who owns the bar. Two customers, a woman and a man, are sitting at a table enjoying their drinks. The woman's hairstyle is similar to the barmaid's, similar to that of Empress Salonina, wife of Gallien. A small dog is jumping up at the table.

The image has two meanings. On the one hand, it depicts normal everyday life in the port: a ship arrives, and the passengers get to go to the harbour and relax at a tavern. On the other hand, it can also be seen as a symbolic funerary image that depicts arrival in the afterlife. A sea voyage ends with the passengers arriving in the afterlife, which is symbolised by a banquet – a common motif in funerary art – in this case held at a bar.

Bibliography: Calza 1931, 531, fig. 15; Calza 1940, 203, 351, fig. 107; Meiggs 1973, pl. XXVI, b; Hermansen 1982, 187-88; Amedick 1991, 55, 57, 72, 110,

112, cat. 87, pls. 49, 1.2; Chamay 2001, 119; Descoeudres 2001, 406, cat. VI.2; Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 211-12, cat. R63; Schoevaert 2018, 397, relief 8. See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, pp. 269-70. [R.B.]

101. Drinking glass



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5171.
Material: Transparent, greyish and thin blown glass.
Dimensions: H. 12.5, diam. rim 9, diam. foot 6.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Fifth–sixth century CE.

Drinking glass with convex, flaring walls, plain lip, standing on a foot that widens strongly towards the flat base. Drinking cups with feet, such as this one, are a fairly late invention – they came on to the market only in the late fourth or early fifth century CE and dominated until the early middle ages.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 101; Chamay 2001, 93; Descoeudres 2001, 430, cat. XIII.18. In Ostia, similar goblets have been found, for example, in the excavations of the Terme del Nuotatore (Carandini 1968, 194, fig. 192; II, fig. 206). [R.B.]

102. Pitcher



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 17839.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 21.7, diam. rim 6.6, diam. max. 13, diam. foot 5.
Provenience: Via Laurentina necropolis, the Claudii tomb, in the well of tomb 33, 1955.
Condition: A part of the rim is broken and missing.
Date: Fifth–sixth century CE.

This pitcher, with low foot, oval body, and cylindrical neck, is an example of simple utilitarian ceramics – unglazed and featuring only a simple line decoration consisting of undulating parallel lines on the shoulder, and, above, groups of superimposed short horizontal lines. Pitchers like this were used to serve water and wine. To judge also from the clay, this model was produced in Africa.

Bibliography: Pavolini 2000, 136-37, cat. 60, fig. 35; Descoeudres 2001, 431, cat. XIII.21. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, p. 69, n. 16, and p. 70. [R.B.]

103. Pitcher





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5556.
Material: Terracotta (clay 10 YR 7/3 very pale brown, surface opaque slip 10 YR 3/1 very dark gray).
Dimensions: H. 19.8 cm, diam. rim 6, diam. max. 16.7, diam. base 7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Mouth partially broken, nose and right ear missing.
Date: Second–third century CE.

This pitcher, another example of coarse utilitarian ceramics, is decorated with a stylised face. Bits of clay were used to shape eyes, eyebrows, a mouth, a chin, ears and a nose for the pitcher; the nose later fell off. Face vases like this, and even more frequently, drinking cups decorated with faces, became common in the first century CE. They do not seem to have had any particular symbolic meaning, being chiefly humorous in nature.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 65-72. [R.B.]

104. Fork (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4224.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 14.8, w. 1.4, th. 0.2 cm.
Provenience: Near the theatre, on the west side, 10.-15.2.1913.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late Imperial age.

The fork has two pointed pins. At the joint with the handle they bend to form a semicircle. The handle is decorated with convex and raised alternating rings, and ends in a rounded knob. Forks were not among the eating utensils used in classical Antiquity. Food was cut into bite-sized pieces in advance and served in small bowls and on plates. It was eaten with fingers or, occasionally, with a spoon. This two-pronged fork is thus rare and of uncertain date. An alternative interpretation offered by some researchers is that it is a medical implement, a pair of sharp-tipped forceps to extract polyps from the nose.

Bibliography: NSc (Vaglieri) 1913, 134; Descoeudres 2001, 431, cat. XIII.24. Two parallels in the Antiquario Comunale of Rome have very similar form and decoration and are identified as forks, see Parisi Presicce *et al*. 2015, 181, cat. 50-51. For the medical uses, see Milne 1907, 83-84; Bliquez 1988, 79. [R.B.]

105. Spoon (Pl. 1)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4463.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: L. 16.2, l. bowl 6.6, w. bowl 4, th. handle 0.4-0.6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I III, 1), 1-6.6.1914.
Condition: Intact, deformation at the left side of the bowl, corroded at places with brownish patina.
Date: Second–third century CE.

The spoon has an elliptical bowl. An image of a shell is engraved on the interior of the bowl. The handle has a circular section, ending in disc topped by a globular knob; at the junction with the bowl, the handle makes a rounded step, and has a rectangular section. Spoons were used to eat many dishes typical of the Roman diet, soup and porridge as well as shellfish, as well as for cosmetic purposes.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 431, cat. XIII.25. Cf. late Imperial spoons with similar traits in Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 181, general form: cat. 49 (Antiquarium Comunale di Roma, inv. 13902), stepped junction: cat. 45 (Antiquarium Comunale, inv. AC 1937). For spoons in general, Allison 2006, 36-37. [R.B.]

106. Knife blade



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4618.
Material: Iron.
Dimensions: L. 29, w. 4.3.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Corroded on all surfaces.
Date: Uncertain.

The wide blade narrows to the tip and has convex sides; one is dented. Originally the handle may have been of wood. This large knife was probably used to cut meat or bread.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 431, cat. XIII.26. [R.B.]

107. Terra sigillata plate





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 14257.
Material: Terracotta.

Dimensions: H. 3.6, diam. rim 13.9, diam. foot 13.9 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Aula di Marte e Venere.
Condition: Recomposed of fragments, a piece of rim missing.
Date: Mid-Augustan Age.

This plate is of particular interest because of the rectangular signature stamp on it. It includes both the name of the slave who made the plate, *CHRESV* > Chrestus, and the genitive form of the owner's name, *RASINI*. Rasinius is one of the most well-known early producers of ceramics from Arretium, and the city itself is the most famous terra sigillata production site. Throughout the first century CE, the sigillata ceramics made in Italy (in Arezzo, Pisa and Pozzuoli) were the highest-quality tableware of the era and also an important export product. They were transported everywhere, not only in Italy but also throughout the entire empire, often as light supplementary cargo in cargo ships.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 410, cat. VII.19. The form of the plate is *Conspectus* 4.4. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 66-68. [R.B.]

108. Terra sigillata plate



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4837.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: Diam. rim 14, diam. foot 7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, *Giornale*: "nella strada che segue la base del monumento funerario in travertino fuori Porta Marina, lato N del Decumano" pendula, July 1939.
Condition: Pieces missing at rim; reconstructed.
Date: 50-100 CE.

The low bowl or plate stands on a ring foot, has rounded walls and a slightly out-turned rounded rim. In the mid-first century CE, ceramists from Italy started to move to other parts of the empire and to establish competing production centres. The most important ones were the workshops founded in Gaul in what is now Southern France. This plate represents a rare and unusual experiment in the Gaulish potteries: a marbled surface with curls created by mixing red and light-coloured clay slips. It features a maker's mark, *CALV F(...)*. This probably refers to a producer named Calvus, who is known to have worked in the largest production centre in France, La Graufesenque. It is possible that this plate was among those brought to Ostia as supplementary cargo in a Gaulish cargo ship.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 410, cat. VII.21. The form is Dragendorff 18. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, p. 67. [R.B.]

109. African sigillata bowl



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 16627.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: Diam. rim. 16 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: 100-160 CE.

The shallow bowl with rounded walls stands on a low foot and is decorated on the outside, below the rim, by a raised band with impressed rouletting. During the second century CE, the production of Italian sigillata ceramics dried up, and copies produced in Africa, the so-called light or African red slip ware, entered the market. By the mid-second century, the best tableware in Ostia, too, consisted entirely of African ceramics. The slip on these products is more orange than in Italian ware, and the clay is harder and redder. The shapes also developed somewhat, there is less decoration, and the producers no longer stamped the vessels. African tableware dominated the market until late antiquity.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 411, cat. VII.26. Form Hayes 9A. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, p. 68. [R.B.]

110. Later Italic terra sigillata (tardoitalica) bowl



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5138.
Material: Terracotta.

Dimensions: H. max. 10, d. rim (rec.) 20.5 cm
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Recomposed from several fragments, most of the rim missing.
Date: 75-100 CE.

The bowl stands on a bulbous ring foot, has a marked carination on the lower body, and a wide flaring, convex rim. The exterior of the rim is decorated by multiple rows of rouletting. On the body, most of the decoration consists of geometric relief ornaments: on the uppermost row, large ovoli framed by two arches, in the middle, arrowhead-shaped elements, and below, a series of stylized figures of difficult interpretation, perhaps bunches of grape or horizontally depicted pitchers. Various figurative images and symbols are depicted on the lowest level below the carination. These include alternating crouching Cupids, bearded theatre masks, female busts with raised hand and flowing vest (probably maenad) and one *plantapedis* that possibly features the maker's stamp, non-legible because of the worn state of the mould. This bowl represents the final phase of Italian production at the end of the first century CE. The slips are worn and have no shine, and the image moulds used were coarse and worn.

Bibliography: See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 66-67. [R.B.]

111. Corinthian sigillata cup



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5667.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: Diam. rim 7, diam. foot 3.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The base and about half of the vessel preserved.
Date: Second–third century CE.

A small bowl on a ring foot, sloping, relief decorated walls, and a bead rim. Such relief-decorated sigillata wares with slip of poorer quality, browner and more uneven, were produced in Corinth, Greece at the end of the second and beginning of the third centuries. The decoration on this cup is difficult to interpret, because it was made with a worn and well-used mould. It seems to feature a rural idyll: in the centre, there are two figures in short tunics among vegetation. They may be shepherds, with a sheep between them. A female figure is holding a basket on the right, and a smaller figure is reaching to take something from it. A large bowl has been set on a pedestal on the left – it may be a fountain or a vessel for mixing water and wine.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 411, cat. VII.29. Cf. Malfitana 2007, 107, scene LP. See also the article by Pavolini in this volume, pp. 71-72. [R.B.]

Commerce in Ostia/Economic Life

112. Coin bank



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3554.
Material: Terracotta (Munsell 10 YR 7/4 very pale brown).
Dimensions: H. 5.2, diam. top 8, diam. max 12.5, diam. base 8.5 cm.
Provenience: Terme di Nettuno, 191. *Giornale di scavo,* 7 May 1911: "Negli scarichi provenienti da un passaggio coperto che trovasi a nord di questa costruzione fu raccolto: terracotta figulina rossiccia. Salvadenaro a pancia a doppio coniforme riunito per la base avendo nella parte superiore un'edicoletta, alt. mm 60 diam. maggiore 130".
Condition: Slightly worn on all surfaces. The hole for inserting coins has flaked below.
Date: Second century CE.

This coin bank is mouldmade in two parts, and it has the form of two superimposed truncated cones. Its surface is without a slip. On the top, in relief, an image of the goddess Fortuna, holding a *cornucopia* in her left hand and a rudder in her right. She is standing in an *aedicula* with a triangular pediment resting on two spiral columns with stylized Corinthian capitals. Above the *aedicula*, the slot for inserting coins was surrounded by a raised board. The shape of this vessel imitates the body of a lamp, and other variant shapes included the safe-box (*arca*), *olla*, and *omphalos*. They were produced by the same workshops that made lamps and were popular New Year's gifts. Cheilik (1963)

suggests that such items may have been kept on the domestic *lararium* altar.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Vaglieri) 1911, 284-85, fig. 2; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91; Helbig 1972, 126, cat. 3154; Arslan 1997, 414, cat. V.34. NB (there is a confusion with inv. 3526, perhaps a misreading of the inventory number, in some publications). A very similar composition, quite possibly by the same hand, with Mercury inside an *aedicula* with spiral columns, appears on a coin bank in the beehive (*omphalos*) shape in the Johns Hopkins Museum. It has the maker's stamp *BASAUGU* on the rear, see Cheilik 1963, 70-71, pl. 16. From Ostia, other fragmentary coin banks have been found, one in the *omphalos* form with a depiction of Victoria inside an *aedicula* (inv. 3308). See also Graeven 1901 and Corda 2013 on Roman coin banks. [R.B.]

113. *Sestertius* coin



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 18.M428-2.04.
Material: Bronze/copper alloy.
Dimensions: D. 3.5 cm; weight 20.76 g.
Provenience: Ostia, *fullonica*.
Date: 107 CE. Mint of Rome.

Side A: Portrait of Trajan wearing a laurel wreath and a mantle over his shoulder, and the legend *Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) Nerv[ae Tra]iano Aug(usti) Ger(manici) Dac(ico) P(ontifici) M(aximo) [Tribunicia potestate] C(onsuli) quintum P(atri) P(atriae)*. "For emperor Nerva Trajanus Augustus, conqueror of Germania and Dacia, supreme priest, tribune, five times consul, father of the nation". Side B: Goddess Fortuna holding a rudder and a cornucopia, legend *SPQR [Optim]o Principi, S(enatus) C(onsultu)*, "Senate and the people of Rome to the best emperor, by degree of the Senate":

Bibliography: Cf. *RIC* II Trajan 500. [R.B.]

114. *Quinarius* coin



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 18.M428-2.05.
Material: Silver.
Dimensions: D. 1.45 cm; weight 1.19 g.
Provenience: Piazzale in front of Porta Marina (IV, VIII, 1), excavation in the centre of the area.
Date: 112-114 CE Mint of Rome.

Side A: Portrait of Trajan wearing a laurel wreath and a mantle over his shoulder and the legend *[Imp(eratori) Traia]no Aug(usti) [Germ(anici)] Dac(ico) P(ontifici) M(aximo) Tr(ibunicia) p(otestate) C(onsuli) sextum P(atri) P(atriae)*. "For emperor Nerva Trajanus Augustus, conqueror of Germania and Dacia, supreme priest, tribune, six times consul, father of the nation." Side B: Goddess Victoria holding a wreath and a palm branch, legend *SPQR Optimo Principi*, "Senate and the people of Rome for the best Emperor".

Bibliography: Cf. *RIC* II Trajan 281. [R.B.]

115. Mould for tokens, and plaster cast



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5920 + 5920 a.
Material: Limestone (palombino) and plaster cast.
Dimensions: 17.8 × 17.8 cm.
Provenience: Workshop at the east side of Cardo Maximus, opposite Terme di Faro.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial age.

The octagonal mould consists of two valves sculpted of white palombino stone. It could produce 11 round lead tokens with the legend *P*. These were not actual monetary coins (these were minted only in the capital), but rather unofficial tokens that may have served, for example, as entrance tickets to theatre or baths or property markers. Such tokens may have been distributed during public feasts and spectacles or religious events, and they may also have been used in grain distribution. They were produced and used locally. Numerous moulds have been found in Ostia.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 409, cat. VII.8-9. For similar moulds found in Pompeii, see Ciarallo – De Carolis, 1999, 195, cat. 246 with bibliography. [R.B.]

116. Lead slag



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 15732: a-e.
Dimensions: 12-13 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial age.

The lead waste consists of five branches of fusion (*coduli*) to create lead tesserae (cf. no. **115**). They retain obvious traces of metal smudging, exceptionally documenting the use of the same matrix in a tight production cycle for repeated metal fusions.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 409, VII.10. [R.B.]

117. Relief depicting a greengrocer



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 198.
Material: Italian Luna marble.
Dimensions: H. 43.5, w. 34.5, depth ca. 6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Episcopio.
Condition: The right side is broken and missing; chipping along the right margin.
Date: Early third century CE.

A female greengrocer is standing behind a trestle table with a selection of various vegetables on it. She is wearing a tunic with a *palla* diagonally over her shoulder and raising her right hand in an authoritative gesture, while the left hand is pointing to the merchandise. The non-permanent, rather than masonry counter indicates that she might be a temporary street market vendor. The exact types of vegetables on sale are difficult to interpret. On the left, there is a vessel, possibly containing beans, on stepped shelves that are familiar from Ostian bars. On the counter, there may arguably be spring onions, asparaguses and zucchini. There is also a large, rectangular wicker basket under the table; this may have contained refuse.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 21, cat. 12; Kampen 1981, 59-64, 139, cat. 4, fig. 40-41; Zimmer 1982, 222-23, cat. 182; Descoeudres 2001, 416, cat. VIII.12; Holleran 2012, 206, fig. 5.3; Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 211, cat. R62; Schoevaert 2018, 396, relief 5 (online catalogue, http://www.efrome.it/publications/resources-en-ligne.html). See also the article by Harlow & Laurence in this volume, p. 290. [R.B.]

118. Relief depicting a chicken seller



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 134.
Material: Grey Proconnesian marble (from Asia Minor).
Dimensions: H. 25.2, w. 54, depth 5 cm.
Provenience: Via della Foce, so-called chicken seller's shop, in front of the Terme della Trinacria, 1939.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late second – early third century CE.

The relief is dominated by a large counter and the female seller behind it. The woman is handing a customer a rounded object, perhaps a fruit or an egg, from a plate on the counter. Next to the counter, there are two slaughtered chicken hanging from a rack. There is also a tall basket on the counter, with a considerably larger-than-lifesize picture of a snail engraved next to it to indicate the contents. The counter itself is a cage that apparently contains live chicken and two rabbits. The two monkeys sitting on the right side of the counter are possibly pets or mascots. Two male figures are standing behind the customer and having a discussion, one of them possibly a merchant.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 20, cat. 8; Kampen 1981, 52-59, 139, cat. 3, fig. 28; Zimmer 1982, 220-21, cat. 180; Descoeudres 2001, 416, cat. VIII.10; Parisi Presicce – Rossini 2015, 211, cat. R61; Schoevaert 2018, 395, relief 3 (online catalogue, http://www.efrome.it/publications/resources-en-ligne.html). See also the article by Harlow & Laurence in this volume, p. 290. [R.B.]

119. Relief depicting a smith's workshop



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 14260.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 40.5, w. 41.5 cm.
Date: 160-180 CE.

Provenience: Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 29.
Condition: Intact, slight superficial abrasion.
Date: 160-180 CE.

This terracotta relief adorned the façade of the tomb. According to the inscription, the people buried in the tomb are Verria Zosime and Verrius Euhelpistus – probably slaves freed by the same master who then married each other. In the image, the bearded male figure wearing a tunic and an apron is working in front of a table in the form of a grinding stone (*catillus*), making a pickaxe in the workshop. The set of tools in the background are likely to have been produced by Verrius Euhelpistus, and they include mostly agricultural tools. They include, in the upper right angle, two bill-hooks, a knife, an axe, a pickaxe and a hoe, with a row of hoes and chisels of different shapes at the bottom of the picture.

Bibliography: Calza 1931, 537, fig. 17; Calza 1935, 415, fig. 4; Calza 1940, 252-53, fig. 151; Floriani Squarciapino 1956/58, 187-88, pl. II.2; Zimmer 1982, 183, cat. 117; Descoeudres 2001, 416, cat. VIII.8; La Rocca *et al.* 2012, 359, cat. VI.25.1; Schoevaert 2018, 399, relief 13 (online catalogue, http://www.efrome.it/publications/resources-en-ligne.html). See also the article by Larsson Lovén in this volume, p. 226. [R.B.]

Leisure and entertainment

120. Lamp decorated with the image of an actor



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2793.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. body 3.6, h. handle 5.4, diam. disc 10, total l. 14.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Nozzle broken.
Date: 175-250 CE.

The nozzle of this mould-made lamp with a pierced handle is decorated with volutes and it has an angled tip. The discus is surrounded by an acanthus-leaf border, and there is a small wreath near the nozzle. The lamp stands on a broad base-ring. An actor wearing a long-sleeved, decorative tunic and a loose mantle is portrayed on the discus, holding his right hand at his waist, and the left hand is visible at his waist under the mantle. He has the characteristic *cothurni* of tragic actors. He is wearing a tragic mask with a high headdress. These masks represented recognisable archetypes, such as an old man, a young girl, a prostitute and a cunning slave. Actors always wore colourful and luxurious clothes that had to be loose-fitting to make it easier to move on the stage.

According to Margherita Guarducci, this lamp was produced in central Italy, possibly in Rome or Ostia, since the analysis of a sample from this lamp shows that it was Italic marine clay, used for three similar lamps. Copies of similar lamps that were made in the area of modern Tunisia have a brown glazing. The lamp may have been made in the workshop of *Aeoli*, and eight names of lamp-makers emerge from the other products of

this lamp group, *Augendus, Carpamus, Macellus, Mauricus, Ninus, Possessor, Pullaenus* and *Revocatus*. Guarducci sees the acanthus rim, the small wreath above the nozzle, and the agonistic motifs on the disk as evidence for their connection to the games, of music, poetry, drama, gymnastics and horse racing.

Bibliography: Guarducci 1982, no. 7, 107-08, 110, n. 20, 111, 127-30, pl. 49, 1-4: she linked this lamp together with 50 lamps to the workshop of *Aeoli* that was active both in central Italy, Rome or Ostia, and in Africa, and created this lamp type for the celebration of *Neronia* in 60 CE in Italy. Guarducci suggests that the production in Africa started later, in the second century CE, see pp. 128-30. Cf. Bailey 1988, Q 1718, pl. 15, with a similar rim pattern and nozzle, dated to 175-250 CE (discus decorated with a victorious athlete), from the workshop of Possessor. See also the articles by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 124, 213-14, 295-96. [A.K.]

121. Decorative mould with three actors



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3532.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 13, w. 17.5 cm.
Provenience: House of the Dolia, 1906.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

This mould has three actors depicted in relief. The crouching female figure on the right is wearing a loose tunic, a mantle and a tragic mask that includes an *onkos*, a high theatre headdress wig. The woman is crying and drying her eyes on the hem of her mantle. Another female figure in a tragic mask is standing in the middle. On the left is a comical pot-bellied male figure who is seemingly strangling himself with his scarf. The scene has been interpreted as belonging to Euripides's tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Following Greek tradition, theatre actors were all men, who played both male and female roles.

Bibliography: NSc (Pasqui) 1906, 368, fig. 10; Floriani Squarciapino 1954, 85-86, pl. XVIII; Descoeudres 2001, 423, cat. XI.7. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 295-96. [A.K.]

122. Mould depicting an animal fighter

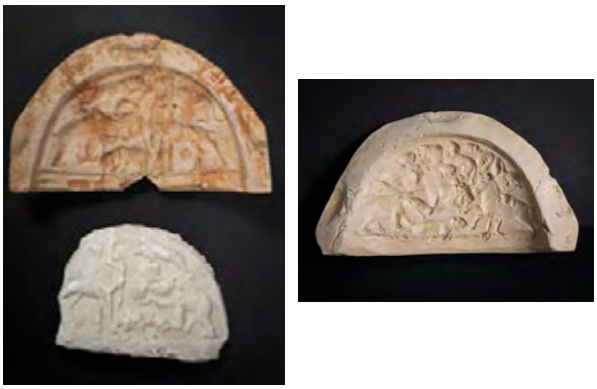


Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3531.
Material: Terracotta mould; gypsum cast.
Dimensions: H. 11, w. 17 cm.
Provenience: House of the Dolia, 1916.
Condition: Intact, some flaking at edges.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

This mould depicts a bear fighting a *bestiarius*, an animal fighter. The fighter is wearing a helmet that covers the head and neck, a leather tunic, and arm and shin guards.

Bibliography: NSc (Pasqui) 1906, 326-63, fig. 4; Floriani Squarciapino 1954, 89, cat. 11, pl. XIX, 3; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 87; Helbig IV, cat. 3148; Descoeudres 2001, 424, cat. XI.9. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 300. [A.K.]

123.-124. Moulds depicting fighting animals, and their casts



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3705, 3714.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: See below.
Provenience: Caseggiato dei Dolii (I, IV, 5).
Condition: See below.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

Hunting shows featuring exotic animals and fights between different animals were both popular forms of entertainment in amphitheatres. They were often held in arenas before the gladiator fights. No amphitheatre has been uncovered in Ostia, but many animals passed through there on their way to Rome.

1) inv. 3705 (h. 11.5, w. 18 cm. Intact) Mould features three leopards attacking a giraffe, targeting its neck and back. An elephant is fighting two panthers in the other half of the image.
Bibliography: NSc (Pasqui) 1906, 363, cat. Fig. 5a; Floriani Squarciapino 1954, 91, pl. XX.2; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 87; Helbig 1972, 3148; Descoeudres 2001, 424, cat. XI.10.

2) inv. 3714 (h. 11.5, w. 18 cm). Mould features, at its corners, a hippopotamus and a zebra (or, according to Pasqui, a wild horse). Between them, above, a lion and, below, a tiger, are about to attack the zebra. A panther has already hit it on its back with its paws and teeth. In the upper register, eight tigers are fighting each other.
Bibliography: NSc (Pasqui) 1906, 363-64, fig. 5; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 87.

Bibliography: See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 300-01. [A.K.]

125. Mould fragment with elephant decoration



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3761.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 12, (extant), w. 13 cm.
Provenience: Caseggiato dei Dolii (I, IV, 5).
Condition: The mold is broken, and recomposed from two fragments; the left part is missing.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

In the mould, an elephant is depicted, standing to the right, with typical diagonal square pattern.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 87. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 300-01. [A.K.]

126.-128. Gladiator-shaped knife handles



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Ivory.
Dimensions: See below.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: See below.
Date: Second century CE.

Such knives normally had a foldable iron blade of 6-8 cm. Handles 1) and 3) have long grooves on their backs – and were certainly folding knives. The blade of knife 2) was attached to the handle with the bronze rings that have been preserved in the handle. Such utensils have been interpreted as toilet knives, possibly razorblades, or smaller multipurpose knives (Pearce 2020). Since they are highly decorative, it has been suggested that they may have been favoured as gifts, for example for the ceremonial shaving of the first beard.

1) inv. 4302 (l. 8.3, w. 2.4, th.1.3 cm; left side missing). The handle depicts a gladiator guarding himself with a rectangular shield (*parmula*) decorated with four squares with stars at their centers. He is wearing a helmet with three visible protuberances, and can be classified as a *thraex*. The central protuberance is possibly a crest, and the ones on the side could be two feathers. On his left leg, the gladiator has a shin guard made of leather. *Thraex* was armed with a curved sword, *sica*, missing here. The identification of the Ostian specimen is, however, ambiguous; it has also been interpreted as *myrmillo* by Gottschalk 2006, 110.
Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 432, cat. XIII.29; Bartus 2010, 32, pl. II.27.

2) inv. 4303 (l. 8.4, w. 2.2 cm; integrally preserved with bronze band at base; some brown colouring from corroded iron). The gladiator, to judge by his rounded helmet with a low and rounded crest, is

a *secutor* (chaser). He has a sword in his right hand and a shield decorated with engravings, horizontal lines, possibly an image of a defensive wall. The *secutores* fought the agile *retiarii*, who were armed with a trident and a net. For this reason, the secutor's helmet has no sharp projections, since these could get caught in the net. Similarly, the eyeholes of the helmet are small, to provide protection against the trident. The *secutor* has an arm guard on his right arm (*manica*) and a leg guard on his left leg (*ocrea*).
Bibliography: Chamay 2001, 94; Descoeudres 2001, 432, cat. XIII.28; Bartus 2010, 35-36, pl. IV.26.

3) Handle inv. 4632 (l. 5.7, w. 1.9, th. 1.4 cm; left side and lower part missing) depicts a *secutor*, equipped with a helmet, sword (decorated by undulating line along edges, and a central diamond shape) and shield, as well as a leg guard on his left leg.
Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 431, cat. XIII.27; Bartus 2010, 35, 37, pl. V.25.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 98; Shepherd 1999, 140-41, cat. 30-32. For the typology of gladiator handles, see Bartus 2010. In Italy, besides the three Ostian examples only one has been found in Pisa; such knives are most widespread along the northern limes area, *ibid*. 44, fig 3. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 299-300. [R.B.]

129. Lion-shaped knife handle



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 50918.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. 9.7, w. 3.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second-third century CE.

This handle depicts a resting male lion, the large mane carved with great detail and precision. At the attachment with the handle the joining member has a stylized column capital. The bronze ring used to attach the iron blade to the handle has also been preserved. This has been a clasp knife, as parallels found in the Northern *limes* area show.

Bibliography: An identical handle (inv. 5346) is mentioned in Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 98. A similar handle in the form of a resting lion handle belongs to the collection of the Museum of Trier, though of more careless workmanship, Fries 2008, 28, fig. 5, An ivory handle of a clasp knife, in the form of resting panther found in Londinum in the tomb of a fourteen-year-old girl, datable to 250 CE, Redfern *et al.* 2017, 269, fig. 7. For more parallels, see Bartus 2007, 225-29; Major 2013, 43. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 299. [R.B.]

130.-133. Counters or other small objects



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4320, 4324, 4326, 4327.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Tokens are intact.
Date: First–early second century CE.

Three counters or tokens of various forms. Although no rules for Roman board and dice games have survived, some complete sets of counters are known, all numbered from 1 to 15. Known games include *duodecim scripta*, in which the players move through a gameboard made up of 36 letters according to the numbers they roll on the dice, and *ludus latrunculorum*, which resembles draughts.

1) Inv. 4320 (bone, l. 6.3, w. 1.5, th. 0.6 cm) is a rectangular *tessera* that features the name *Tertullis*, inscribed with small circular, drilled incisions. There is a hole at one end of the object that could be used for suspension. The object seems to be

a simplified version of the rectangular, inscribed tesserae with a rounded, perforated ending, that were used as gaming counters, but also property markers, see Rostovtsew 1905; Baratta 2019.

2) Inv. 4326 (l. 3.7, w. 0.9, th. 0.6 cm) is a fish-shaped token; the mouth, the tail and the fins have been indicated by liner incisions, the eye is drilled circular with a dot at the center. Cf. similar, slightly more elaborate fish tokens from Herculaneum, Scatozza 1989, 78-79, cat. 166 (with the incised numeral VI), 80-81, cat. 169-73 (pierced for suspension). Scatozza derives the meaning of such amulets from Oriental and Egyptian cults, cf. Keller 1913, 346. See also Lambrugo 2015, 86, 88, cat. 1, with further references.

3) Inv. 4327 (terracotta, diam. 7.9, th. 0.7 cm) is a circular, flat object depicting a comical, male theatrical mask in mould-made relief. The underside is flat. Such an object may be a lid for the filling-hole of an oil lamp, or may have been used as a gaming counter. For round gaming counters with portraits and other images, the so-called Alexandrine tesserae, see Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1976.

4) Inv. 4324 (bone, l. 5.9, w. 1.6, th. 0.7 cm) is shaped like a roast chicken or goose, with some linear grooves for details, and has the number *XV* engraved on it (*CIL* XIV 5318.3). The function of such bone markers, carved in the shape of animals (ham, fish, chicken, rabbit) and other foodstuffs (fruit, nuts), is not clear. It has been proposed that they may have been used as theater tickets, as lottery tickets in the final extractions of gifts in lavish banquets, or as tokens distributed to the public by the Emperors during various spectacles, as *sparsiones* (and called *missilia, symbola, tesserae*). However, they have also been found in funerary contexts together with game counters and dice, and sometimes pierced as amulets. See, for example, three counters in the form of a 'roast goose', found together with other bone counters, in the tomb 5 in S. Vittore di Cingoli, Lambrugo 2015, fig. 3, and 87-88, cat. 6-7, with further bibliography.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 99. See also the article by Dasen in this volume, pp. 309-11. [R.B.]

134. Game counter or a lid of oil lamp's filling hole



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4752.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: Diam. 2.7, th. 1.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, with some superficial wear.
Date: 70-130 CE.

This token may be a game counter decorated with a relief of a child. The object may also have been a stemmed lid of an oil lamp's filling hole. In that case, the lid would depict the god Mercury, holding a staff known as the *caduceus* in his left hand. The stemmed lamp-lids were made by pressing into one-piece moulds, and a stem was attached to the rear of the disc.

Bibliography: Bailey 1980, Q 1460-1461 (Type W), 402-03, pl. 92. See also the article by Joska & Vuolanto in this volume, p. 264. [A.K.]

135. Three dice



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi.
Material: Bone.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact with minor lesions.
Date: First–second century CE.

Dice with the numbers engraved as circular drillings. Dice are very common finds from the Roman world. Two of these Ostian dice are hollow, and the reasons suggested for this range from their having been used as weighted dice to cheat at dice games,

to the fact that the bone the dice were carved from was simply hollow.

1) Inv. 4308 (2.2 × 2.1 × 2.2 cm). A perforation between sides with 2 and 5 dots (the cover, with it, the central dot of side 5 is missing).
2) Inv. 4309 (2 × 2 × 1.7 cm). A perforation between the sides with 2 and 4 dots; on side with 4 points, the cover intact.
3) Inv. 4310 (1.2 × 1.3 × 1.2 cm).

Bibliography: Manniez 2019. See also the article by Dasen in this volume, pp. 309-11. [R.B.]

136. Flute



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 56432.
Material: Bone.
Dimensions: L. 18, d. 1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Broken at one end.
Date: Imperial era.

The hollow cylinder has preserved four holes, representing thus the most ancient form of flutes, *tibia*, according to Varro.

The flute was a popular instrument, usually made of bone, wood or ivory. Flute-music had a central role especially in the *palliata*, the comedy in Greek dress, and the flute-player accompanied the words of the actors. It has been suggested that the flute-player, *tibicen*, was playing simultaneously two flutes, *tibiae dextrae et sinistrae*, in Roman comedy. Literary sources mention several different types of tibiae: *tibiae pares*, *tibiae serranae, duae dextrae*, and *tibiae impares*. Timothy Moore suggests that the *tibicines* accompanying *palliata* played separate notes on each of their two pipes. Each pipe had at most six holes, one for each finger and a vent hole. *Tibicines* also accompanied sacrifices, rites of Bacchus and Magna Mater, and religious processions. According to Albert Howard, in the worship of Cybele and of Bacchus, the accompaniment was performed on the pipe held in the left hand, and the melody was performed on the pipe in the right hand.

During the Imperial era, the flute was played especially at pantomine performances, and also in weddings and funerals. Its popularity fell with the advent of Christianity during the late antique period, but the flute became a favoured instrument again during the Renaissance.

Bibliography: Howard 1893, 4, 42-43, 47; Moore 2012, 3, 35, 48-53, 57-60, 63. For Roman flutes, see also Daremberg – Saglio V, s.v. *tibiae*. Cf. the Pompeian examples, Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 273, cat. 356-58. See also the article by Mustakallio in this volume, pp. 413-14. [A.K.]

137. Phallic amulet (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4159.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 6.6, w. 6.5, depth 2.6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, houses at the west side of the Capitolium, 31.1.1916.
Condition: Intact, but for two missing suspension rings below.
Date: First–second century CE.

The phallus of flaccid type has been cast in one piece with the robust suspension ring above. Hair has been rendered in accurate relief curls. Glans and sides are pierced for the suspension of three separate rings. The suspension rings of this amulet indicate that it was part of a larger object. It may have been part of a lamp that had amulets and bells hanging from it. It may also have been part of a horse harness, for instance. Phalluses of similar form, without suspension rings, have also been interpreted as anatomical votives.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 95; Pavolini 1978, 40. For a less elaborate parallel of a similar general shape, see Mercando – Zanda 1998, 161, cat. 375, pl. CXIV. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 314-15. [R.B.]

138. Phallic amulet (Pl. 2)



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3958.

Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 4.9, w. 6.3, th. 0.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: The central phallus and the two suspension rings below have been broken.
Date: First–second century CE.

The object was cast as one piece, including four ringlets for suspension of further elements, one above and three below. Its general form refers to a crescent. To the left, a hand in the aggressive or averting gesture of *manus impudica*, with the thumb between the index and middle fingers. This was a rude gesture that referred to female genitalia. On the right, an erect phallus, and at the centre, a flaccid one. In old archive photographs the latter element is still present, but has since been lost. As an amulet, the effect of both the *phalli* and the gesture was to shock and repel the evil eye. Such a charm could be used as single amulet, for example on animals, and similar elements belong to lamp-*tintinnabula*.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 95; Pavolini 1978, 40. Cf., for example, a similar piece as part of such lamps found in Pompeii: in Caupona di Asellina, hanging between an ithyphallic dwarf and a bell, Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli 1990, 270, cat. 55, 190, fig. 161; Ciarallo – De Carolis 1999, 269, cat. 351. Together with cosmetic utensils in House I 10, 8 in Pompeii, see Allison 2006, 228, cat. 1724, fig. 48.6, pl. 107.12, with further bibliography. See also Bolla – Tabone 1996, 268, B50. See also the article by Berg in this volume, pp. 314-15. [R.B.]

139. Erotic relief in a chestnut half carved from ivory





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4329.
Material: Ivory.
Dimensions: H. 1.5, l. 3.7, w. 2.8 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First – second century CE.

From one side, this object is similar to a real nut in appearance, size and colour, and could be mistaken for a real one. When it is turned around, however, you can see an erotic image engraved inside. The image depicts a woman on top of a man in a position known as *Venus pendula aversa*. Amulets in the shape of a whole walnut, made from rock crystal and amber, are relatively common without engravings.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 99. Cf. three similar nuts, with different sexual positions, in the Christie's New York (17 December 1998) auction catalogue, nos. 76-78, dating to the first–second century AD, but without information about the provenance. Two of the objects are now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, inv. L 2000.1.5.1-2. Quite close parallels are also two amulets in the form of an almond, carved in bone, found in Herculaneum (inv. 2584, 2587): one has a *symplegma* with a *mulier equitans* on the inside, the other shows the exterior shell of the almond, with the engraved numeral *XII*, perforated for suspension. Their exact find spot in 1969 excavations in Herculaneum is unclear, possibly along the Decumanus Maximus, see Scatozza 1989, 78-79, cat. 162, 165; Varone 2000, 37, Figs. 33-34. For amulets in the form of whole walnuts carved in rock crystal, from Pompeii, with further bibliography on nut-shaped amulets in Roman funerary contexts, see d'Ambrosio – De Carolis 1997, 54-55, cat. 153, cat. 157, pl. XIV; Calvi 2005, 50.2, 55.2; Lambrugo 2015, 88-89, cat. 10 (a chestnut with numeral *III* incised on it). See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 318. [R.B.]

140. Erotic scene decorating an oil lamp




Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2707.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 6.2, d. disc 11.1 cm
Condition: Nozzle broken and missing.
Provenience: Ostia, Columbarium outside Porta Romana, 1908.
Date: Around 250 CE.

The signature *ΠΡΕΙΜΟΥ* on the bottom of the lamp indicates that the product was made in the highest-quality lamp workshop of the time, that of the Athenian Preimos. The lamp is proof of the popularity of Athenian quality products in Ostia and Rome. It may have arrived in Ostia in the same cargo as Greek marble or Attic marble sarcophagi. This lamp is plausibly the one Vaglieri described in 1908 as "un frammento di una lucerna con trac-

cia di figura e la marca *ΠΡΕΙΜΟΥ*', found in the earth filling of a *columbarium,* possibly used as a grave gift.

The lamp has a pierced handle and a kite-shaped nozzle, the upper part of which is missing. The main part of the rim, decorated with ovules, has broken off, but the left side preserves part of the panel that decorated the shoulder. The base is decorated with two circular grooves, preserving the incised signature of Preimos in the genitive; the letter *epsilon* has the characteristic lunate form of Preimos' signature preserved in many products of this workshop. The disk motif is well preserved, deriving from a fresh mould and preserving still all the small details of the relief. It has been suggested that the finest Preimos lamps were probably made from wax moulds that were taken from metal archetypes.

The lamp is decorated with an erotic scene. The position is the same as in the previous object (*Venus pendula aversa*), but the woman is still getting into position. The woman's active role in the scene should be noted. Both are completely naked except for the wreath on the man's head and the bracelet and the armlet the woman is wearing on her left arm. This, along with the wreath decoration hanging from the ceiling, implies that the scene depicts an after-party. The erotic scene might be taking place on a dining couch that had just been used for dining. The luxurious linen and pillows on the couch reveal that this is an elite house. The couple has placed their small sandals or slippers on a small stool under the couch. This lamp found in Ostia is the only known example of this image on oil lamps, and the first example of Preimos lamps found in Ostia.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Vaglieri) 1908, 179; Karivieri 1996, 125-29; Berg & Karivieri 2019; see also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 317. [A.K.]

141. Erotic scene decorating an oil lamp



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4739.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 5.5, w. 4.6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia. Probably the disc fragment found on 25-29 June 1919 on the North side of 'Grandi Magazzini'.
Condition: A fragment of the disc.
Date: 175-225 CE.

The fragment from Ostia preserves likewise part of the shoulder decorated with ovules, and the disk is separated from the discus by a single moulding. The woman is shown resting her right hand on her knee and raising her left hand to her hair. The decoration on this lamp depicts a woman on top of a man in a position known as *Venus pendula*. The man has raised his arm in a gesture that is difficult to interpret – is it a greeting or a sign of surrender? Similar images sometimes include a text, such as *Tu sola nicas*, 'only you are the winner'. The British Museum currently has a completely preserved oil lamp decorated with the same subject in its collections. It is signed by a lamp maker named Heraclides, and it is possible that this lamp fragment found in Ostia was produced by the same lamp workshop, which operated in the area of Rome.

Bibliography: Bailey, Q 1400 (Type Q, group viii), 68, 70, 364-69, figs. 71, 104, pl. 84. Berg & Karivieri 2019. See also the article by Berg in this volume, p. 317. [A.K.]

142. Young Faun's head



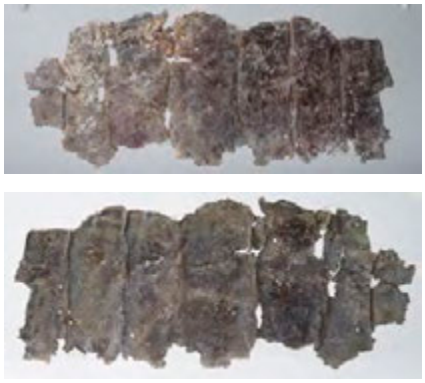
Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 97.
Material: White marble.
Dimensions: H. 27 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Terme del Foro (I,XII,6), 1927.
Condition: Some superficial damage by grooves, broken at neck.
Date: First half of the second century CE.

The youthful figure has short, curly, disorderly hair crowned by a pine wreath. From under the hair, pointed ears emerge, and two small horns are visible on the forehead. The statue may be a copy of a late Hellenistic original of the second-first century

BCE. The presence of the horns makes the figure more likely a Faun than a Satyr. Both were wild natural spirits portrayed in partly human, partly animal form, that represent primitive, intoxication-oriented wine consumption, for which Bacchus had set rules brought on by civilisation. The playful smile aptly reflects his mischievous character.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 38, cat. 14; Helbig 1972, 46, cat. 3040. [R.B.]

143. Curse tablet



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 17044.
Material: Lead.
Dimensions: H. 11, w. 23.5, thickness 0.2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Via Ostiense necropolis outside Porta Romana, tomb 11, 1954.
Condition: Fragmentary, several joining pieces.
Date: Second century CE.

Curses were addressed to the gods of the underworld and aimed at harming one's enemies for varying reasons. This tablet was rolled up, and probably placed in a tomb, as was customary, and features a curse targeting around thirty slaves or freed slaves, mostly women. The writer summons the help of the gods of the underworld and continues with a list of names. The exact curse can no longer be discerned, but certain typical words on the lines can be identified: *ligo*, 'I tie/curse'; *periant* (=*pereant*), 'let them perish'; *ocidant* (=*occidant*), 'let them lose'; and *tabescant*, 'let them rot'. To judge by their names, the cursed individuals, or at least some of them, were of eastern origin.

Bibliography: Solin 1968; Descoeudres 2001, 448, cat. XVI.27. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 384. [A.K.]

IV Religion and cults

144. Statue of Vulcan

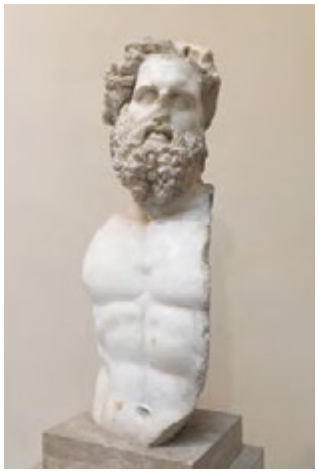


Present location: Museo Ostiense, inv. 152.
Material: Greek Pentelic marble.
Dimensions: H. 104 cm.
Condition: The left arm, right hand and the toes of the right foot are missing.
Provenience: Ostia, Terme del Mitra (I, XVII, 2), subterranean furnace area, 1938.
Date: Second century CE.

In the sculpture, the bearded Vulcan is wearing the simple work garment of craftspeople and farm workers, the *tunica exomis*. His curly hair is covered by a conical cap resembling the *pileus*, the symbol of freed slaves. He may have held a hammer in his right hand and a sceptre in his left. Although the realistic working clothes are shown on the statue, the crippled foot, deformed when falling from Mount Olympus, is not visible. The sculpture is a Roman replica of the famous cult image in the temple of Hephaestus in Athens, which had been made by the sculptor Alcamenes around 421-415 BCE. Although Vulcan was allegedly the protector god of Ostia, only a few representations of the god have been preserved there. This statue was placed in a niche in the underground furnace area of the Baths of Mithras, thus protecting the workers who worked with fire.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Calza) 1915a, 255, fig. 17b, n 17; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 30, cat. 3, fig. 12; Helbig 1972, 23, cat. 3014; Descoeudres 2001, 433, cat. XIV.2. See also the article by Mustakallio, pp. 336-37. [R.B]

145. Aesculapius, god of medicine



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 114.
Material: Copy, original made of Parian marble.
Dimensions: H. 106, h. head 43 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, area of the Temple of Hercules, in front of the stairs of the tetrastyle temple, 1938.
Condition: Limbs and nose missing.
Date: Late second century BCE.

The divinity is depicted with a nude, muscular upper body, and rather long and curly hair and beard. The head is inclined, and the hair is bound by a band. The original was composed of separately worked parts; now missing are the upper part of the head, and the limbs, originally attached with metal bolts. The mantle on his left shoulder may have been in wood covered by metal. The treatment of the face and hair of the figure might also refer to Jupiter, but they have closer parallels in figural types of Asclepios. The figure is probably in a sitting position, and may have been the cult image of a temple in the sacred precinct of Hercules, possibly of the tetrastyle temple identified as the temple of Aesculapius and Hygieia. The statue has been identified as a Greek original datable to ca. 100 BCE.

Asclepios was normally depicted as an older, bushy-bearded man with a snake on his arm. His daughter was Hygieia, goddess of health, whose symbol was also a snake. Asclepios was a deity who gained popularity during the Hellenistic period of Greece (from the fourth century BCE onwards), allegedly the inventor and teacher of healing and medicine. Asclepios was adopted into the Roman world early on under the name Aesculapius and his most important cult site was in Rome, on Tiber Island. Healing dreams were also typical of his cult: the sick would sleep in the temple, where they would either be healed or receive advice in their dreams to aid their recovery.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 36-37, cat. 7, fig. 19; Helbig 1972, 39-40, cat. 3032; Zevi 1969-70, 98; Zevi 2001, 15-16, fig. 6; Descoeudres 2001, 404, cat. V.2; Pensabene 2007, 560, 621; Van Haeperen 2019, 93, fig. 72. Similar to the torso Asklepios of Munychia, in Athens National Museum, found in Piraeus, see Palagia 2019, 88, fig. 8-9. See also the article by Mustakallio in this volume, p. 343. [R.B.]

146.–150. Sculptures of gods from a home altar

These statuettes of Hercules, Jupiter, Mercury and Serapis were found in the excavations of the Via dei Molini bakery and appear to be from the apartment located on the floor above the bakery, destroyed in a fire in the third century CE.
See also the articles by Mustakallio, Hänninen and Pellegrino in this volume, pp. 335-659.

146. Jupiter



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3552.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 7.2, l. 6.2, depth 3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), room 16, February 1915.
Condition: Intact, brownish patina and minor corrosion at places.
Date: Hadrianic, first decades of the second century CE.

Jupiter is shown as a bust, nude apart from a mantle (*chlaina*) draped on the left shoulder. The piece may have been attached to a base as a *lararium* statuette or a revetment for furniture. The god is wearing a wreath of oak, bound behind with ribbons that hang on his back. His hair and beard are depicted in orderly lines of long curls. The model of the image may be the cult statue Leokhares in the Olympian temple in the end of fourth century BCE, Zeus Brontaios, brought to Rome by Augustus.
Jupiter was the supreme deity of the Romans, a heavenly father figure whose temple, the Capitolium, had a central location in the Forum of Ostia.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Calza) 1915a, 253; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 102; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 155, n. H. 0.075; Chamay 2001, 109; Descoeudres 2001, 433, cat. XIV.3. [R.B.]

147. Statuette of the child Hercules



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3538.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 7, w. 4, depth. 2 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), room 17, 1915.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second half of the second century CE.

Hercules is depicted here as a robust youngster, nude apart from the characteristic lion skin (*leonté*) worn as a hood on the head, descending on the back as a mantle, the tail winding around the left arm. The left, protruding hand holds the apples of the Hesperides, in anticipation of the heroic quests of his adulthood. The right hand is held straight, aligned to the body, and it probably originally held the club. The statuary type is similar to the child Hercules of the Capitoline Museums (Ercole fanciullo, inv. Scu 1016), that may have stood in a temple on the Aventine Hill, where it was found.

The cult of Hercules was important and popular in Ostia, too, since it was often associated with trade sites and foreign trade – after all, he was a hero who had travelled all around the Mediterranean performing heroic deeds and meeting foreign peoples.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Calza) 1915a, 255, fig. 18a; Calza 1915b, 169, pl. XI,1; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 102; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 156; Descoeudres 2001, 433-34, cat. XIV.5. [R.B.]

148. Statuette of Mercury



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3540.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 6.8, w. 3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), room 16, 1915.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Imperial age.

Mercury is shown nude except for the mantle (*chlamys*) draped on his left shoulder. The symbols of Mercury are the winged and brimmed hat known as the *petasos*, winged shoes and the money bag (*marsupium*) he is holding in his right, protruding hand. In the left hand, the god probably originally held the *caduceus* staff with its characteristic snakes. The money bag refers to Mercury's status as the god of merchants and commerce in particular. This status made him an important deity in Ostia. The winged hat and shoes refer to his swiftness, mobility and role as a divine messenger and courier. The large-scale sculptural model has as its model the Hermes of Polykleitos with a triangular *chlamys*.

Bibliography: *NSc* (Calza) 1915a, 255 and fig. 17b; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 103; Bakker 1994, fig. 60; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 155; Descoeudres 2001, 434, cat. XIV.7. Cf. numerous similar Mercury figures found in Pompeian houses, for example d'Ambrosio – Guzzo – Mastroroberto 2004, 282, cat. IV.119; 341, cat. IV. 325. [R.B.]

149. Statuette bust of Serapis



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3549.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 12, w. 8.5, depth 3.8 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), room 17, 1915.
Condition: Intact, but for the projecting spike, below, broken at tip.
Date: Late second–early third century CE.

The bust of the god finishes below in a spike that may have served to attach the image to a base. The god is dressed in an ample *chiton* and mantle

on his left shoulder; his hair and beard are bushy and cork-screw curly. The tronco-conical *modius* headdress is decorated with a palmette in the front. Serapis was the protector of grain and the grain trade. This is symbolised by his headdress, which takes the shape of an Egyptian grain measure.

Bibliography: Calza 1915a, 252, fig. 13a; Floriani Squarciapino *NSc* (Calza), 26, pl. V, 8; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 102; Malaise 1972, 81, cat. 85; Hornbostel 1973, 281, cat. 286; Bakker *et al.* 1999, 156. See also Cat. 47. [R.B.]

150. Statuette of Minerva



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3547.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. 6.4, w. 2.5, depth 3.5 cm.
Provenience: Caserma dei Vigili (II 5, 1), 1912.
Condition: Intact, apart from corrosion on some surface details of the face, eyes missing.
Date: Mid-second century CE.

The goddess is wearing a Corinthian helmet, under which wavy bunches of hair emerge at the sides and are tied back in a knot. The chest is covered by a cuirass (*aigis*) without *gorgoneion*. Eyes are missing, because they must have been made in another material, probably silver, and inserted. Minerva was depicted as having bright blue and penetrating eyes, and the contrast of the materials could have underlined this characteristic. Minerva was the protector of craftspeople, especially weavers, but also the goddess of wisdom and learning. The inclination of the head and helmet indicate that the prototype of this statuette was the Athena of Velletri, based on a Greek original by Kresilas made around 430 BCE. This small bust has a hole cut at the back to attach it, and it may have been a furniture revetment belonging to a casket or a safe-box.

Bibliography: NSc (Vaglieri) 1912, 51; Descoeudres 2001, 433, cat. XIV.4. [R.B.]

151. Statue of the god Lar



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3535.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: H. max. 24, h. statuette 16, w. 16 cm. Base h. 6.7, l. sides 9.7 × 10.
Provenience: Ostia, caseggiato dei Molini (I, III, 1), June 1915.
Condition: There is a rectangular hole in the front side of the hem of the tunic; the attributes are missing from the hands.
Date: First half of the first century CE.

The statuette stands on a quadrangular pedestal with relief mouldings at the top and bottom, resting on four feet at the angles. It is decorated with relief palmettes and astragals, and, at the top, ovoli. The front of the pedestal has silver laurel leaves and berries engraved and soldered onto it, possibly identifying the figure as *Lar Augusti*. The items this figurine had in its hands are missing. According to Calza, when found it still had a *patera* plate in its right hand. On the basis of images of the deity, we know that Lar usually had a *cornucopia* or a wine-horn (*rhyton*) in the other hand. He would let wine run through a hole at the bottom of the horn and into the plate or into a bucket. This could represent either a kind of libation or the act of serving the wine. Lar wears here the typical high laced boots known as the *embades*, with a panther's head on the upper part. The Lares were depicted as youngsters dressed as servants: this one too wears a short belted tunic with short sleeves; a cloth has been tied at waist like a belt and fastened over one shoulder as a strap (*succinctus*). A high, up-girded hemline made it easier for servants to move around. The Lares were always portrayed in motion, in dance-like poses.

There were two Lares – guardian deities of the home who had a special connection with the servants of the house. In home altar images, the Lares usually featured as a symmetrical pair, with the image of the master's genius, spirit and life-force, between them. The master was portrayed in

a toga, making a sacrifice at the home altar with a *patera* in his hand. The cult of the Lares was associated with the hearth of the home, and worship took place in front of the hearth in connection with meals. This statuette belongs to the items that were found in the destruction layer after the fire of the building at the end of the third century CE, in the ground-floor *taberna* and bar n. 15 and 16. The statuette may belong to the upper floor and domestic shrine of the baker. The Lar may even have belonged to the compital cult of *Lares Augusti*, founded by Augustus; in fact, in front of the Caseggiato dei Molini, a *compitum* altar has been found.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1915a, 254, cat. 16, fig. 16; Calza 1915b, 171, fig. 44; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 102; Helbig 1972, 136, cat. 3168; Bakker *et al*. 1999, 156, n. 9937; Descoeudres 2001, 432, cat. XIII.30. See also the article by Hänninen in this volume, p. 347. [R.B.]

152. Lampstand with an image of Minerva, and a lamp with two nozzles



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3223.
Material: Terracotta, reddish slip.
Dimensions: H. 15.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, superficial flaking and abrasions.
Date: Second half of the first century CE.

The mouldmade plastic object combines a pedestal in the form of the goddess Minerva and, on top, a *bilychne* (double-nozzle) lamp. The stand is smoothly rounded at the back, and the front is decorated with the figure of Minerva in high relief. The goddess Minerva is standing on a low, moulded base, wearing her characteristic war helmet and breastplate, which is decorated with the head of the *gorgon* and worn over a long *chiton*. In her right hand, she is holding a spear.

The double-nozzled lamp on the stand represents Donald Bailey's Type H, with a characteristic flat oval area surrounding the wick-holes. The plain circular disk is framed by *ovoloi* on the shoulder. At the rear, the handle is broken; the broken surface, however, indicates that there was a decorative element attached to the handle.

Lamps were often used in religious practice, and they are conveniently combined with the image of a deity here, too.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1996, 86. For a similar mouldmade lamp stand, supporting a lamp with one nozzle, see Bailey 1980, Q 1101 (Type H), 237-39, pl. 39. A double-nozzled lamp of Type H was found in Corinth in a context dated by coins of Nero. [A.K.]

153. The god Attis as a child, statuette



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3265.
Material: Terracotta (10 YR 7/3 very pale brown).
Dimensions: H. 14, w. 4.7, depth max 4.4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second–third century CE.

In this mould-made, hollow statuette, Attis is depicted as a child, standing on a quadrangular, low base. He is wearing a Phrygian cap with flaps that descend on his shoulders as a cape. The cape garment is fastened on his breast with a circular brooch. He is also wearing open-fronted trousers, looped at intervals with studs, that leave the belly and thighs naked; the sleeves are long (*tunica manicata*). Such trousers, *anaxyrides,* were common among the Persians, Scythians and Amazons. As a child, Attis was a shepherd boy wandering the slopes of Mount Ida. References to this include the panpipes (*syrinx*) in his right hand and the curved shepherd's crook (*pedum*) in his left.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 91; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 17, pl. XV.22b; Vermaseren 1977, 135, cat. 425. See also the articles by Hänninen and Pellegrino in this volume, pp. 348-52, 363-66. [R.B.]

154. Sculpture of Serapis



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 1125.
Material: Italian Luna marble.
Dimension: H. 28, w. 14, depth 15 cm.
Conditions: Left hand and part of the backrest of the throne missing; some flaking along the top of the headdress.
Provenience: From a *taberna* on Via della Foce, near Terme della Trinacria, 3.3.1939.
Date: 150-200 CE.

The divinity is seated on a throne with a rectangular backrest, topped by a pediment with three projecting discs, and a diagonal cross at the back side; the front feet are decorated by mouldings, and there is a fringed cushion on the seat. Under the chair, there is a moulded vase. He has long curly hair and beard, a *modius* on his head, and is dressed in a thin *chiton* with short, wide sleeves, mantle and elaborate sandals. The feet rest on a footstool. In his missing left hand, he may have held a sceptre. The statuette stands on an elliptical plinth with concave mouldings. This sculpture was modelled on the gigantic cult image in the Serapeum of Alexandria, Egypt, made by Bryaxis, in dark stone, in the fourth century BCE.

Serapis was a deity created in Hellenistic Egypt during the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty in the third century BCE as an amalgamation of several earlier gods: the Egyptian Osiris and Apis as well as the Greek Zeus and Hades. Like Osiris, Serapis was the husband of the goddess Isis. From Zeus and Hades, Serapis got his appearance – long, curly hair and a beard – and from Hades and Osiris, his status as god of the afterlife. In this sculpture, that status is symbolised by Cerberus, the three-headed dog of the underworld, checked by Serapis's right hand by a snake collar at his neck. Serapis is associated especially with grain and the grain trade, symbolised by his headdress, which takes the shape of an Egyptian grain measure. The cult of Serapis spread from Egypt to Mediterranean grain ports in particular and was very popular in Ostia, where there was a temple dedicated to the god, and images of the deity were widespread in the cityscape.

Bibliography: Calza 1947, 17; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 45, cat. 2; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 26, cat. 2; Helbig 1972, 41, cat. 3034; Malaise 1972, 79, cat. 68, pl. 4; Hornbostel 1973, 65-66, 70, 94, 276, pl. VIII.11; Tran Tam Tinh 1983, 35, cat. 96; Descoeudres 2001, 435, cat. XIV.11; Mar 2001, 235-36, cat. 9, 263, fig. 8 a-d. See also Cat. 149 and the articles by Hänninen and Pellegrino in this volume, pp. 350-52, 366-68. [R.B.]

155. Lamp in the shape of a ship



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3218.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 11.9, l. 34, w. 14.8 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, in the drains of the *Caupona* of Fortunatus (II, VI, 1).
Condition: Integrally preserved, apart from the missing front nozzle and two nozzles on the side.
Date: First century CE.

This boat-shaped lamp has five nozzles on both sides (two of them broken off) and the lamp had originally one more nozzle in the front, at the apex of the prow. The central part of the lamp depicts the goddess Isis standing on a plinth between two spiralled columns, wearing a *Knotenpalla* dress, holding a *sistrum* in her right hand and in her raised left hand a vase from which a serpent is rising. Above Isis, in the front part of the lamp, the bust of Harpocrates is depicted, framed by an *aedicula*, wearing a lotus crown, raising his right index finger to his lips, holding a *cornucopia* in his left hand. In the rear part of the lamp, below Isis, the bust of Serapis is depicted, framed by an *aedicula*, the head turned to left, with a *mo-*

dius headdress. The lamp has two transverse pierced handles above and below the image of Isis, meant for chains that were used to carry the lamp in procession, as is vividly described by Apuleius.The stern of the boat-shaped lamp is decorated with an acrostole. The nozzles on both sides have flanking volutes and a central tongue decorating the channel leading to the wick-hole. The wick-holes show traces of burning. The two filling-holes were placed on both sides of the feet of the image of Isis.

This lamp with multiple nozzles is likely related to the launching of the ship of Isis (*navigium Isidis*), a festival held on 5 March. The festival featured a procession carrying an image of the goddess in a ship, which would then be allowed to sail in the sea. Isis was, indeed, the protector of ships and seafarers in particular, and Isis was probably the most common name for a ship in antiquity. In the maritime city of Ostia, the cult was extremely popular. At first, it was practiced by Alexandrian merchants and later by the local population of Ostia and even emperors. The heyday of the city also coincided with the greatest popularity of the cult of Isis.

Bibliography: NSc (Vaglieri) 1909, 118-19, fig. 2; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 85; Helbig 1972, 122-23, cat. 3149; Picard 1962, 230, fig. 4; Squarciapino 1962, 32; Hornbostel 1973, 307, cat. 1, fig. 328; Pavolini 1978, 35, pl. XII, fig. 2; Tran Tam Tinh 1990, 1, 773, cat. 165; Arslan 1997, 280, cat. IV.320; Chamay 2001, 111; Descoeudres 2001, 435, cat. XIV.12; Podvin 2011, NAVI(2), 92, 177, 260 (Podvin describes only ten nozzles), figs. 180b, 181a,b,c, pl. 63. See also the article by Hänninen in this volume, pp. 351-52. [A.K.]

156. Mithras sculpture





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 149.
Material: Copy, original made of white Pentelic marble.
Dimensions: H. 170, w. in front 58, w. at back 72, depth 193 cm.
Provenience: Mithraeum under Terme del Mitra (I, XVII, 2), Baths of Mithra, 23.11.1938.
Condition: The hind legs of the bull are broken, headdress of Mithras missing.
Date: Second century CE.

This depiction of Mithras shows the deity on his knees on the back of a bull, bending its head back with his left hand and just about to strike it in the heart with the right hand, which must originally have held a knife. There is also a snake on top of a pedestal, but the other animals that are typically present – a dog drinking the bull's blood, a flying raven and a scorpion seizing the bull's testicles – are all missing.

This depiction of the god Mithras deviates from the customary way of portraying him in other ways, too. The deity is usually portrayed in eastern clothes, wearing trousers, a colourful tunic with long sleeves and a red Phrygian cap known as the *mitra*. In this sculpture, Mithras is wearing Greco-Roman clothing: a simple *tunica exomis* that leaves one shoulder bare. It is possible, however, that there were originally metallic sunbeams or a cap attached to the head.

The sculpture was found in the temple of Mithras beneath the Baths of Mithras. This was not the original location of the sculpture, however, since the pedestal it was on was clearly not meant for it. The *mithraeum* beneath the baths is presumed to have been built in the early third century CE. The sculpture was signed on the chest of the bull by the Athenian sculptor Criton (*ΚΡΙΤΩΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ*). Dating the sculpture has caused debate, because some have suggested it could even be a Hellenistic original, whereas others have dated it to the first century CE and yet others to 160-170 CE.

Bibliography: Calza 1938, 307; Fuhrmann 1940, 428-31, fig. 17; Calza 1947, 30, cat. 149; Becatti 1954, 32-38, pl. IV.1-3; *CIMRM* I, 119, cat. 231; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 40-41, pl. VIII; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 26, cat. 30, fig. 8; Helbig 1972, 21-22, cat. 3012; *LIMC* VI (1992), s.v. Mithras (R. Vollkommer), 596, cat. 98, pl. 331; Strocka 1999, 312, pl. 87.1; Chamay 2001, 112; Descoeudres 2001, 435, cat. XVI.13; Valeri 2004; Van Haeperen 2019, 191, fig. 207. See also the articles by Hänninen and Pellegrino in this volume, pp. 353-54, 357-58, 368-69. [R.B.]

157. Knife handle with an animal head decoration



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4317.

Material: Bone.
Dimensions: H. 5.5, w. 2.5, th. 1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Broken at base.
Date: Second century CE.

The handle of this folding knife depicts an animal-headed human figure wrapped in a mantle. There are three protuberances on the top of the head. The creature is dressed in a close-fitting tunic with a central, decorated ribbon at the front. It has been variously interpreted as a fox, a wolf or a lion. An identification with Egyptian animal-headed gods could be proposed: in this case, rather than Anubis, the most probable identification is Sekhmet, the lioness-headed goddess of fire and pestilences. The three protuberances are the two ears and the central *uraeus*-snake headdress. Amulet figures of Sekhmet were donated as new-year gifts, for their protective and prophylactic qualities. For those who did not know Egyptian divinities, the suggestion may have been that of an animal-headed demon, commonly depicted on magical curse tablets and gems, also sometimes depicting monsters with a human body and an animal head, in particular with bird or horse heads; the Mithraic cult imagery likewise includes human figures with an animal head.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 98. For a silver figurine of Sekhmet, and references to the custom of donating the figurines, see Kalloniatis 2019, 124-25, cat. 74. For animal-headed monsters in curse-tablets and enchantments, see for example, Piranomonte 2011, 139; Franek – Urbanova 2019, 202, fig. 1-2. See also the article by Hänninen in this volume, p. 360. [R.B.]

158. Oil lamp with Jupiter, Isis, Harpocrates and Anubis



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 5535.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 12.5, l. 20, w. 14.5 cm.
Provenience: Fullonica (wool fullery) next to the Caserma dei Vigili, 1958.
Condition: Intact, except for the missing right tip of the crescent.
Date: Second half of the first century CE.

The lamp has a circular body with a rounded nozzle. A short channel connects the disk to the wick-hole; an air-hole is pierced near the channel. The narrow, plain shoulder is separated from the disk by two grooves, and the disk is framed by two circular grooves. Large ear-handles, decorated with two ring-and-dot patterns, are attached to each side of the body. The decorative crescent-shaped attachment on the handle of this lamp features the bust of Jupiter. An eagle with outspread wings is beneath the bust, holding a bundle of lightning bolts in its talons. Three Egyptian gods are portrayed in the discus of the lamp: Isis (with a lotus crown) in the middle, Harpocrates (with a finger over his mouth) on the left and Anubis (with a dog's head) on the right. Isis is holding a *patera*, a shallow bowl, in her right hand and a *sistrum*, a kind of rattle, in her left. Anubis has a *sistrum* in his right hand and an ear of grain in his left. The child Harpocrates is also holding a palm branch in his left hand.

The lamp is a fine illustration of how Roman deities, many of whom were originally Greek, co-existed peacefully with new cults that came from elsewhere. On the other hand, Egyptian gods had already been Hellenised and their clothing, for instance, changed to look more generically Mediterranean before they spread beyond Egypt.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 85; Malaise 1972a, 84, cat. 106, pl. 7; Arslan 1997, 412, cat. V.32; Podvin 2011, Hdf-Idf-Adg2.m.G(3), 86 (Podvin's group B), 124 (date: 80-150 CE), 151, 258, pl. 60. For the disk motif, cf. Bailey 1980, 31-32, fig. 28, Q 968-969, pl. 23; for a similar shape of mouldmade lamps, see Bailey 1980, Q 1093 (Type G), 233-35, pl. 38. [A.K.]

Changing Beliefs

159. Ring



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4135.
Material: Bronze.

Dimensions: D. 2.4 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, some patina.
Date: Fourth century CE.

The bezel of the ring is dominated by a *Chi Rho* symbol, made from the letters X and P – the initials of Christ in Greek. When the letters are superimposed, the resulting figure also resembles a radiating star, and the sun was another symbol of Christ.

Bibliography: Boin 2013, 39-43, fig. 8. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 375. [A.K.]

160. Lamp with the image of the Good Shepherd



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 2509.
Material: Terracotta, covered with worn, matt orange slip.
Dimensions: H. 4.6, diam. 8.7 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Nozzle broken, abrasions on surface.
Date: Early third century.

The central image of this mouldmade oil lamp, made by the workshop of Annius Serapiodorus in Ostia, depicts a shepherd carrying a sheep on his shoulders. A short, rounded nozzle, attached to the circular body, was heart-shaped on the upper surface, and a stamped sunken ring-and-dot pattern is visible between the nozzle and the disk. A pierced handle is placed at the rear. The stylised rim pattern consists of alternating vine leaves and bunches of grapes, divided from the discus by a single moulding. The lamp stands on a broad base-ring, within which is impressed the name *ANNISER*, an abbreviation of the maker's name; above and below the name is a ring-and-dot pattern in sunk relief. The quality of the signature and the base-ring show that the lamp derives from a very worn mould. Both motifs, the shepherd and the vine, may either refer to the pagan god Dionysus/Bacchus or be interpreted as Christian symbols: the Good Shepherd and the tree of life.

Bibliography: Ceci 2001, 192, 194, fig. 2. For shape and shoulder decoration, see also the lamp signed *PALLAD* in the British Museum, Bailey 1980, Q 1397 (Type Q group viii), 364-66, 369, pl. 84. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 374-75. [A.K.]

161. Relief depicting a speaker



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 130.
Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 49, w. 51 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, room from late antique period near the Temple of Hercules, 5.6.1938 (Giornale: "Zona horrea Epagathiana ambiente 42").
Condition: Intact.
Date: Late fourth century.

The figure is framed by a moulded cornice. A bearded figure is standing on a platform in the centre, his right hand raised. He is an orator, a philosopher-teacher or a Christian preacher. Men sitting at tables on both sides of the orator are taking notes on wax tablets, and there is a row of listeners at the back. The relief is a rich depiction of a lecture in which the listeners are clearly indicating their interest.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 82-83, cat. 13, fig. 43. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 378-79. [A.K.]

162. Architrave edge decoration



Present location: Original: Museo Ostiense, inv. 1883a.

Material: Plaster copy, original made of marble from Marmara.
Dimensions: H. 33, w. 48, l. 185 cm.
Provenience: Ostia Synagogue.
Condition: Broken at sides.
Date: Third-fourth century CE.

This stone lintel is from the Ostia Synagogue, which may have originally been built as early as during the reign of Claudius in 41-54 CE, making it one of the oldest synagogues in the world and the earliest in Europe. It belongs to the architectural decorations of a semi-circular apse that functioned as the *arón*. This was where the Torah, the holy texts of the Jewish congregation, were kept. It decorated the architrave supported by two columns, both topped by relief-decorated *mensolae*, which were located in front of the apse. The decoration depicts the seven-branched *candelabrum* known as the *menorah* and, on the right, a horn called the *shofar*. On the left, there is a fruit, the *ethrog*, which symbolises the fertility of divine wisdom and fairness, and a *lulav*, a palm branch. These are associated with the bundle of four plants used in the *sukkot* festival. The Jewish population in Ostia was a financially and culturally significant part of Ostian life as well as being one of the oldest known Jewish communities in the western Mediterranean.

Bibliography: Floriani Squarciapino 1961, 334, fig. 16; Zevi 1972b, 13, fig. 10 and 11; Fine – Della Pergola 1994, 42-57, 109, cat. 18; Rutgers 1996, 84-88, pl. XVIIa-b, cat. 16; Chamay 2001, 114; Descoeudres 2001, 436, cat. XV.1. For the marble, see Decrouez – Ramseyer – Descœudres 2002, 47, cat. 13. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 381-82. [A.K.]

163. Amulet





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4168.
Material: Bronze.
Dimensions: D. 3, th. 0.1 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Third–fourth century CE.

Instead of medicine, people could also turn to magic. This amulet, worn around the neck, depicts King Solomon, the legendary wise man who also possessed magical skills. Solomon is wearing a long mantle and stirring a pot. In his other hand, he is holding a round object that represents control over knowledge. Magical symbols can be seen around him (*caduceus*, scales, stars). The reverse of the amulet features the three-bodied goddess Hecate, who was associated with black magic and worshipped at crossroads at night, for instance. Hecate, too, is surrounded by magical symbols.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1917, 326-28; Calza 1920 (*Bullettino comunale* 44), 85-100; *CIL* XIV 5318; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 95; Boin 2013, 103-08. See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, pp. 384-85. [A.K.]

164. Amulet or simple curse tablet



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4164.
Material: Lead.
Dimensions: H. 5.3, w. 6.9, th. 0.3 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact.
Date: Second–fourth century CE.

Lead was an element associated with the underworld, since it was the heaviest metal. For this reason, prayers addressed to the gods of the underworld – curses – were usually engraved on lead. The exact message on this object is unclear. It has two engraved symbols on it: the letter A and an inverted letter R with a stroke. This resembles the Christogram (Greek R + X) or the earlier staurogram, which featured the letter P with a stroke.

Bibliography: See also the article by Karivieri in this volume, p. 384. [A.K.]

165. Scarab





Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3578.

Material: Green serpentinite.
Dimensions: H. 3, l. 8.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia.
Condition: Intact, apart from scratching on all surfaces; the centre of the base, with text, has been abraded.
Date: Imperial era.

Although Egyptian cults were popular, religious objects imported from Egypt are fairly rare in Ostia. Some sculptures made of Egyptian granite that were already considered exotic 'antique items' in Roman times have been found within the city area – an eagle Horus, for instance. It was more common to make objects in imitation of Egyptian style locally. Egyptian imagery communicated that the owner not only was religious but also was aware of and followed the trends of the rich and luxurious city of Alexandria.

This large stone scarab is a unique object in Ostia. In Egypt, while small scarabs were used as amulets, large green scarabs were placed on the hearts of mummies. The flat underside of the scarab was covered in texts from the Book of the Dead written in hieroglyphs. Their function was to prevent the heart from testifying against its owner at the judgement in the afterlife. In this case the text scribbled under the scarab consists of five lines of pseudo-hieroglyphs without any meaning. This object is possibly made of Italian serpentinite, which was used to emulate the green, hard Egyptian types of rock. The object may thus be an exotic imitation produced in Italy.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 46, cat. 6; Squarciapino 1962, 34, n. 1; Malaise 1972a, 87, cat. 122; Arslan 1997, 416, cat. V.37. For heart scarabs at MANN, see Pirelli 1989, 203-04, cat. 28.73-81. See also the articles by Pellegrino and Karivieri in this volume, p. 383. [R.B.]

166. Statuette of Osiris



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3580.
Material: Green serpentinite.
Dimensions: H. 12.7, w. 3.8, depth 3.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, excavations along Via della Foce, April 1939.
Condition: Feet and top of the headdress broken; some scratching on the surface; eyes missing.
Date: Imperial era.

In this image, Osiris is depicted in a close-fitting mummiform garment, akin to a dead pharaoh. He is wearing an *atef* crown, which combines the white, conical crown of Upper Egypt with a large feather on each side; in the front, the *uraeus* snake in low relief. He is holding the insignia of pharaonic authority, the shepherd's crook (*heqa*) in his right hand, and the flail or scourge (*nekhekh*), in his left hand; the hands are positioned one (right) above the other. The back is covered by rather eroded hieroglyphic signs, among them the cartouche of *Psammeticus*, name of various pharaohs between seventh and fifth centuries BCE. Osiris statuettes were common temple offerings in Egypt by the first millennium BCE. The image is an imported Egyptian original.

In Egyptian religion, Osiris was one of the most popular gods. He was the the ruler of the underworld and the inventor of agriculture and legislation. He was the personification of the fertile floods of the Nile. According to the legend, Osiris was drowned and dismembered, and the pieces thrown into the Nile, but his sister/wife Isis revived him with her magic, became pregnant and gave birth to a child named Horus (later known as Harpocrates) in the Egyptian pantheon. Thus, Osiris was also an image of resurrection. The Egyptian ruler was perceived during his lifetime as the incarnation of Horus, and, after his death, was assimilated to Osiris.

Ostians who had been initiated into the cult of Isis must have known the story of the Egyptian Osiris. Nonetheless, Osiris was associated with other, more familiar deities who had experienced death and rebirth, such as Dionysus/Bacchus. This provided the god with an increased number of followers.

Bibliography: Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 46, cat. 5; Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 34, n. 1; Malaise 1972a, 84, cat. 102; Arslan 1997, 414, cat. V.35. Cf. similar statuettes in the Naples Archaeological Museum, see d'Errico 1989, 112-13, cat. 12.6-9, in part. 12.7, with hollow eyes, inv. MANN 185-87, 932. See also the articles by Pellegrino and Karivieri in this volume, p. 383. [R.B.]

Death and afterlife in Ostia

167. Funerary inscription of Saint Monica

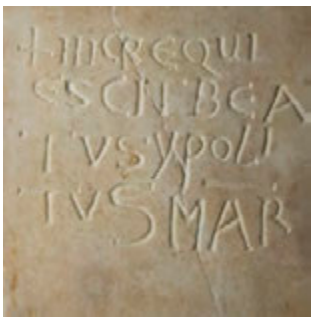


Present location: Ostia antica, Church of Santa Aurea, Chapel of Saint Monica, inv. 10732.
Material: Copy, original made of white marble.
Dimensions: H. 57, w. 61.5, th. 2-4 cm.
Provenience: Borgo di Ostia, near the church of Santa Aurea, 1945.
Condition: Recomposed from three fragments, pieces missing at all angles.
Date: 408 CE.

This text is part of an epitaph for Saint Monica, mother of the church father Saint Augustine. The epitaph was written by Anicius Auchenius Bassus in 408 CE, and it is known in full thanks to several medieval manuscripts. According to Augustine, his mother died in Ostia in 387 CE. She was probably buried in the church of Santa Aurea, near which this part of the inscription was found. The text is an important source for the formation of an early Christian community in Ostia. In his *Confessions*, the Church father Augustine emphasises the exemplariness of Monica as well as her importance in strengthening the Christian faith. It had been customary for the dead to be buried in their home region so that their relatives could make sacrificial offerings to their spirits on the festival of the dead. However, Monica, who hailed from North Africa, started a new Christian tradition and was buried in Ostia.

Bibliography: Casamassa 1952-54, 271-73, fig. 1.2; Broccoli 1984, 34-35, fig. 6; Chamay 2001, 123; Descoeudres 2001, 437, cat. XV.3; Boin 2013, 228-31. See also the articles by Karivieri and Melotti in this volume, pp. 375-76, 388-90. [A.K.]

168. Funerary inscription of Saint Hippolytus



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 32838.
Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 31, w. 29, th. 2-2.5 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra, Basilica of Saint Hippolytus (San Ippolito).
Condition: The marble slab is cracked in the middle.
Date: Ninth century CE.

Hippolytus, who lived ca. 170-235 CE, was one of the most important theologians of the early church. He died in Portus as a martyr – according to tradition, he was drowned in a well outside the city walls. A church and a memorial plaque were later erected in memory of the saint.

The short, four-line text, *Hic requi/escit bea/tus Ypoli/tus mar(tyr)*, briefly states that 'here lies blessed Hippolytus the martyr'. This was clearly a way to indicate that the relics in the coffin belonged to the famous martyr of Portus. There were bones of several people in the coffin, and on the basis of the style of the inscription, it has been suggested that the text dates to either the nineth century or the twelfth century CE.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 439, cat. XV.11. See also the article by Melotti in this volume, pp. 387-88. [A.K.]

169. Urn and its lid



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 54699.
Material: Urn: terracotta, lid: lead.
Dimensions: H. 35, diam. 30 cm.
Provenience: Via Ostiense necropolis, area of Acilia near Ostia, tomb 160.
Condition: Urn intact, lid broken at margins.
Date: First century CE.

The terracotta urn was lined with lead and covered by a flat lid made of lead.

At funerals, up to the second century CE, it was customary to carry the body of the deceased to a funeral pyre. After the body had been cremated, the bereaved would collect the person's bones and ashes into an urn made of clay, marble or some other stone. A finer urn was often placed inside a rough stone urn. The urn was sealed tightly with a lid and usually placed in the family's house-shaped tomb. Another possibility was a funerary association's *columbarium*, a building that resembled a dovecote and featured small recesses reserved for the urns.

Bibliography: Panariti *et al.* 1999, 59-60, fig. 22; Descoeudres 2001, 446, cat. XVI.19. See also the article by Mustakallio in this volume, pp. 417-19. [R.B.]

170. Urn and its lid



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 52718, 52719.
Material: Urn: travertine, lid: travertine.
Dimensions: Urn h. 28.5 diam. 30 cm. Cover h. 10, diam. 30 cm.
Provenience: Via Ostiense necropolis, area of Acilia near Ostia, tomb 297.
Condition: Intact.
Date: 100 BCE–100 CE.

The stone urn has a tronco-conical form, and a conical lid with a knob at top. There is a hole in the lid of this urn, possibly used to make a libation to the deceased when visiting their tomb.

The Via Ostiense necropolis in the area of Acilia was in use from the Augustan Age up to the reign of Hadrian in the second century CE and contains both cremation and inhumation graves. It has been suggested that the graves belonged to Greek-speaking settlers from the eastern Mediterranean, who had already been moving into the area surrounding Ostia and working at farms in the region from the second century BCE onwards. This urn was unopened before the exhibition, and the accompanying video recounts the opening of the urn. The cremated bones were analysed by Paola Francesca Rossi, who could identify the bones as belonging to a single adult female individual, including also some small animal bones from a burial ritual.

Bibliography: Descoeudres 2001, 446, cat. XVI.20. P. F. Rossi & F. Panariti 2019, video 'Lo scavo di un'urna cineraria' (Parco Archaeologico di Ostia Antica). See also the articles by van der Ploeg and Mustakallio in this volume, pp. 399-400, 416-17. [R.B.]

171. Epitaph for a murdered daughter



Present location: Ostia Deposito 20, inv. 18398.
Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 45, w. 50, th. 3 cm.
Provenience: Portus.
Condition: Intact with minor lesions.
Date: Second century CE.

Restutus Piscinesis/et Prima Restuta Primae/Florentiae filiae carissimae/fecerunt qui ab Orfeu maritu in /Tiberi decepta est. December cocnatu/posuit. Q(uae) vix(it) ann(os) XVI s(emis?)
"Restutus Piscinesis and Prima Restuta made (this monument) for Prima Florentia, dearest daughter, who was murdered by her husband Orfeus in the Tiber. December erected (the monument) for his relative. She (the wife) lived for sixteen and a half years."

This epitaph attests to the tragic tensions between a married couple resulting in the young wife's murder. However, it also suggests a strong emotional bond between parents and children.

Bibliography: IPO A, 210, pl. 60.2; Solin 1987, 124, cat. 12; Helttula 2007, cat. 321. See also the article by Mustakallio & Hänninen in this volume, p. 255. [R.B.]

172. Inscription



Present location: Ostia Lapidarium, inv. 7029.

Material: Marble.
Dimensions: H. 29, w. 36, th. 6 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Via Laurentina necropolis, 1930s.
Condition: Intact but for a fragment missing at the upper left angle and some chipping along the upper border.
Date: Late first–early second century CE.

Dis manibus / T(iti) Flavi, Aug(usti) lib(erti), Stephani / praeposito camellorum.
"To the spirits of the dead. For Titus Flavius Stephanus, imperial freedman, overseer of camels."

Below the text, which covers most of the slab, two camels and one elephant are engraved in outline. The term *praepositus camellorum* is unique and fairly ambiguous, and different interpretations of its meaning have been offered. The person, who was a freedman of the *gens Flavia*, may have been a caravan manager who organised caravan transport in Africa. Another hypothesis is that the man worked in Ostia at a game enclosure where wild animals from Africa were kept on their way to the fighting arenas. A game enclosure like this near the Via Laurentina necropolis is mentioned in written sources and in other inscriptions. One inscription (*CIL* VI 8583) also mentions a *procurator Laurento ad elephantos*, the "elephant keeper" in the Laurentum area. The animals engraved on this tombstone may hint at the existence of such a game park, too. Other inscriptions mention also a *praepositus herbariarum*, keeper of the herbivores (*CIL* VI 10209).

Bibliography: *NSc* (Bloch) 1953, 276, n. 37, fig. 28; *AE* 1955, 181; Bertrandy 1987, 231, cat. 3; Kolendo 1969, 287-98, fig. 1; Ensoli – La Rocca 2001, 476, cat. 92; Descoeudres 2001, 414, cat. VII.49. See also the articles by Karivieri and Van der Ploeg in this volume, pp. 301, 401-02. [R.B.]

173. Inscription of a salt worker



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 54610.
Material: Proconnesian marble.
Dimensions: H. 31.7, w. 47.5. H. of the letters 2.8.
Provenience: Ostia, Pianabella necropolis, building 6A, 1997.
Condition: Recomposed from three fragments, pieces missing at upper angles.
Date: End of the second – first half of the third century CE.

Salinator Eutuches /Salinatori Aelea con/ iugi et Salinatori Eutu/ cheti et Leoni et Seve/ ro filibus posuit se vivo.
"Salt worker Eutyches (erected this funerary monument) during his lifetime for his wife, salt worker Aelea, and salt worker Eutyches [=himself or another homonym], and his children Leo and Severus."

The salt worker Eutyches may have worked at the salt mines pan or as a salt seller. In the image engraved under the text, three Cupids are playing a ball game. The game could be *pila trigonalis*, in which three players stood in a triangle and threw the ball to one another.

The inscription highlights the importance of salt to Ostia, since salt mines and the salt trade provided employment to many people. It also emphasises the value of the profession in typical Ostian fashion. The person who erected the tombstone was relatively wealthy. The children's ball game depicted on it can be understood as a motif that idealises the carelessness of childhood.

Bibliography: Pellegrino 1999, 90-91, cat. 73, fig. 19; Descoeudres 2001, 150, cat. XVI.33. See also the article by Morelli in this volume, p. 231. [R.B.]

174. Funerary bed decorations



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 4332, 4333, 4338, 4330, 4340, 4341, 5227, 5322, 5325.
Material: Bone
Dimensions: 3.2 × 2.1, 3.5 × 2.2, 3.4 × 3, 4.8 × 1.8, 5 × 2.1, 2.4 × 2.3, 2.8 × 2.3, 2.3 × 5.8, 3.2 × 6 cm.

Provenience: Via Ostiensis necropolis, near Porta Romana, tomba F (Tomba degli avori), 1912.
Condition: Fragmentary, some elements bent by fire.
Date: Augustan Age.

These bone decorations from a wooden funerary bed have been partially damaged by fire from a funeral pyre. Three cylindrical parts that adorned a bed leg can be identified, depicting three Cupids (lower register, inv. 4340, 4341, 5227) and two female figures, nymphs, one of whom is nude, while the other one wears a beautifully pleated outfit (upper register, inv. 4332, 4333). The bed platform was decorated with two running Cupids (inv. 4338-4339) and a rectangular plate with a griffin in relief, of which only the rear is conserved (inv. 5325). The headrest (*fulcrum*) featured a panel depicting a sphinx (inv. 5322). The Cupids here symbolised pleasures of life and idyllic afterlife; the sphinx symbolised death. Similar funerary decorations have also been found in Rome and Vindonissa, Switzerland. The decorations were probably made in Alexandria.

Bibliography: NSc (Vaglieri) 1912, 95-99; Floriani Squarciapino 1958, 14-15; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 97-98; Lenzi 1999, 64-68; Descoeudres 2001, 447-48, cat. XIV.26. For parallels and discussion, see Bianchi 2010. See also the article by Mustakallio in this volume, pp. 411-13. [R.B.]

175. Central decoration from a mosaic floor, *emblema*, bird composition



Present location: Ostia Antiquarium, inv. 36826.
Material: Stone cubes, mortar.
*Dimensions:*59.5 × 58 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, Isola Sacra necropolis, tomb 85.
Condition: Partially preserved, consisting of six fragments.
Date: First half of the second century CE.

This emblema features a peacock (*Pavo cristatus*) at the top. The peacock was the symbol of the afterlife and, for Christians, of immortality. The bird beneath the peacock, to the left, is probably a mallard (*Anas platyrrhynchos*). The aquatic bird in the centre right is a Eurasian teal (*Anas crecca*), swimming in the water, surrounded by aquatic plants and flowers. This may be a reference to the Nile and Egypt. Below the teal, an Alexandrine parakeet (*Psittacula eupatria*) is pecking at a grasshopper. The image has many kinds of references to the afterlife, possibly through Christianity or the cult of Isis. Its paradisiacally rich nature scene was a popular theme.

Bibliography: Bragantini 2005, 1158-59, fig. 3; Germoni 2014, 14, fig.; Pellegrino 2017, 50-52, fig. 29. [A.T.]

176. Mask depicting a child's face



Present location: Ostia Nuovi depositi, inv. 3520.
Material: Terracotta.
Dimensions: H. 18.2, w. 17.3, depth 8 cm.
Provenience: Ostia, from a tomb near the modern cemetery of S. Ercolano, 2.9.1917.
Condition: Intact.
Date: First–second century CE.

This mask depicting a child has two holes for suspension at the top, which may indicate that it was originally an *oscillum*, a hanging garden ornament. They were hung between the columns of porticos that surrounded gardens. The mask resembles and imitates a theatre mask, since it has holes for pupils and nostrils. Both theatre and the *oscilla* belonged to the world of Dionysus/Bacchus. The hairstyle is complex, with a hair knot on the forehead. The child has a wreath of leaves tied together with a spiral textile band on the head. This, too, may refer to Dionysus; perhaps the child may even depict Dionysus himself as a child, or Cupid. This object, however, was later placed in a grave. This may recall the mythic rebirth and mystery cult of this god.

Bibliography: NSc (Calza) 1919, 71, fig. 1; Calza – Floriani Squarciapino 1962, 90; Helbig 1972, 125, cat. 3153; Pavolini 1978, 31, pl. IX; Descoeudres 2001, 422-23, cat. XI.2. [R.B.]

Osteological research

177. Skeleton of a salt pan worker



Present location: Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma.
Provenience: Castel Malnome necropolis near Ostia, grave 132.
Date: First–second century CE.

This male salt pan worker, around 30-35 years of age, has astounded researchers. A congenital deformity meant that his upper and lower jawbones were fused together in a way that prevented the man from opening his jaws. A hole was drilled in place of his front teeth for eating, and he ate only liquid food his entire life. However, bone analyses have proved that his diet was well-balanced and rich in protein and carbohydrates. The damage to his leg bones indicates that he did heavy labour for years. He was been buried in a cemetery for salt pan workers after having died at a ripe age. The man is an excellent example of the new information provided by modern osteological research, which sometimes challenges previous ideas about the details of history. The prevailing view used to be that disabled and weak individuals would not have been understood or helped in the Roman world. However, this salt pan worker was clearly a full member of his community.

Bibliography: Catalano *et al.* 2009. See also the article by De Angelis *et al*. in this volume, pp. 433-36. [A.K.]

178. Golden dental bridge



Present location: Soprintendenza Speciale Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Roma.
Material: Bone, gold.
Dimensions: H 3.5, w. 7.5, depth 5.5 cm. Gold wire: <1 mm in diam., est. l. 100 mm.
Provenience: Collatina Necropolis outside Rome, Viale della Serenissima, cremation burial of a woman.
Condition: mandible, spanning five teeth.
Date: First–second century CE.

A gold wire holds one re-placed tooth in place in the mandible. The re-placed tooth is held in place by the gold wire that passes through a hole in the tooth, around two teeth on each side of the re-placed tooth. The mandible with the golden dental bridge was found in a cremation burial of an adult woman in a tomb of the Imperial era in the Collatina necropolis.

Bibliography: Minozzi *et al*. 2007; Catalano *et al.* 2013, 12, fig. 5a-b; Becker – MacIntosh Turfa 2017, W7, 145, 283-87, 297, fig. 5.27. [A.K.]

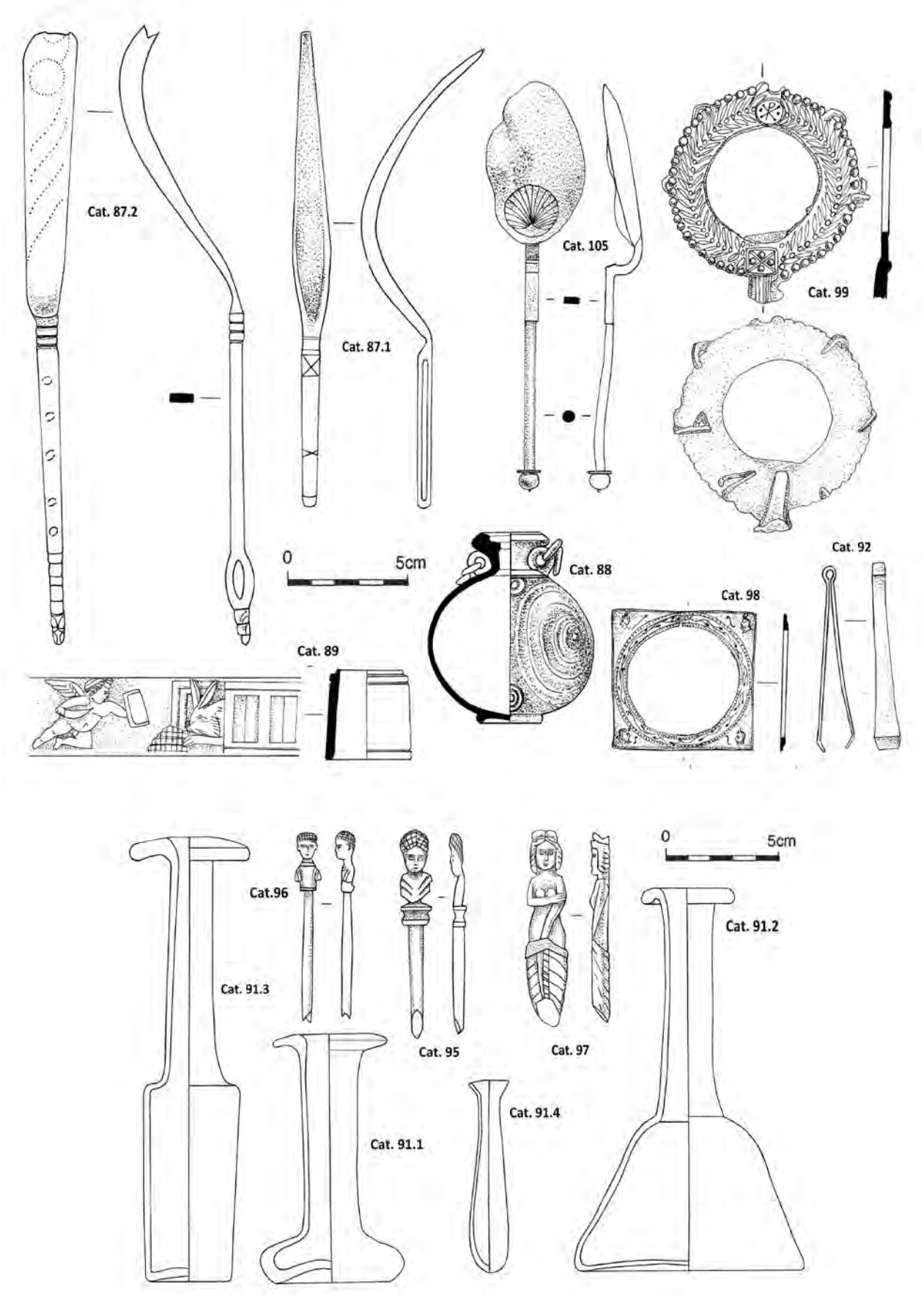


Plate 1. Toiletry items.

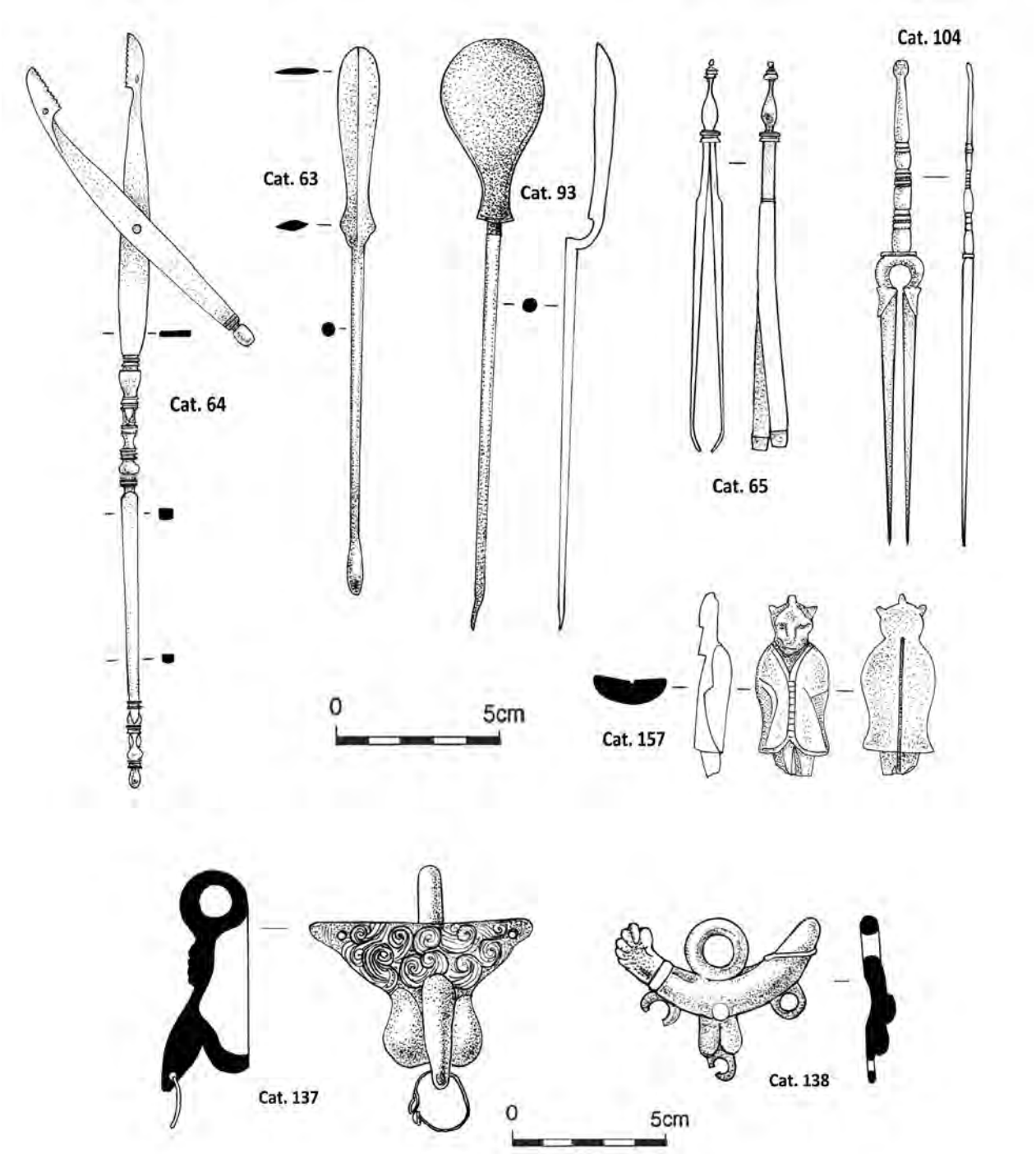


Plate 2. Medical and amuletic items.

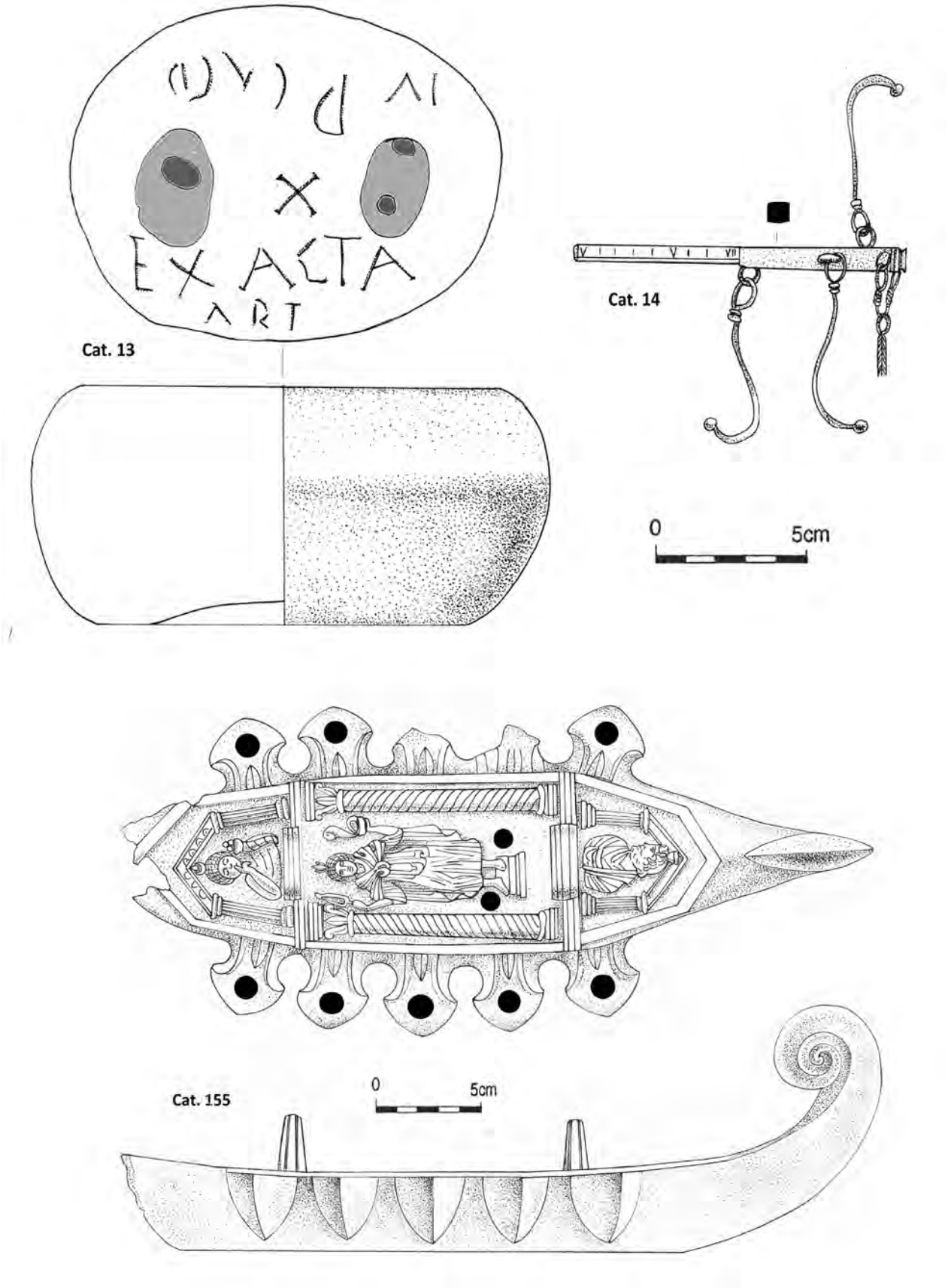


Plate 3. Weighing equipment and a boat-shaped lamp.

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Catalogue, Plates 1-3

All drawings by Ria Berg

Bibliography

Abbreviations

For the ancient Latin authors, the abbreviations of the *Thesaurus linguae Latinae, Index*, Leipzig 1990, are used; for the Greek authors, see *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 1996, 3. ed. Titles of periodicals are abbreviated as in *l'Année philologique*.

AE = L'Année Epigraphique (Paris, 1888–).

BGU = Berliner griechische Urkunden (Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Kgl. Museen zu Berlin).

CIL = Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (Berlin, 1863–).

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