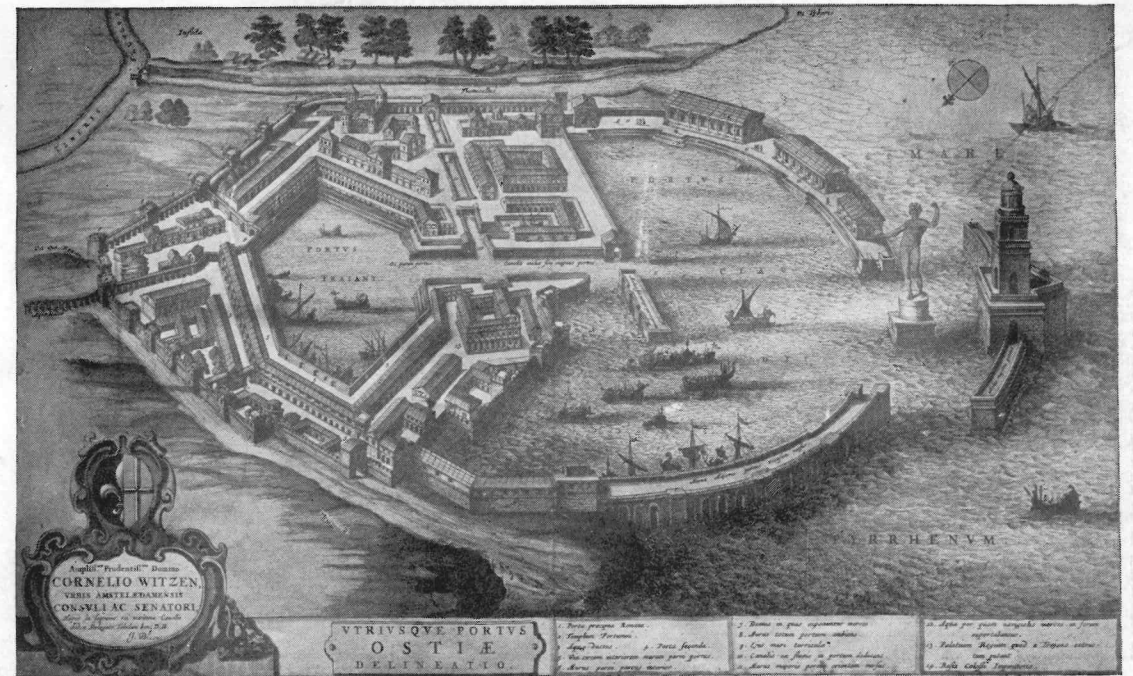


Ostia was the granary of Rome. The grain which came from Sicily, from Egypt and Africa, was unloaded at Ostia into immense warehouses, and preserved in very large terracotta vats—dolia—, until it was shipped to Rome.

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The Port of Ostia, constructed by the Emperor Claudius and enlarged by Trajan. A restoration made from a Roman coin of the Empire. The commerce of the whole Latin world flowed in this port; the larger boats were unloaded here; the smaller ones were towed up the Tiber to Rome.

A RIVAL OF POMPEII: OSTIA, THE PORT OF ROME.

By GUIDO CALZA

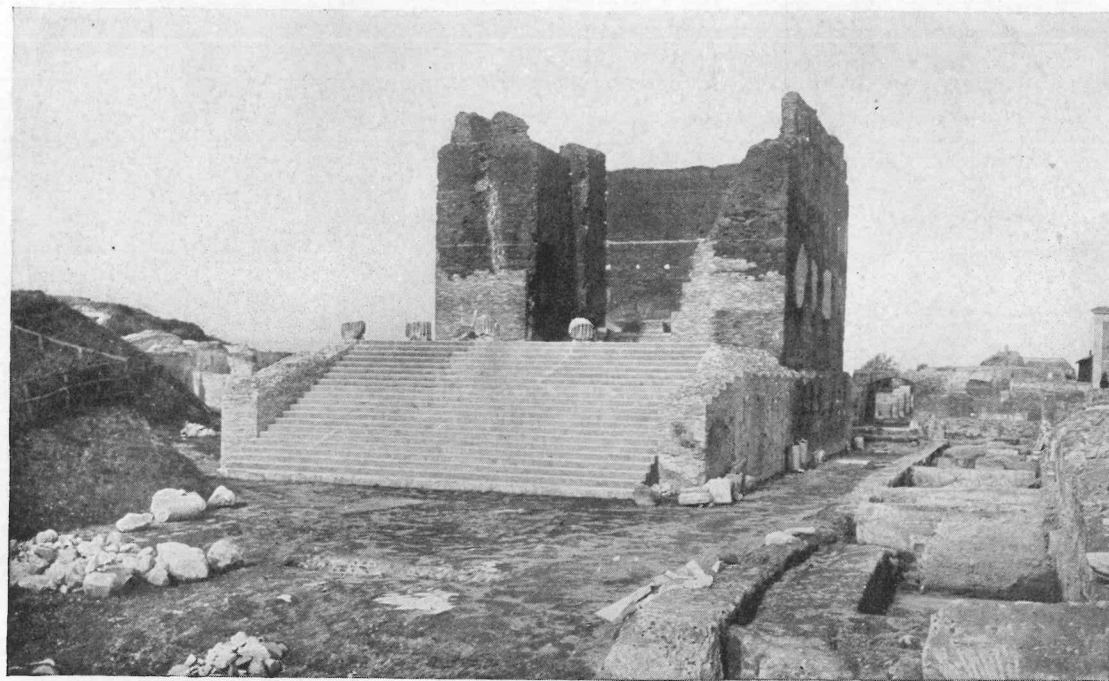
Inspector of the Excavations and Monuments of Ancient Ostia

PERHAPS no part of Italy is so interesting, poetic, and profoundly suggestive, as the desolate Campagna which extends around the walls of Rome, and which is shut in by the mountains and by the sea. Although the Alban and Sabine Mountains shut it in on the east, robbing it of the first light of dawn and of the first ray of sun, the sea—no, the sea does not shut it in, but, as if taking pity on this coast, where there is not one rock to offer resistance, the sea appears, instead, to be a continuation of the softly undulating land, only a little less immutable, and only a little more languid. These Latin waters

would seem to prolong by their deeper breathing the musical silence of that plain, which Rome has willed to be deserted by man and sterile of harvests, in order perhaps, that that Empire, dominion over which has been lost to her, may continue through the ages. What profound things this landscape narrates! Three ancient Sisters, who have not known old age, will be our guides: Poetry, Legend, and History.

Poetry says: "This is the land on which, after long wandering, Father Æneas fixed his gaze, as if asking where, on this undulating plain, Rome's high destiny should be prepared. And when the fatal prow cleaved its way be-

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The Temple of Vulcan, the largest temple in the center of the city. It was here that the people of Ostia worshipped the God of Fire.

tween Tiber's wooded shores, a cry went up from the company of heroes—their eyes still red with the flames and the blood which had made their Fatherland desolate:

“Hail, land for me predestined by the Fates!

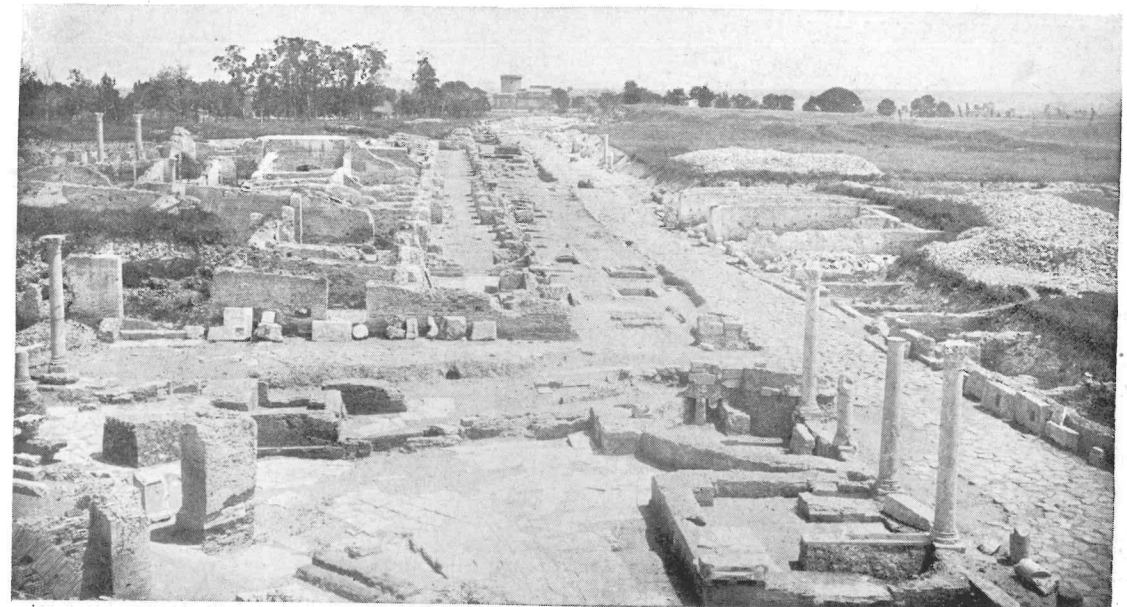
And you, ye true Penates of Troy, Hail! Here our home, and here our country lies.”

How changed these places are! Virgil described them as he actually saw them during the first century of the Empire, when the undulating plain which extends from Ostia to Laurentum, and from the mountains to the sea, appeared worthy indeed that Rome's high destiny should have been prepared there. It is easy to understand why the Poet of the triumphant Latin race designed that Æneas, the hero-founder of the Latin race,

should first behold this land fertile, smiling and happy, to which the all-wise will of the gods had directed him. Virgil saw the banks of the Tiber crowned along their whole length with graceful woodlands, splendid country-seats, and delicious gardens, and, on its tawny waters, boats laden with the commerce of the world, which spread Latin sails to the wind, and, near its mouth, a great and wealthy city, Ostia, Rome's first colony, displaying her signal-lights and asserting for more than three centuries, the rights of Rome to the Mediterranean.

To speak of Ostia is to speak of Rome because Ostia signals the first expansion of Rome on the sea and whoever recalls how great a part Rome's dominion over the sea played in history, must render due praise to Ancus Martius, who founded the first Roman colony at the mouth of the

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View of the main street of Ostia—decumanus, taken from the theatre. This street was 2000 yards long, and extended from the entrance of the city to the sea. 450 yards have been uncovered.

Tiber in order that it might keep watch over the sea. This rough and uncultured kinglet of a tiny city with a poor populace, which had not yet known a hundred years of history, displayed sane political perspicacity in giving a sea-port to Rome.

Ostia's first duty was to furnish salt; and the founding of the new city was considered so important and so auspicious for the future of Rome that Ancus Martius celebrated the event by distributing 52,000 liters of salt to the people; Rome no longer wished to see, from the heights of the Palatine, Etruscan sails floating on the river. And the Tiber soon became insufficient for the commerce of the city, just as a single hill no longer sufficed for the demands of her industrial activity. Rome, perhaps, owed the first impulse to become a great and powerful city to Ostia, because Ostia gave her a broader vision of life, and the sea a vaster horizon than that of the

Alban Hills and the Tiburtine Mountains.

Not a trace exists of the Ostia of the kings, which must have been only an insignificant village of huts; but, on the other hand, the ruins of the Republican city are quite numerous and important; and it may be affirmed from recent excavations that Ostia followed the development of Rome step by step. The commerce of oil and grain was added to that of salt.

Ostia placed herself in the service of Rome, and, by harboring trading-vessels from every part of the world, insured food for the Plebs, and luxury for the Patrician. Toward the close of the Republican epoch, the mouth of the Tiber which served as the port, was already silting-up with the great quantity of sand which makes its waters tawny.

Caesar was the first to think of constructing a real port; but the honor of the undertaking was reserved for

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An apartment house at Ostia with a marble stairway. Inside are preserved a great many interesting pictures.

Claudius, the third emperor of Rome. This port was constructed on the right of the Tiber, three kilometers from Ostia; and Claudius inaugurated it twelve years later, in 54. Between the years 100 and 104, Trajan made it more safe, and enlarged it by adding a spacious basin. The port was surrounded by arsenals and warehouses with porticoes. Its conspicuous ruins have been only too little explored, and have been, for too many years, the domain of briars and saplings, and the haunt of shepherds and plowmen. A canal was excavated, placing the Port in communication with Rome by way of the river, by means of which the Tiber flowed into the sea through two arms; between them was an island called today Isola Sacra. A road traversed this island, connecting Ostia with her Port. Thus Ostia, the real city, the center of business and life, lay on the left bank of the Tiber, and the Port, with the warehouses on the right. Trajan's Port Claudius lent new importance to Ostia.

It matters little that history tells us almost nothing of her life and development, for her ruins speak with eloquence and truth. Ostia had, in fact, all the typical characteristics of a commercial city. Built, even as early as the Republic, according to a prescribed plan, she widens her streets during the Empire, and constructs new ones, bordering them with arcades, improves her warehouses, erects dwellings three and four stories high, multiplies the number of her temples in order to welcome the gods of all the peoples, and lavishes a wealth of marbles and mosaics on these public buildings, which she has copied directly from those of Rome.

The Emperors interested themselves in her development. The aqueduct, as well as much liberality, was due to Domitian; Ostia was, as an inscription records, re-built and extended by Trajan.

Septimius Severus and Caracalla enlarged the theatre and the garrison of the Watch; Antoninus Pius re-

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Excavating Ostia. The earth removed from the ruins is carried off on a Decanville railroad and dumped into the Tiber.

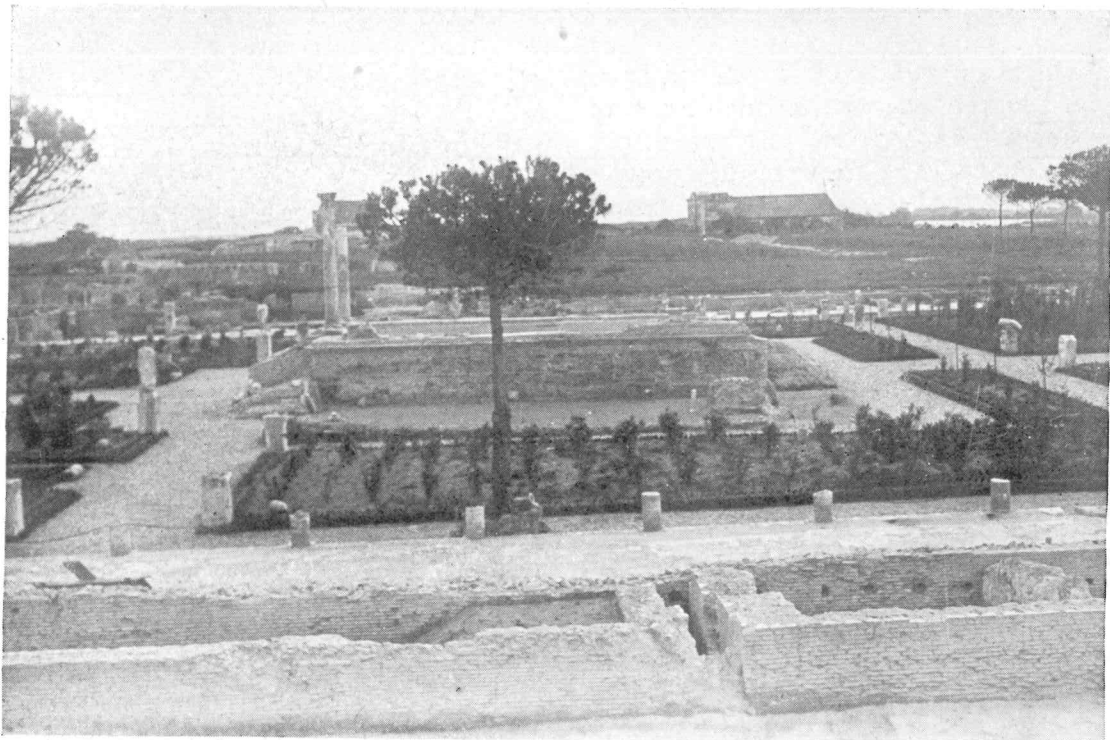
constructed the Baths; Aurelian adorned the city with a Forum which bears his name; and made her a gift of one hundred columns of giallo antico, twenty-three feet in height; and in 309, the Emperor Maxentius established a mint at Ostia.

Note also the prodigal generosity of her citizens—for instance: one very rich Ostian provided for the restoration of seven temples, for the paving of a street near the Forum, for the apparatus of the public scales in the market, and, also, paid a tax of a million francs out of his own pocket to the municipality of Ostia.

The population of such a city must be cosmopolitan—Romans, Italians, Africans and Orientals, and pilgrims and Barbarians congregate here, form-

ing a population of eight thousand souls, with slaves and workmen in the Port, sailors, tradesmen, manufacturers, and rich and enriched commercial agents. Every kind of merchandise arrives here to be transported to Rome: grain and wine and oil, and Spanish wool, and silk, and glass, carpets from Alexandria, even fish from Ponte, medicinal herbs from both Sicily and Africa, Arabian spices and perfumes, pearls from the Red Sea, wood from the Atlantic, diamonds, African and Asiatic marbles. Ostia sees—even before Rome—what marvels the world possesses, and what tributes the Empire receives from her subject provinces. The Ostians, promenading on the banks of the Tiber, can hear the news of the whole

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The Exchange of the Commercial Associations of Ostia. The merchants and owners of boats met here to settle the prices of food-stuffs and the means of transportation.

world, admire the costumes of all nations, and listen to their various dialects.

But Ostia, born almost with Rome, and the dearly loved daughter of Rome, declines with the decline of her mother. Her economic and commercial development is arrested; the Barbarian invasions commence, destroying the security of the city which Rome can now neither watch over nor protect.

Ostia's last cry of greatness is a cry of mourning and of death; before embarking for Africa, Saint Augustine mourned the death of his mother, Saint Monica, here at Ostia in words which seem, in very truth, dictated by a god.

Rome depopulates, Ostia dies; and though Rutilius, that spirit of pagan poetry, threw a last vain cry of hope into his verse:—"Yet again shall the Roman

fleet plow triumphant Tiber's waters!"—he was afterwards constrained to write this melancholy distich, which is like a funeral inscription to be placed over the grandeur of Rome and of Ostia:—"Hospitis Aeneae sola gloria manet." ("Only the glory of Aeneas remains in this place.")

It is sad—this picture of a great and sumptuous city on which Death advances day by day, suffocating her industrial vitality, and snuffing out her exuberant life. Never more shall the citizens of Ostia crowd to the Tiber's mouth when, far out at sea, sails of Latin boats are sighted, laden with who knows what tribute of marbles, purplefish, stuffs, jewels—with who knows what sports of nature and exotic plants to beautify the gardens of Rome—with who knows what new image of a deity

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to which a temple shall be erected or an altar raised—never more! An approaching sail almost inspires terror; the people seek refuge in their houses and in the temples, demanding whether Rome can once more save her Campidoglio, whether Ostia shall see the sanctuaries of the pagan gods untouched and the Cross of that newest Faith respected and held sacred. The richest inhabitants fly in search of new fortunes; the poor remain in the city, where, little by little, the streets become deserted, and the fields are left uncultivated; nothing more arrives at the warehouses which have seen grain from Africa and Sicily, and olives from Spain heaped mountain-high; little by little the roofs of the edifices and the walls of the dwellings fall with age, which neither the hand of man nor a providential pause of Fate arrests; the marble columns tumble down, breaking their capitals and scattering the fragments; the pavements and ceilings cave in; and, slowly, day by day, their ruins accumulate on the mosaics and wall-paintings—abandon does its work. The city is buried four or five meters deep beneath her own masonry; and Nature lends a mantle of dense, wild growth to hide the members of the great skeleton.

Violent destruction had, perhaps, been better, or a ferocious attack which, in one single instant, would have saved the city from this piteous spectacle of diminishing in importance and in life, from seeing the fountains of her vitality exhausted and feeling herself depopulating, from becoming a skeleton day by day, and beholding herself despoiled of what was hers by peoples who knew neither the Latin tongue nor Latin civilization—from this tediously long, irreparable work of death. It had been better for the inhabitants of Ostia to face

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Entrance door of the offices of the Grain Measurers, one of the workmen's associations of Ostia. This is a typical example of the architectural decoration of buildings at Ostia constructed entirely of brick.

a nameless Barbarism and a scepterless force with the resignation of death, rather than the pitiableness of living a life of misery and melancholy.

Pompeii was spared the piteous sadness of feeling herself die a little each day—Ostia was slowly spent.

Since the year 408, when Rome opened her gates to Alaric, who rushed in with his rapacious Gothic hordes, Ostia became the natural road for all bold robbers tempted by the riches of Rome. And Ostia had to mourn the nearness of the sea which had made her fortune, and, abandoned by her inhabitants, has never been repopulated. Malaria has infested the soil, and—just as the ashes of Vesuvius have done for Pompeii—has prevented her from con-

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A Happy Augury
A Victory recently discovered at Ostia.

tinuing to live through the ages. This is why we find the image of an Imperial Roman city almost intact. In 800, Gregory IV built a small suburb here, which he called Gregoriopoli; but it had a very brief existence. And towards the close of the year 1400, Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere constructed the

Castle of Ostia for the defense of the Tiber; he employed Baccio Pontelli as architect, and Baldassarre Peruzzi as painter. And here behind its triple defenses of Saracen walls and watch-towers, the Papal troops were collected to resist with arquebus and cannon the Corsair's furious onslaught. But now, objects of art are collected here from the neighboring city, which is being uncovered to the light of day. This Castle, which was once an instrument of war, is now an instrument of peace and culture—a museum. This is the story of Ostia in brief.

Ostia merits a comprehensive and systematic program of excavation. The importance of her resurrection is enormous. This is the city, which, for at least seven centuries, lived the very life of Rome, which, for seven centuries, served by giving life to Rome. Continue your promenade among the basilicas of the Forum and through the halls of the imperial palaces on the Palatine, if you would feel instantly and vividly the pulsations of the history and of the political life of Rome. But come to Ostia, if you would reconstruct the laborious, industrious life of a commercial people.

The Roman Commonwealth was not solely was not even *above all else*, a political and an administrative institution; Rome was not solely the center of a bureaucracy and of a State without boundaries; the Consuls and Emperors, the senators and warriors were not solely statesmen, or *viveurs* or *débauchés*, they were also merchants and manufacturers, they were men-of-affairs and brokers. The population of Rome was not solely a population of clients and parasites, but a population of workmen, artisans, professional men, and contractors; the people of Rome

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were not a people who only consumed and absorbed, but a people who worked and produced. Rome was not solely a political metropolis, but a commercial metropolis.

It is possible to admire the frame at Rome, but impossible to take in the whole picture of the varied, many-sided life of the capital of the world—that intense, feverish life to which all the conquered nations contributed their energy. One admires the machine at Rome, but can understand neither its mechanism nor its motive-power; and it is Ostia, which gives us the key to all these problems.

The great importance of Pompeii lies in her making us know a provincial city; but Rome was the capital of the world. The great charm which breathes from her ruins has been given by her death, not by her life—and it was life which the Pagans held divine. The great utility of Pompeii lies in her having preserved a photograph for us with the most minute details, the photograph of an ancient city. Its image is clear-cut and precise; it instructs the hurried tourist as well as the attentive archaeologist, the indifferent lady as well as the curious dilettante. It is much to be able to see the photograph, but it is more, it is better to possess the original picture—and at Ostia we have the picture of life in ancient times. What does it import if Time has dimmed the colors and worn the canvas? I want to see clearly, but on condition that I see beauty; I want things to speak to me, but I also want to speak to them.

Ostia not only completes Pompeii, but even completes Rome itself. Ostia is not only an actual part of the metropolis, while Pompeii is a provincial city—Ostia does not only reflect and repeat Rome, while Pompeii is Hellenic in



Portrait of an unknown lady, represented with the attributes of Ceres. A severe noble sculpture of great value.

character—but, while Pompeii dates, for the most part, from the first century of the Empire, Ostia dates, for the most part, from the second and third centuries, from the period of the Antonines, from the period of wide-spread culture and of Rome's greatest prosperity, the

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A portrait of a Roman lady found in a house at Ostia.

period when the life of the ancients most resembled our own. Pompeii might have continued to live without in any way modifying the destinies and interests of Rome; but when the Tiber begins to fill with sand and can no longer harbor the vessels of Rome, it is Caesar himself who recognizes the necessity of constructing a port.

Studying Ostia, we find that our antiquarian education, got almost entirely at Pompeii, is not sufficient; the narrow, tortuous streets of the charming Campanian town do not correspond to the broad, straight streets of the Latin city, which was laid out in the very beginning on a regular systematic plan, and is almost the image of a Republican city. The systematic, regular plan of Ostia is like that of a modern American town. It has often been affirmed that the Roman dwelling was like the Pompeian dwelling. Ostia demonstrates that the Pompeian dwelling-house with its atrium and peristyle were the exception in the great city of Rome—just as the house and garden, or the cottage, are in a modern city. Ostia has preserved for us the house of the middle-class and of the people—that is: the most ordinary type of house.

And it is also at Ostia that we can study the elegant severity and grandiose force of Roman architecture in its various forms—even the private house—for the great height of her ruins (ten meters in some places) permits us to admire and study the façade, a very important architectural detail rarely found among the ruins of the ancient world.

It requires no effort of the imagination to see her principal thoroughfares extending broad and straight before us with immense arcades on either side, beneath which are shops and stores; and above are the dwellings of the people with balconies and galleries supported on travertine corbels; and we may ascend to the second floor by stairways in perfect preservation without fatiguing our imagination by acrobatic exercises.

Moreover, the architectural interest has a parallel here in the artistic interest. Although Ostia, having been

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sacked several times, cannot, unfortunately, give us what Pompeii has given us; she possesses some very interesting sculptures, closely Roman in conception and execution, which must have served as the point-of-departure for Christian and Mediaeval Art.

What cannot be said of the importance of Ostia in the history of the religions! She places the phenomenon of religious promiscuousness before our eyes—beside the Temple of Vulcan, the most ancient deity of Latium, open the doors of temples to the Mater Deum and to Mithras, “the Incomprehensible God,” and near the Temple of Pater Tiburinus are those to Isis and to Serapis; and, in the midst of all these gods of the Orient whom Ostia has made welcome, Christianity is triumphant.

To excavate Ostia signifies bringing the picture of Rome’s great august spirit to the light, and feeling and understanding how and why the History of Rome became the History of the World. To affirm this today, when only a tenth part of the city has been excavated, is, perhaps a paradox—but the paradox of today may become tomorrow’s truth.

The present resurrection of Ostia, in praising which the people of every land and every culture concur, has been inspired and encouraged by the kindness and very active interest of His Majesty the King of Italy, whom I have several times had the honour to accompany around the ruins. His Majesty is, in truth, the *Genius Loci* of Ostia.

Rome, Italy

ROMA EVERSA

By ALICE ROGERS HAGER

Thy glory in the dust—Rome! Rome!
Thy streets, so vilely choked with blood and flame,
Thy purple gardens, blossoming in Jove’s name,
Where love and laughter made a golden home—
In arch and portico the precious loam
Lies fouled by barbarous feet; vestal and dame,
Children at breast, and men of ancient fame
Go down together in Tiber’s pitying foam.

Rome! Rome! thus do the mighty fall;
And man’s high castle, builded with such pain,
Forgets its keep, when frolic decks the hall,
Till the foe knocks and stark-eyed Furies reign;
Know, while within thy gates rides the mad horde
Peace only rests beside a sharpened sword.