
Paths - movements - traces: public and domestic spaces in Ostia antica

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Résumé

Intensive research in Ostia antica over the past decades has considerably increased our knowledge of the development of the ancient port city, the infrastructure and the mobile finds and objects such as sculptures, inscriptions, and objects of daily life. In the context of the panel, the focus will be on the legacies and find complexes that allow us to trace people's movements based on the available and preserved finds in domestic and public spaces. Structural changes should also be considered, as they can contribute to changes in spatial use and pathways. In addition to inscriptions, such finds include above all bases of statues and their inscriptions, statues, ideal sculptures, small finds such as small lamps or other (utilitarian) objects, but also archaeometric find data that can contribute to making paths, movements or traces traceable.

The contributions in the panel were intended to reflect the variety of possibilities that can contribute to a reconstruction of paths and movements. Two main subjects of contributions are given here as examples.

Domestic spaces: the location of both the findings and the wall and floor decoration in the inhabited spaces in Ostia is very different and dependent on a period of use that can be traced based on the excavations and noninvasive investigations. The problem of changes in mobile objects in the rooms of a villa *or* domus over a long period of use will have to be addressed in this context and should take into account as many aspects as possible. Chronology and restoration, phases of reconstruction and changes in furnishings, based on the questions how the use of a room can be reconstructed, should be considered. For example, the reuse of building materials and decorative materials (inscriptions, cladding panels, etc.) plays a role regarding the reconstruction of structural changes and developments. Several questions can be linked to finds on decorative sculpture, such as the identity and the artistic taste of the patron and his family. This also includes portraits of ancestors or previous owners, which were preserved in a house as decorative elements even through changing owners, a passion for collecting on the part of a householder or also a possible affinity to religion and cultic worship pursued by a householder. The disposal of materials that can be assigned to a living area would also have to be considered in an overall view. Even if not all aspects are equally comprehensible due to different find situations, the preserved objects provide important foundations for a discussion.

Public spaces: Public spaces, be they streets, forums, temples, theatres, or thermal baths

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were often subject to structural extensions and redesigns, often due to topographical and functional changes. Along with this, changes and adaptations of the paths and movements are to be expected. In this respect, too, investigations in recent years have brought many new research findings, for example around the forum or along the main streets, such as *decumanus*. As public areas are increasingly subject to alterations and restructuring, reconstructions and re-enactments are on the one hand easy to follow, but on the other hand more difficult regarding movable decorations or remains. The locations of inscriptions, bases, statues, and portraits, along with the small finds, often present a heterogeneous picture.
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Mots-Clés: Ostia, spaces, public, domestic, new research