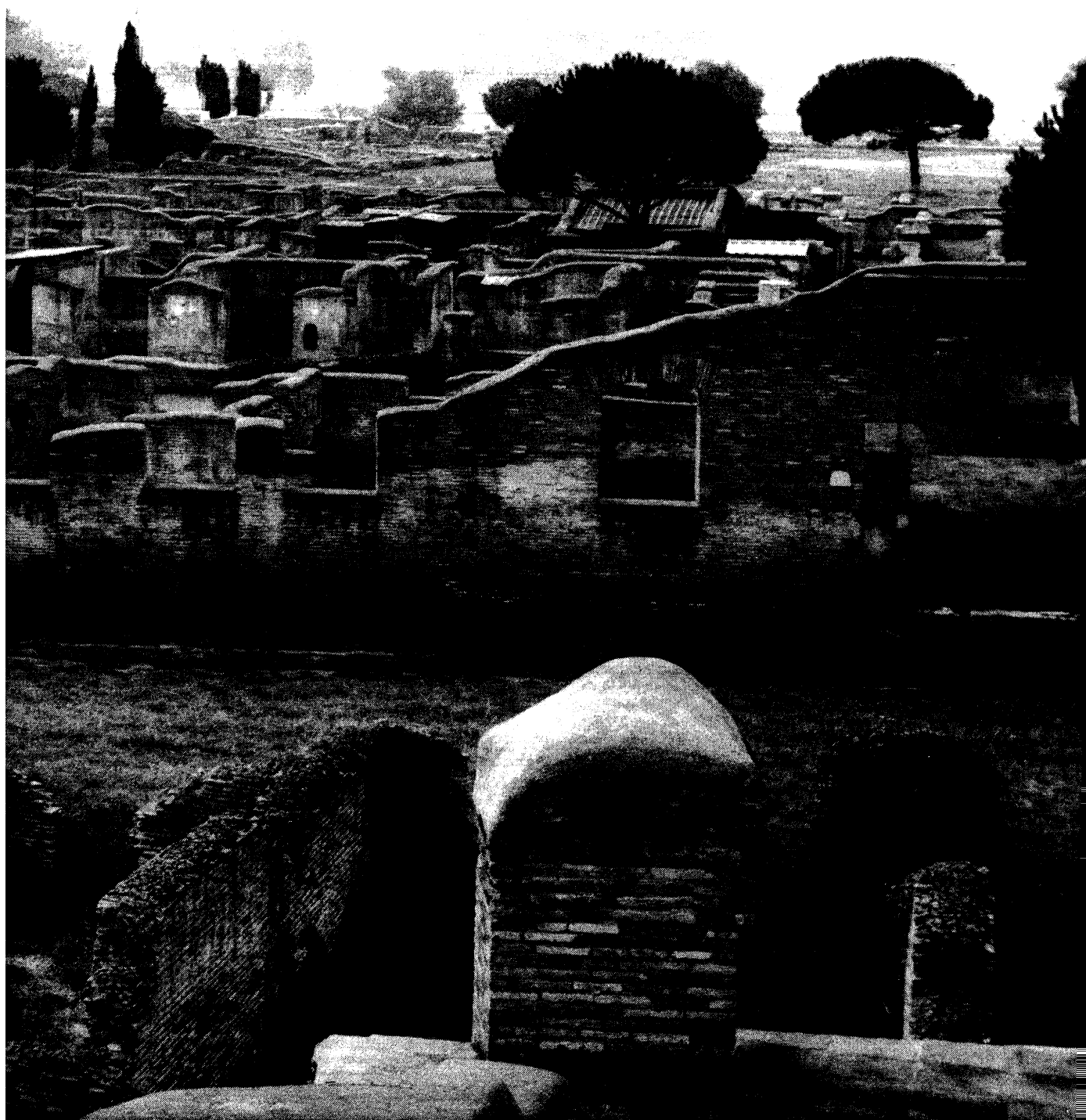

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS IN IMPERIAL ROME

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I

Upper-Class Apartment Housing in Ostia and Rome

EXCAVATIONS at Ostia, the port city of Rome, have revealed, in the course of the past century, a pattern of urban housing which literary sources also associate with Rome of the High Empire: sturdy four- and five-story apartment blocks (*insulae*), constructed primarily in brick and concrete with vaults or wooden raftering, and a high density of settlement—in short, an urban pattern perhaps distinguishable from Rome's only by the much smaller size of Ostia (ca. 20,000-35,000 inhabitants).¹ An understanding has also emerged of the relationship between the social structure of Ostia (well-known from inscriptions) and the types of housing uncovered by excavations.²

The Ostian excavations have in part merely confirmed what was already known from literary sources. Thus, the stately homes of the Ostian governing classes³ are perhaps

¹ On Ostia's population, see J. E. Packer, *The Insulae of Imperial Ostia*, *MAAR* 31 (1971) 65-71 (the figures involve many guesses); on the relation of Ostia's housing pattern to Rome, *ibid.* 74-79. This book, which contains most earlier bibliography, is henceforth cited by the author's last name only. *Insulae* are referred to by the "addresses" in G. Calza *et al.*, *Scavi di Ostia* vol. 1 (1953); e.g. Casa di Diana (1, iii, 3-4).

² See B. W. Frier, *JRS* 67 (1977) 27-37 (and literature there cited); compare Packer pp. 71-72.

³ E.g. the Domus della Fortuna Annonaria (v, ii, 8), built ca. A.D. 150-200: cf. A. G. McKay, *Houses, Villas and Palaces in the Roman World* (1975) 78 (bibliography at n. 110); the Domus del Tempio

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only smaller and less costly versions of the houses of wealthy Roman senators and knights. Into the category constituted by these mansions can be placed as well a number of large and luxurious apartments, which display the same generous proportions and also the same tendency to orient major rooms in loose, functional groups around an interior court.⁴ Within such houses and luxury apartments, the rich and powerful of Ostia encountered one another in circumstances of worldly ease.

Nor has lower-class housing occasioned much surprise, although to be sure archaeologists have tended to ignore these humble structures and concentrate instead on the better-built and thus better-preserved housing of the upper classes.⁵ Nonetheless, the plan of Ostia displays a great numerical preponderance of lower-class housing: not only large and relatively well-constructed tenements like the Caseggiato degli Aurighi (III, x, 1),⁶ but also numerous smaller and more anonymous structures. A typical example is III, i, 12-13: a Trajanic construction consisting of two rectangular "rooms," each ca. 115 sq. m. and each subdivided by flimsy partitions into two or three tiny "apartments." The use of temporary partitions is very characteristic of lower-class housing at Ostia; it occurs also on the mezzanine floor of the Insula degli Aurighi, on the ground

Rotondo (I, xi, 2-3), built ca. A.D. 225 (Packer pp. 155-157, plan: p. 99); the Casa delle Muse (III, ix, 22), built ca. A.D. 128 (Packer pp. 173-177, plan: p. 185); in general, G. Becatti, *Casa Ostiensi* (1948).

⁴ E.g. the handsome apartments in the Insula di Giove e Ganimede (I, iv, 2), built ca. A.D. 120-140 (Packer pp. 134-139, plan: p. 95).

⁵ This is perhaps the reason why the impression of Ostian housing in such books as R. Meiggs, *Roman Ostia* (2d ed. 1973) 235-251, is so favorable. In these pages I have largely ignored shops, which, however, also housed a good portion of the Ostian population; see G. Girri, *La Taberna* (1956) 37-43.

⁶ Built ca. A.D. 140-150 (Packer pp. 177-182, plan: p. 106). Packer's description of the "Second Floor" (more properly, the mezzanine floor) refers to the "later tufa block walls" dividing upstairs rooms (p. 181), and these are clearly visible in his plate LXVI, fig. 188.

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floor of the slum-like Caseggiato del Temistocle (v, xi, 2),⁷ and on the first floor of the Casa di Diana (I, iii, 3-4).⁸ Because such partitions are easily swept away in the ruin of a building, their existence tends to be ignored by archaeologists. Nonetheless, even the surviving walls confirm an impression of crowding and squalor: rows of rooms no longer easily distinguishable from one another in function, disposed along facades or lightwells, and often reached by long interior corridors. In any event, nothing in the Ostian remains contradicts the picture of lower-class housing given by literary sources.⁹ The great majority of the free Ostian population, perhaps some 90-95 percent, occupied these dismal buildings.

What was truly surprising about Ostia, however, was the discovery of a form of housing intermediate between these two extremes. The ruins have yielded up numerous well-built apartment houses that have an astonishingly modern look and "feel," especially in their standardized oblong apartment plan. This plan is also described in a *Digest* text (D. 9.3.5.2) from the jurist Ulpian (d. A.D. 223), which gives to the apartment its familiar name *cenaculum*.¹⁰ The plan consists of two large dayrooms (*exedrae*) disposed at either end of a long axis running through a corridor-like central room (the *medianum*). All three rooms take light

⁷ Built ca. A.D. 117-134 (Packer pp. 192-195, plan: p. 110).

⁸ Built ca. A.D. 150 (Packer pp. 127-134, plan: p. 94). This famous and much described building is taken by B. W. Frier, (cited n. 2) 30-34, as an archetypal example of lower-class housing; G. Calza, *Not. Scav.* (1917) 322, thought that its first floor was a *piano nobile*, for reasons which in retrospect are unconvincing.

⁹ Compare the classic pages of J. Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (trans. E. O. Lorimer, 1940) 22-51; cf. also Packer pp. 72-79. Still worth reading is R. Pöhlmann, *Die Uebervölkerung der Antiken Grossstädte* (1884).

¹⁰ See B. W. Frier (cited n. 2) 27-29, based partly on G. Hermansen, *Phoenix* 24 (1970) 342-347; cf. *idem*, *Historia* 27 (1978) 129-168, at 131. This form of apartment corresponds to Packer's types II C and D (Packer pp. 8-11). Most legal texts cited without extensive bibliography in this chapter are discussed at length in Chapter IV.

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from large windows on the facade, and the *exedrae* are not infrequently two-storied with two ranges of windows. Across the *medianum* from the facade, therefore on the inner side of the *cenaculum*, are a row of from two to five bedrooms (*cubicula*), which are directly lighted only on the rare occasions when the back wall is free to the air (e.g. III, ix, 3-4 and 10). The apartment's entrance is almost without exception directly into, or through a vestibule-corridor into, the *medianum*, which provides access to all the other rooms. Many *cenacula* have internal mezzanines that cover the entire lower-floor area except for one or both of the two-storied *exedrae*. Their total floor area is normally 150-300 sq. m., thus very large.

There can be little doubt, especially in view of the Ulpian text, that the *cenaculum* form originated at Rome.¹¹ It first appears at Ostia in the reign of Trajan (98-117), obviously as an aftereffect of Ostia's greatly increased prosperity when Trajan's harbor opened. The earliest *cenaculum* form is the so-called Casette-Tipo (III, xii, 1-2; xiii, 1-2).¹² A small rectangular lot was developed as two very long rectangular apartment houses. From them survives, to just below windowsill height, the rather crudely constructed walls of four ground-floor apartments without mezzanines; in both buildings, steps to an upper story indicate that a second floor of apartments once stood above. The Casette-Tipo apartments are unusual in their provision of latrines, probably for the ground floor only.

In the reign of Hadrian (117-134) the *cenaculum* form proliferated at Ostia. It is most easily discussed in relation to the apartments associated with two tract-developments of these years. The first is a very large complex (III, iii-vi and

¹¹ At Rome, apartment living for the upper classes is first attested from the second century B.C.: Plut. *Sulla* 1.2, 6; cf. Livy 39.14.2; Diod. 31.18.2; and Val. Max. 5.1.1f.

¹² Built ca. A.D. 100-110 (Packer p. 185, plan: p. 108); cf. M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop, *Roman Construction in Italy from Nerva Through the Antonines* (1973) 155.

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xi-xii) built ca. 124-134 in the northeast of the city, between the river Tiber and the Via Ostiensis leading from the center of Ostia to Rome;¹³ the complex (not fully excavated and partially reburied) includes the Baths of Neptune, the Barracks of the Vigiles, at least two *horrea* for grain storage, large industrial premises, and numerous small shops. Set into this predominantly commercial development are four *cenacula* that throw considerable light on the origin of the *cenaculum* form. The Insula dell' Ercole Bambino (II, vi, 3) best illustrates the point,¹⁴ which is, however, also true of the Insula del Soffitto Dipinto (II, vi, 6) and of two other unnamed *cenacula* (II, iii, 3 and 4). The Insula dell' Ercole Bambino is part of a long block divided lengthwise; on the east side of this division are four virtually identical shops whose walls continue in plan through the central dividing wall. The *cenaculum* on the west side thus consisted originally of four approximately equal rooms (the northernmost shortened by the inclusion of an entrance hall and a staircase); these four rooms were linked by a "corridor" of doorways aligned just inside the west facade. The middle two rooms were later (but perhaps already at the apartment's first leasing) each divided from the "corridor" by brick partitions. The result was the creation of a *cenaculum* form, with *cubicula* at the rear of the central rooms and a long narrow *medianum* linking the *exedrae* at either end of the

¹³ Archaeological evidence now suggests that this project was largely a reconstruction of an earlier Domitianic one: R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 582-583, citing F. Zevi, *FA* 18/19 (1963-1964) 7429; *Not. Scav.* 24 (1970) 7.

¹⁴ The complex II, 6 was published by D. Vaglieri, *Not. Scav.* (1913) 120-128. The door into the large *exedra* of II, vi, 3 was cut after the building's construction, as an inspection of the bricks shows. Both II, vi, 3 and 6 originally communicated with shops behind them, and were presumably occupied by wealthy merchants. On them, see also R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 247; M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 193-194. II, iii, 3 and 4 are very interesting, though less known; on them, see G. Calza, *MAAL* 23 (1915) 602, with a plan at p. 582 and an exterior restoration at p. 594.

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plan. The same thing happened in each of the development's other three apartments: a line of rooms was in effect converted into a *cenaculum*-form apartment.

The meaning of these conversions is obvious; the *cenaculum* form was created out of and evolved from "strip" apartments consisting of long files of rooms arranged behind a facade.¹⁵

The second Hadrianic project is the Garden House complex (III, ix), built ca. A.D. 128 in the extreme west of Ostia.¹⁶ This primarily residential complex was developed in a large rectangular tract (ca. 100 m. x 130 m., with the northwest corner slightly truncated); a continuous line of exterior buildings surrounds a central park that contains the two rectangular units known as the Case a Giardino (III, ix, 13-20), each with four ground-floor *cenaculum*-form apartments. (In the Garden House complex, the *cenaculum* form was the original plan.) The northeast corner of the surround was given over to a splendid private house about an internal courtyard, the Casa delle Muse (III, ix, 2); as has been happily suggested,¹⁷ this house may have been the developer's. Along the four sides of the great park are arranged, roughly alternating, groups of shops (III, ix, 2, 5, 7, 9, and 11) and *cenaculum*-form apartments (III, ix, 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 21), some of which were later substantially altered. The complex's ground floor thus contained sixteen *cenaculum*-form apartments. Further, many staircases go up to now vanished upper stories; it is reasonable to suppose that the whole complex averaged three or four stories in height. If the ground-floor plan repeated in upper stories (as is not

¹⁵ See below at nn. 41-44.

¹⁶ Excavations beneath the complex have revealed earlier efforts at systematic development: F. Zevi and I. Pohl, *Not. Scav.* 24 Suppl. 1 (1971) 43-234, esp. 74 (at p. 43, reference is made to further, as yet unpublished excavations by G. Ricci). On the complex, see R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 139-140; J. E. Packer, in *The Muses at Work* (ed. C. Roebuck, 1969) 47-51; M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 188-191.

¹⁷ Packer p. 176; on this house, see also at n. 3 above.

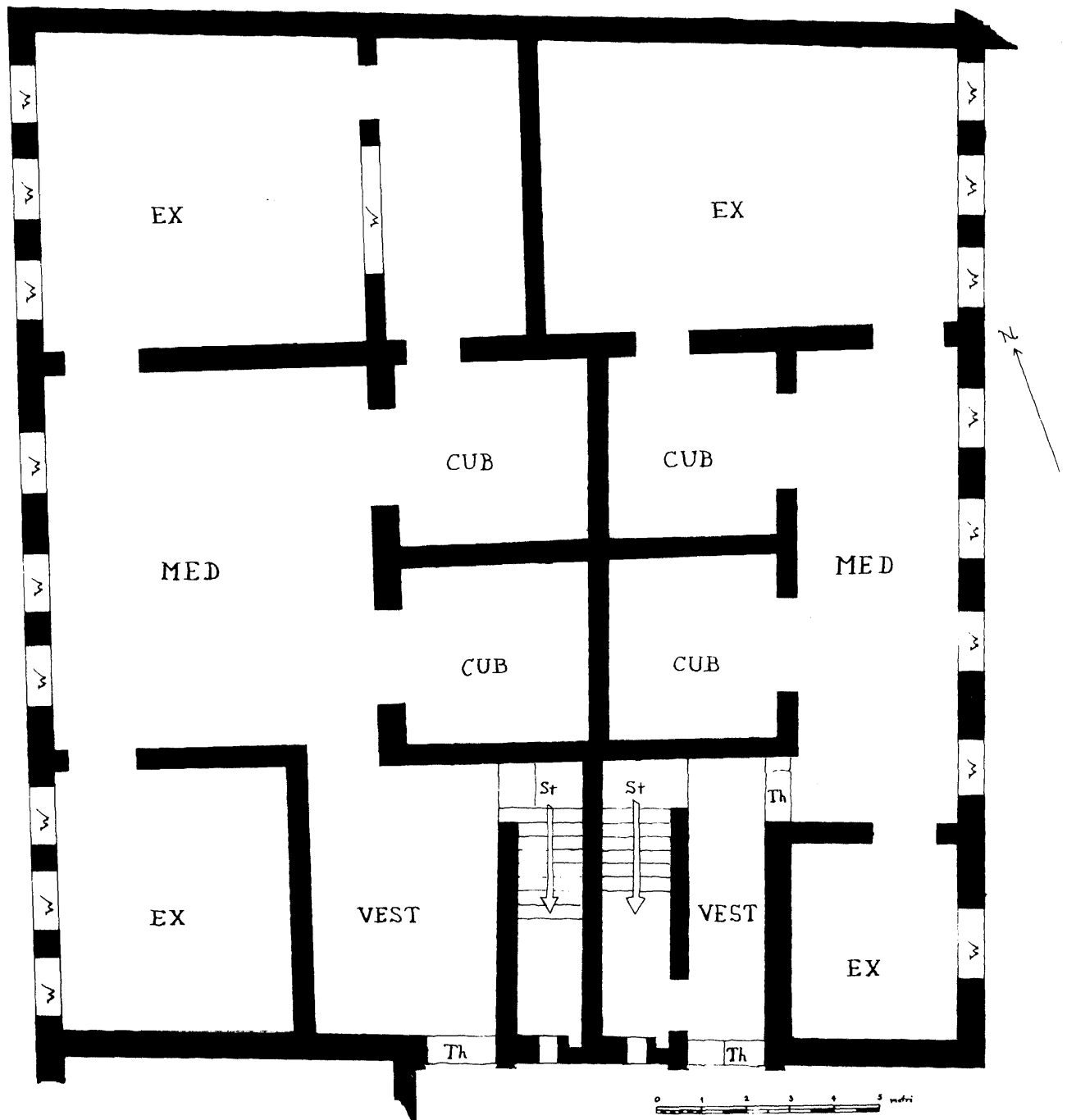
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unlikely in a development of this sort), the entire complex may have contained fifty to sixty *cenacula*. The Garden House complex can be described as an upper-class housing project.

On the east a monumental triple archway gave entry to the central park; smaller passages led in from the other cardinals. The impressive triple arch, reached by the wide Via delle Volte Dipinte from a major thoroughfare, lay between the Domus dei Dioscuri (III, ix, 1; later extensively modified) on the left, and the Insula delle Pareti Gialle (III, ix, 12) and the Insula del Graffito (III, ix, 21) standing back-to-back on the right.

The Insula delle Pareti Gialle is not only a typical *cenaculum*, it is also extremely well preserved, and so warrants a closer examination.¹⁸ It and its companion, the Insula del Graffito, are contained in a very slightly rhomboid plot about 21 m. on a side. The architect's intention may have been to divide this approximate square into two rectangular apartments, each having on the south a vestibule with a staircase to upper floors. However, the positioning of the triple archway required the displacement of the two doorways about 1.5 m. to the east; as a consequence, the Insula delle Pareti Gialle gained floor room and the Insula del Graffito lost it. Each apartment has two ground-floor *cubicula*; in plan these four rooms comprise a square that lies approximately in the center of the plot's north-south axis, but displaced on the east-west axis by the same 1.5 m. to the east. The vestibule, *medianum*, and smaller *exedra* of the Insula delle Pareti Gialle became thereby correspondingly larger; indeed, the *medianum* is virtually a square, and the smaller *exedra* is both broader and deeper by 2 m. than that of the Insula del Graffito. Only in the rear (west) portion of the plot were the larger *exedrae* of the two *cenacula* approximately equal in size—the large *exedra* of the Insula

¹⁸ Besides the bibliography cited below, see G. Calza (cited n. 1) 136-137, 236. The following pages should be read together with the plan and plates.



INSVLA DELLE PARETI GIALLE
INSULA DELLE PARETI GIALLE. REG. III. IX. 12

INSVLA DEL GRAFFITO
INSULA DEL GRAFFITO. REG. III. IX. 21

PLAN. Original plan of the Insula delle Pareti Gialle (III, IX, 12) and the Insula del Graffito (III, IX, 21), before the addition of internal buttresses in the former. The principal ground-floor rooms (*vestibulum*, *medianum*, *exedra*, *cubiculum*) are labeled; thresholds for lockable doors are also indicated. Ground-floor rooms except for the larger *exedra* of the Insula delle Pareti Gialle were all one story high (2.8 m.); all these rooms were originally covered with rafters, except for the vestibules which were barrel-vaulted. The better mosaics are confined to the *exedrae*. (This plan was drawn by Mr. Robert Bailey, after G. Beccati's plan in *Scavi di Ostia* vol. IV, 1961, tav. CCXXIV. North is up.)

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delle Pareti Gialle being, however, divided by a partition with a door and a huge arched opening.¹⁹

The result of these adjustments in plan was the creation of two apartments, one of rather grandiose ground-floor dimensions (about 200 sq. m. excluding vestibule), the other somewhat cramped (about 145 sq. m.). The Insula delle Pareti Gialle, furthermore, had a mezzanine reached by the staircase from the vestibule. All rooms in the south two-thirds of the *cenaculum* (except for the vestibule, which was barrel-vaulted) had wooden rafters, the cornices and footings for which can still be seen in the *medianum*; in the small *exedra* and the two *cubicula* the rafters have been restored. The large *exedra*, however, lacks these emplacements and must have risen two stories with a double range of windows (like those in the *exedrae* of I, iv, 3 and 4).²⁰ The mezzanine was therefore confined to the apartment's southern two-thirds. By contrast, the Insula del Graffito has emplacements for rafters also in its large *exedra*. Furthermore, unlike the Insula delle Pareti Gialle whose vestibule gave access also to the mezzanine, the interior of the Insula del Graffito is divided from its vestibule by a threshold block with sockets for a hinged door. It is therefore likely that this ground-floor *cenaculum* lacked a mezzanine, and that two or more independent apartments were constructed directly above it.²¹

Within the Insula delle Pareti Gialle space was given a deliberate hierarchy. The *cenaculum* takes afternoon sun

¹⁹ Similarly divided *exedrae* occur also in I, iv, 3-4; II, iii, 3-4; and II, vi, 3 and 6. The reasons for this fashion are unclear.

²⁰ This is also shown by the arch in the large *exedra*; its crown is 4 m. above floor level, while the cornices in the remainder of the apartment begin at 2.8 m.

²¹ The upper-story apartments above the Insula delle Pareti Gialle were presumably reached by the external staircase at the northwest corner of the Casa delle Muse (Packer p. 105, "rooms" 1-2). It is not clear why Packer (p. 89) limits this *insula* to two stories; the buttressing which it later required should indicate that it was substantially higher.

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through a range of windows on its long western flank; they are divided into three groups of three each, corresponding to the two *exedrae* and the *medianum*. In the two *exedrae*, the sunlight streams down upon richly patterned mosaic floors; the *medianum*, *cubicula*, and vestibule have much simpler mosaics. All the mosaics date from the building's construction.²² The walls were repeatedly decorated with elaborately painted plaster, the earliest surviving of which dates from the mid-second century, and the latest perhaps from the fourth century—some measure of the apartment's very long life.²³ The fine yellow and scarlet wall paintings in the large *exedra*, its alcove, and one *cubiculum* (they date from ca. A.D. 175-185) gave the *cenaculum* its name: on a yellow field, broad vertical stripes of scarlet, out of which there develops a delicate and fantastic architecture of thin white columns and lintels.

The esthetics of this handsome imperial *cenaculum* deserve special mention. From the exterior doorway an uninterrupted line of sight extended from the vestibule (which lay in permanent gloom) through the drab *medianum* to the door of the large *exedra*, often brilliant with sunlight by virtue of its great size and fenestration (its windows are 0.25 m. higher than the others on the facade). The doorway of this room was also the focus of a secondary axis running into the elegant small *exedra*. The plan is simple and clear, yet very dramatic. The large *exedra* contains the only surprise: an enormous arch (2.90 m. high) opening on a shallow alcove that communicates with the master bedroom. The two *cubicula* are naturally given no special emphasis, but the corresponding windows on the facade are slightly asymmetrical so as to provide them the maximum light.

The architectural emphasis within this *cenaculum* was on light, privacy, security, and the orderly flow of spacious

²² G. Becatti (cited n. 18) 123-125.

²³ On the painting, see B. M. Felletti Maj, *Monumenti della Pittura Antica Scoperti in Italia* vol. III (Ostia), fasc. 1-2 (1961) 41-54, with earlier bibliography.

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volumes. Plainly, a well-to-do family might have dwelt here in more than moderate comfort; the mezzanine presumably housed their slaves. The source of the wealth sustaining this style of life is hinted at by the four heads of Oceanus (one now destroyed) that were placed at the cardinals in the lunettes of the large *exedra*'s mosaic. The apartment appears to have been continuously occupied, without structural alteration except for some buttressing soon after its construction, over more than two centuries.

The Hadrianic era saw even more lavish variants of the basic *cenaculum* form (such as I, iv, 3-4;²⁴ III, ix, 6 and 9), but also much humbler variants (I, xiv, 9; III, vii, 5;²⁵ v, iii, 3-4; v, xi, 2).²⁶ There are a total of more than thirty such ground-floor *cenacula* from Hadrian's reign, to which may perhaps be added some plans very hard to discern on the ground (such as III, vi, 2). The Hadrianic building programs permanently filled the need for this popular apartment form. Thereafter, the only possible instance of the *cenaculum* form (iv, iv, 6: built ca. A.D. 222-235) is not easy to understand.

Before discussing the social character of the tenants of these *cenacula*, it is best to shift the scene briefly to Rome. However, the housing patterns of Rome cannot without further comment be reconstructed on the basis of Ostia. To be sure, the link is obvious in one respect: the Ostians deliberately oriented their city toward a crowded, vertical housing pattern, rather than toward a horizontal spread. The Ostian pattern must recall, though perhaps in a somewhat relaxed fashion, the housing pattern of the capital—a

²⁴ These are the Insula dei Dipinti and the Insula di Bacco Fanciullo, respectively; their plans are virtually identical. On the former, see Packer pp. 139-141 (plan: p. 96); on both, M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 173.

²⁵ The Casa Vicina alla Domus Fulminata, built under Hadrian (Packer pp. 171-172, plan: p. 104).

²⁶ The Casggiato del Temistocle, built under Hadrian (Packer pp. 193-195, plan: p. 110). One wing houses four extended *cenacula* which were directly lighted, if at all, through skylights.

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mode of living, in short, which the Ostians intended as a mirror to Rome's urbanity. Still, what is known of the ground-floor plans of Roman *insulae* (whether from archaeological remains²⁷ or from the Severan Marble Plan)²⁸ does not clearly confront us with the Ostian *cenaculum* form. It is true that the preserved remains are in any event too scanty to allow a systematic view of Roman housing; and much the same criticism can be brought against the Marble Plan, which is also very difficult to read as regards housing. What remains of the Marble Plan may simply miss large isolated complexes similar to the Garden House development.

The most completely surviving Roman *insula*, and the only one with intelligible upper-story plans, is the Casa di Via Giulio Romano, constructed around A.D. 100.²⁹ What remains (from a much larger building) is principally the west wing backed up against the steep slope of the Capitoline Hill. The ground floor contains a row of shops behind a (later-constructed) arcade which runs along the facade of the wing. Above these shops a mezzanine floor was set on wooden raftering; the mezzanine rooms intercommunicated, with the likely consequence that a ground-floor shopkeeper could lease, as he desired, one or more mezzanine rooms in addition. The first floor (a sort of *piano nobile*) contained one or two large apartments. The major file of

²⁷ See the fundamental surveys in M. E. Blake, *Roman Construction in Italy from Tiberius Through the Flavians* (1959) 54-58, 125-131; M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 73-98; further, Packer pp. 74-79; all with further bibliography. On the area around the Piazza Colonna, see G. Gatti, *Saggi—V. Fasolo* (1961) 49-66.

²⁸ On house plans in the Marble Plan, see P. Zığans, in *Opusc. Arch.* 2 (1941) 183-194; at p. 191 Zığans claims to recognize a *cenaculum* form. The fragments of the early third-century A.D. Marble Plan were published by G. Carettoni *et al.*, *La Pianta Marmorea di Roma Antica* vol. I (1960).

²⁹ The *insula* is described in detail by J. E. Packer, *Bull. Comm.* 81 (1968-1969) 127-148, with reference to earlier literature; see also M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 81-83 (the date is discussed on p. 82).

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rooms, at the southern end of the wing, begins with a well-lighted trapezoidal room on the extreme south, and then continues with three larger rooms of nearly identical size, and concludes in a still larger, somewhat irregularly shaped room. These five rooms are linked by a "corridor" of doorways just inside the facade. The apartment's total floor area is about 200 sq. m. Like the *cenacula* in the Baths of Neptune complex at Ostia, this apartment at some point in its life was apparently converted to the *cenaculum* form, as the remains of a partition dividing one of the middle rooms shows.³⁰

By contrast, the second floor (and what survives of the third) develops as a warren of tiny, squalid rooms, most of them not directly lighted and served by long interior corridors. Most rooms are very small (about 10 sq. m.), but it is still entirely probable that a small family could have occupied such humble quarters.³¹ The building obviously became more crowded and more lower-class in its upper stories.

The Casa di Via Giulio Romano indicates that, because of the extreme demand for ground-floor space at Rome, many apartments (including *cenaculum*-form ones) may have been located on upper floors. As for Ostia, the consequence is that we cannot automatically assume continuance of ground-floor plans in upper stories.³² Still, in this matter we probably have at least three controls. First, it is plausible that buildings in general tended to become more lower-class in their upper stories, beyond the "*piano nobile*"—a sort of "vertical zoning."³³ Second, at least one floor of

³⁰ This partition is indicated in I. Gismondi's plan, which is reproduced by J. E. Packer (cited n. 29) 140; my discussion of the plan varies somewhat from Packer's (at pp. 138-139).

³¹ So thinks J. E. Packer (cited n. 29), 146. Compare R. Pöhlmann (cited n. 9) 97-98, 104. Note P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower* (1971) 385-388, on the decay of lower-class family life in Rome; compare Pöhlmann, pp. 105-106.

³² *Contra* Packer p. 70; cf. R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 585.

³³ Compare R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 250-251. However, some literary

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cenaculum-form apartments should probably be restored above many of the ground-floor rows of shops that are widely found in Ostian and Roman *insulae*. Third, it is somewhat less likely that *cenaculum*-form apartments were located in the upper stories of the highly commercial Baths of Neptune complex, but somewhat more likely in the largely residential Garden House complex. At any rate, one's impression is that the classes were "horizontally zoned" to a considerable degree at Ostia; the fortress-like exclusivity of the Garden House complex significantly reinforces this impression. At Rome, "horizontal zoning" would presumably be less prominent, at least in the city's center.

Some 40 ground-floor *cenaculum*-form apartments are preserved in Ostia. Since one-third of Ostia is still unexcavated, we may suppose that there were about 60 in all. Upper-story *cenacula* probably multiplied this number by a factor of at least three or four: 180-240 in all. The average number of inhabitants per *cenaculum* is naturally harder to estimate: with slaves, perhaps 6 to 8.³⁴ These figures give a minimum of 1,080 residents, a maximum of 1,920: between 1,000 and 2,000, let us say. By contrast, the number of residents (including slaves) of Ostian private houses has been estimated at 660;³⁵ even if we add to this number the residents of luxury apartments, it is likely that the total was less than that for *cenaculum*-form apartments. But since the incidence of domestic slaveholding undoubtedly declined as one went lower on the housing scale (from houses to luxury

evidence suggests upper-class *cenacula* at the top of their buildings: Martial's third-story *cenaculum* had a view (1.108.3-4, 117.6-7), Augustus could watch horse racing from the *cenacula* of his friends and freedmen (Suet. *Aug.* 45.1), and the roof in Gabba's leaked (Quint. 6.3.64).

³⁴ Packer (p. 70) estimates that the "population of each flat was roughly equal to the number of bedrooms"; this assumption, which seems to me gratuitous (so also R. Meiggs, cited n. 5, 585-586), yields a population for Type II C and D apartment buildings of 763 (Packer p. 91; but he misses some examples). Cf. R. Meiggs, pp. 597-598.

³⁵ Cf. G. Girri (cited n. 5) 42 (using Calza's figures); Packer p. 70.

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apartments to ordinary *cenacula*), it is extremely likely that the numerical majority of the Ostian upper classes, though not its most influential sectors, lived in *cenacula*.³⁶ The tenants of these *cenacula* would constitute the lower ranges of the upper classes: the shippers and merchants, wealthier freedmen, successful practitioners of the liberal arts, and so on. It is perhaps not entirely amiss to designate this group “the commercial class.” (In the next chapter I will try to locate the equivalent group at Rome.)

A number of final comments on the *cenaculum* form need to be made. First, as to the amenities, most preserved *cenacula* had no running water, no latrines or bathing facilities,³⁷ and no clearly identifiable kitchens. There are some exceptions: the two-storied *cenacula* II, ii, 3-4 both had latrines, perhaps supplied with water from the Baths of Neptune across the street. More usually, only single-storied *cenacula* had latrines; for instance, the Trajanic Cassette-Tipo had latrines reached usually by corridors, clearly in order to keep resultant odors at a remove from the central dwelling area. So, too, in the variant forms v, iii, 3-4, where the corridors are even longer and dog-legged. In two-storied *cenacula*, both latrines and kitchens were for the same reason perhaps normally confined to the mezzanines where slaves slept. The reverse arrangement is perhaps found in the peculiar variant III, vii, 5,³⁸ which, since it had only one “*cubiculum*” on the ground floor, presumably had sleeping quarters for tenants also on the mezzanine; hence the latrine was on the ground floor, but divided from the rest by a long corridor. In any

³⁶ On the composition of Ostia’s upper classes in the High Empire, see R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 196-208; on freedmen, *ibid.* 217-224. My colleague John D’Arms has carried these studies still further.

³⁷ Cf. Frontin. *Aq.* 2.76, who complains that water from Roman aqueducts had been misdirected “even into *cenacula*”; the Roman authorities discouraged this practice. Martial’s flat had no running water (8.67.7-8), and a tenant mentioned by Martial (12.32.13) obviously had no latrine. R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 586, calls for more study of the subject.

³⁸ Cf. note 25 above.

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event, the absence of running water meant that usually all water had to be toted in; the Garden House complex had six large fountains in the central park, obviously for the use of residents.

Second, since stone and brickwork are generally all that survive from these *insulae*, the amount of wood originally used in them can be underestimated. Still, it appears that most rooms in *cenacula* were ceiled with wooden raftering, and that the use of concrete vaulting was less than common; the Casa di Via Giulio Romano in Rome uses vaulting throughout (except for the shop mezzanines), but other Roman *insulae* plainly employed wooden rafters.³⁹ Wood was also used in window and door fittings, in partition walls, and in furniture, sometimes also for staircases. *Cenacula* were therefore not immune to fires. Despite the generally high standard of upper-class construction, there are also signs of shoddy building in other structures besides the Insula delle Pareti Gialle.⁴⁰

Third, something must be said about the critical role of natural light. The conservative *cenaculum* form exploited a single, long, well-lighted facade. Its plan was dictated by a conscious architectural choice: granted the inadequacy of artificial lighting, a file of rooms behind a single facade could all be evenly lighted only at the cost either of diminished privacy (if all rooms interconnected) or of great inconvenience (if they interconnected via an unlighted rear corridor). In the *cenaculum* form, the Roman architect brought the corridor to the front of the structure, so that it joined the two rooms (the *exedrae*) at either end of the file; while the middle rooms (the *cubicula*) were partitioned off and left with little or no direct lighting, for use in hours of retirement. The deliberateness of this choice is clearly witnessed in the conversion of the apartments in the Baths of Neptune complex, or of the apartment in the Casa di

³⁹ Cf. M. E. Blake and D. T. Bishop (cited n. 12) 98, on the *insula* incorporated into the Aurelian wall.

⁴⁰ See R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 250-251.

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Via Giulio Romano, from a file of rooms to the *cenaculum* form. Elsewhere in Ostia, rows of interconnecting rooms seldom exceeded three rooms in length (e.g. those in the first floor of the Caseggiato del Triofo, III, iii, 1).⁴¹

Such practical considerations suffice to describe the generation of the *cenaculum* form.⁴² From there, its evolution tended to follow the normal lines of Roman architecture. The principal axis was distinguished by the creation of spacious—even luxurious and two-storied—*exedrae* at either end; a widened *medianum* gave a convincing spatial link between the two principal dayrooms; while the intermediate rooms diminished to the dimension of *cubicula*.

This theory of the *cenaculum* form's development is to some extent confirmed by the more lavish variants at Ostia. In these variants, not one but two parallel facades were available to the architect. More conservative examples are the Insula di Bacco Fanciullo (I, iv, 3) and the Insula dei Dipinti (I, iv, 4);⁴³ here the architect made as much as possible of the superb view of the garden on one flank, and simply set a relatively bland corridor inside the street facade.

Far more startling is the recently excavated Insula delle Ierodule (III, ix, 6; 8 is presumably identical) on the west side of the Garden House complex.⁴⁴ Taking advantage of its two facades, the architect dramatically modified the standard plan: the two *exedrae* become smaller, balanced

⁴¹ Built under Antoninus Pius (Packer pp. 164-166, plan: p. 102); the division of rooms on the first floor is restored at p. 166 n. 2.

⁴² By contrast, some scholars see a relationship between the Pompeian *domus* and the *cenaculum* form: e.g. R. Meiggs (cited n. 5) 247; Packer p. 9; B. M. Boyle, *Journ. Soc. Archit. Hist.* 31 (1972) 257-258. While the *medianum* resembles the *atrium* in being a central room, its radical spatial deemphasis and the alteration in its source of light are sufficient to distinguish it entirely; in this respect, reliance on plans is misleading.

⁴³ At least in the former, the partitions date from the original construction, as is shown by the placement of floor mosaics, which are also original (G. Becatti cited n. 18, 16-17).

⁴⁴ See M. L. Veloccia Rinaldi, *RPAA* 43 (1970) 165-180 (plan: p. 167).

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rooms on either end of the *medianum*; two *cubicula* are set back-to-back at one side; and the majority of the space along the *medianum* is given over to a large and handsome salon divided from the *medianum* by two columns. (The plaster ceiling of this salon survived nearly intact and is being restored.) This plan indicates a willingness to depart drastically from the standard *cenaculum* form when light was available from more than one facade. However, in other apartments (e.g. III, IV, 3 and 10) the same architect used the second facade only for direct lighting of the *cubicula*, otherwise preserving the standard plan.

This evidence strongly suggests that the *cenaculum* form derived primarily from the architectural necessity of handling light within a "strip" apartment.

Finally, the social significance of the standardized *cenaculum* form deserves stress. In Ostia's imitation of the dense Roman housing pattern, apartment tenancy in multiple-story *insulae* had obviously become a way of life also for most of the upper classes. The result was the emergence of "modern" apartments and apartment-house complexes. These apartments were erected by speculating landowners and then put at the disposition of a tenant class possessed of the means and position to defend itself, both socially and at law. Such were the architectural and social preconditions for the creation of classical Roman lease law.