

LIVING AND WORKING WITH THE GODS

STUDIES OF EVIDENCE FOR PRIVATE RELIGION
AND ITS MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT
IN OSTIA (100 BC - 500 AD)

JAN THEO BAKKER

LIVING AND WORKING WITH THE GODS

STUDIES OF EVIDENCE FOR PRIVATE RELIGION
AND ITS MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT
IN OSTIA (100 BC - 500 AD)

JAN THEO BAKKER

PROEFSCHRIFT
TER VERKRIJGING VAN DE GRAAD VAN DOCTOR
AAN DE RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT TE LEIDEN,
OP GEZAG VAN DE RECTOR MAGNIFICUS
DR. L. LEERTOUWER,
HOGLERAAR IN DE FACULTEIT DER GODGELEERDHEID,
VOLGENS BESLUIT VAN HET COLLEGE VAN DEKANEN
TE VERDEDIGEN OP DONDERDAG 13 JANUARI 1994
TE KLOKKE 16.15 UUR

DOOR

JAN THEODOOR BAKKER

GEBOREN TE ROTTERDAM IN 1959

PROMOTIECOMMISSIE

PROMOTOREN

PROF.DR. H.A.A.P. GEERTMAN

PROF.DR. H.S. VERSNEL

CO-PROMOTOR

DR. L.B. VAN DER MEER

REFERENT

PROF.DR. J.S. BOERSMA

OVERIGE LEDEN

PROF.DR. L.P. LOUWE KOOIJMANS

PROF.DR. P.H. SCHRIJVERS

PROF.DR. W.J.H. WILLEMS

DR. T.L. HERES

DR. A.J.B. SIRKS

IN MEMORIAM PATRIS

Acknowledgements

During the years of research for this book the help and support of friends and colleagues were always a pleasant surprise. I am indebted to all of them.

It is with great pleasure that I remember the many heated discussions with Dr. Th.L. Heres on Ostia and related subjects. Her explanations and ideas were invariably stimulating and instructive. Dr. A.J.B. Sirks kindly discussed many legal sources with me. Dr. E.M. Moormann gave valuable advice and information concerning paintings. Roman society and religion were recurring themes during countless encounters with drs. G.J.R. Potman. I owe much to his friendship and insight. Drs. R. Visser gave valuable support in Rome and Ostia. My English text was corrected by Mr. E. Heskin.

At the University of Leyden I was supported by prof.dr. H.A.A.P. Geertman, prof.dr. H.S. Versnel, and dr. L.B. van der Meer.

Thanks are also due to the staff of the "Soprintendenza alle Antichità di Ostia". Permission for my research was granted by prof.dr. V. Santa Maria Scrinari, dr. M.S. Arena Taddei, and prof.dr. A.G. Zevi. In Ostia my daily routine was greatly facilitated by dr. A. Pellegrino and dr. M.G. Lauro.

For the collection of material evidence and the consultation of the library of the "Deutsches Archäologisches Institut" in Rome, I received a grant from the Ministry of Welfare, Public Health and Culture, The Hague, for a stay at the Dutch Institute in Rome from January to June 1984. A second stay in Rome, in March and April of 1986, was financed by the "Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche", Rome. A further stay in Ostia, in July and August of 1987, was financed by the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research, The Hague. A final stay, again at the Dutch Institute in Rome, in February and March of 1989, was financed by the Faculty of Arts of the University of Leyden.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

| | |
|--|----|
| § 1 Subject-matter and aims of the study | 1 |
| § 2 Definitions of public and private religion | 1 |
| 2A The antique definitions | 1 |
| 2B Alternative definitions | 3 |
| 2C Specification of the alternative definitions | 4 |
| § 3 <i>Status quaestionis</i> | 5 |
| 3A The decay of Ostia, the plundering of the site, and the excavations | 5 |
| 3B General studies concerning Ostia | 5 |
| 3C Studies concerning religion in Ostia | 7 |
| 3D Studies concerning Roman private religion in general and in cities other than Ostia | 7 |
| § 4 Selection of the material environment of the evidence | 8 |
| § 5 The evidence | 8 |
| 5A Conspectus of the material expressions of private religion | 8 |
| 5B The preservation of the evidence | 12 |
| 5C The functions of niches | 13 |
| 5D The identification of shrines | 15 |
| 5E Selection of the evidence | 16 |
| § 6 Structure of the study | 17 |
| § 7 Technical data | 19 |

Chapter 2: *Domus*

| | |
|---|----|
| § 1 Introduction | 21 |
| § 2 Conspectus of the Ostian <i>domus</i> | 22 |
| § 3 Notes on the dates, appearance, lay-out, size, and distribution | 25 |
| § 4 Notes on the inhabitants and visitors | 28 |
| § 5 Religion in the <i>domus</i> | 32 |
| 5A The evidence | 32 |
| 5B Dates, position, appearance, deities | 37 |
| 5C Participants, beneficiaries, organization | 42 |

Chapter 3: Other habitations

| | |
|---|----|
| § 1 Introduction | 44 |
| § 2 Conspectus of the other Ostian habitations | 46 |
| § 3 Notes on the dates, appearance, lay-out, size, and distribution | 48 |
| § 4 Notes on the owners and inhabitants | 51 |
| § 5 Religion in the other habitations | 54 |
| 5A The evidence | 54 |
| 5B Dates, position, appearance, deities | 54 |
| 5C Participants, beneficiaries, organization | 55 |

Chapter 4: Workshops and depots

| | |
|--|----|
| § 1 Introduction | 56 |
| § 2 Conspectus of the Ostian workshops and depots | 57 |
| § 3 Notes on the dates, appearance, lay-out, size and distribution | 61 |
| § 4 Notes on the owners and workers | 63 |

CONTENTS

vii

| | |
|--|-----|
| § 5 Religion in the workshops and depots | 65 |
| 5A The evidence | 65 |
| The evidence in workshops | 65 |
| The evidence in depots | 68 |
| 5B Dates, position, appearance, deities | 71 |
| 5C Participants, beneficiaries, organization | 76 |
| Chapter 5: Shops, bars, markets, and hotels | |
| § 1 Introduction | 77 |
| § 2 Conspectus of the Ostian shops, bars, markets, and hotels | 78 |
| § 3 Notes on the dates, appearance, lay-out, size, and distribution | 79 |
| § 4 Notes on the owners and personnel | 82 |
| § 5 Religion in the shops, bars, markets, and hotels | 84 |
| 5A The evidence | 84 |
| The evidence in shops and bars | 84 |
| The evidence in communal parts of buildings and related to shops | 87 |
| The evidence in hotels | 90 |
| 5B Dates, position, appearance, deities | 91 |
| 5C Participants, beneficiaries, organization | 95 |
| Chapter 6: Unclassifiable evidence | |
| § 1 Introduction | 96 |
| § 2 Presentation of the evidence | 96 |
| 2A The evidence | 96 |
| The evidence which formed part of the selected material environment: | |
| The material evidence | 96 |
| The graffiti | 103 |
| The evidence which may have formed part of the selected material environment | 104 |
| 2B Dates, position, appearance, deities | 109 |
| 2C Participants, beneficiaries, organization | 110 |
| Chapter 7: The <i>mithraea</i> | |
| § 1 Introduction | 111 |
| § 2 Presentation of the evidence | 111 |
| 2A The evidence | 111 |
| 2B Dates, position, distribution, appearance, deities | 112 |
| 2C Participants, organization | 115 |
| Chapter 8: The <i>compita</i> | |
| § 1 Introduction | 118 |
| § 2 Presentation of the evidence | 118 |
| 2A The evidence | 118 |
| The evidence from Ostia | 118 |
| The evidence from Rome | 124 |
| The evidence from Pompeii | 125 |
| 2B Dates, position, distribution, appearance, deities | 127 |
| 2C Participants, organization | 132 |
| Chapter 9: The Sacello del Silvano | |
| § 1 Introduction | 134 |
| § 2 Data concerning the bakers in Ostia | 135 |

| | | |
|---|---|-----|
| 2A | Archaeological evidence | 135 |
| 2B | Inscriptions | 138 |
| 2C | Legal sources | 139 |
| § 3 | The organization and the customers of the Ostian and Roman bakers | 142 |
| § 4 | The Sacello del Silvano | 145 |
| 4A | History of the excavations | 145 |
| 4B | The building periods of room 24 and the Sacello | 149 |
| 4C | The paintings and the floor-mosaic in the Sacello | 150 |
| | Summary of the succession of the layers of plaster; identification of the figures | 150 |
| | The dates of the plaster and the floor-mosaic | 152 |
| | Layers 1 and 2 | 153 |
| | Layers 3 and 4 | 155 |
| | Layer 5 | 163 |
| | Layer 6 | 163 |
| | The floor-mosaic | 163 |
| 4D | The fire and the finds | 164 |
| 4E | The functions of room 24 and the Sacello | 164 |
| 4F | The initiators of and the people using the Sacello | 165 |
| | | |
| Chapter 10: The buildings and the people | | |
| § 1 | Introduction | 168 |
| § 2 | Dates | 168 |
| § 3 | Appearance, lay-out, size, and distribution | 170 |
| § 4 | The owners, inhabitants, visitors, workers, and personnel | 175 |
| | | |
| Chapter 11: Interpretation of the evidence in habitations and in commercial premises | | |
| § 1 | Introduction | 178 |
| § 2 | Dates | 178 |
| § 3 | Position | 179 |
| | <i>Domus</i> | 179 |
| | Other habitations | 181 |
| | Workshops and depots | 182 |
| | Shops, bars, markets, and hotels | 183 |
| | Unclassifiable evidence | 184 |
| § 4 | Appearance | 186 |
| § 5 | Deities | 191 |
| § 6 | Participants, beneficiaries, and organization | 193 |
| | | |
| Chapter 12: Interpretation of the <i>compita</i>, the <i>mithraea</i>, and the Sacello del Silvano | | |
| § 1 | Introduction | 195 |
| § 2 | The <i>compita</i> | 195 |
| | Dates | 195 |
| | Position and distribution | 195 |
| | Appearance | 198 |
| | Deities | 201 |
| | Participants and organization | 202 |
| § 3 | The <i>mithraea</i> | 204 |
| | Dates | 204 |
| | Position and distribution | 204 |
| | Deities | 205 |
| | Participants and organization | 205 |

CONTENTS

ix

| | |
|---|-----|
| § 4 The Sacello del Silvano | 207 |
| Deities | 207 |
| Participants and organization | 207 |
| Catalogue A: Chapters 2 to 6 | 209 |
| Evidence of unknown origin | 241 |
| Appendix: a depiction of Silvanus near the Mitreo del Palazzo Imperiale I | 242 |
| Catalogue B: The <i>compita</i> | 243 |
| Catalogue C: The Sacello del Silvano | 251 |
| Caseggiato dei Molini, room 24 | 251 |
| Caseggiato dei Molini, room 25 (Sacello del Silvano) | 251 |
| Caseggiato dei Molini, room 25: plaster | 254 |
| Mural paintings in the Sacello del Silvano - Eric M. Moormann | |
| § 1 Introduction | 262 |
| § 2 Technical, stylistic and iconographic analysis | 262 |
| 2A Phase 2 | 262 |
| 2B Phase 3-4 | 265 |
| Augustus | 266 |
| Alexander the Great | 267 |
| Augustus and Alexander | 268 |
| The Dioscures | 269 |
| 2C Phase 5 | 269 |
| 2D Phase 6 | 270 |
| Bibliography | 271 |
| Lists | |
| List of figures | 273 |
| List of plates | 274 |
| Bibliography | 279 |
| Indexes | |
| Index of classical authors and legal sources | 295 |
| Index of inscriptions, graffiti, painted texts, and stamps | 297 |
| Index of the evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum | 299 |
| Topographical index | 300 |
| General index | 307 |