

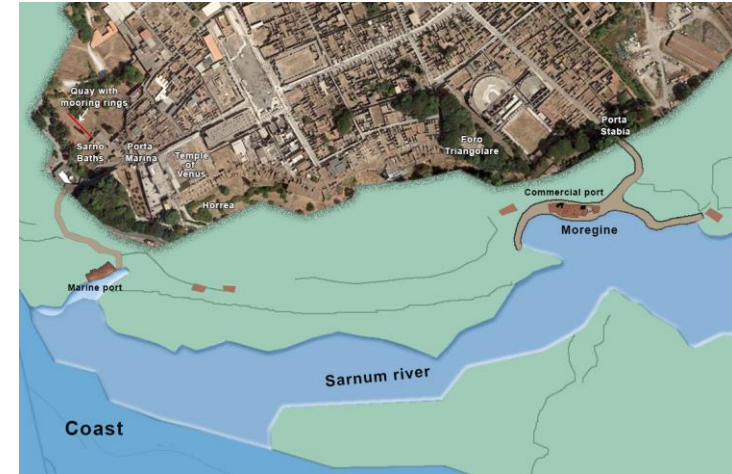
# The poor and enslaves at Pompeii

Pompeii: The life, death and  
rediscovery of a Roman town  
(HPAH5078/HPAH6078)



# Identifying the enslaved at Pompeii

- Chattel slaves and the Roman world.
  - Both social and economic slavery.
  - Slave society?
- Lack of slave testimony at Pompeii or Herculaneum.
- Occasional epigraphic testimony.
  - Golden bracelet: “The master [gives this] to his very own slave girl”.



Discovered at Moregine, near Pompeii

# Slaves in the archaeology and funerary record

- Mausolea of prominent families.
  - tomb of Munatius Faustus outside the Nuceria Gate.
- Rare at Pompeii for tombstones to record that someone was a slave.
- The so-called “shackled man” – outside Capuan Gate.

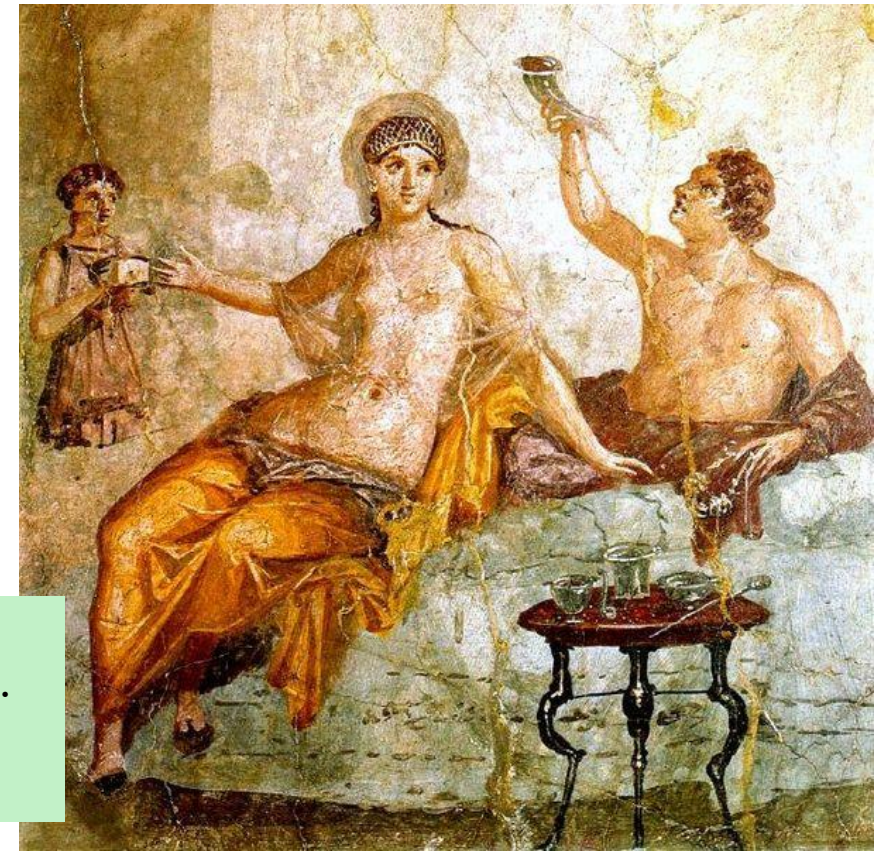


# The enslaved in Pompeiian households

- Potential slave quarters?
  - House of Menander (I.10.4), the House of the Centenary (IX.8.3), and House of the Prince of Naples (VI.15.7-8).
- Art and the presence of slaves.



Banqueting scene from the House of the Triclinium (V.2.4). Naples Archaeological Museum, inv. 120029.



Girl with slave box in background (Herculaneum). Naples Archaeological Museum, inv. 9024.

- Commonly argued that the house came into the possession of Aulus Vettius Conviva and Aulus Vettius Restitutus.
- Paintings in paired dining rooms (*n* and *p*).
  - Severy-Hoven (2012) “Paired scenes of eroticised torture”.
  - Symbolic expression of power of the *pater / paterfamilias*?
- Among the scenes represented are Pentheus being torn apart, the punishment of Dirce, and the punishment of Pasiphae.

## House of the Vettii (VI.15.1)



# Voices of freed- people in Pompeii

---

- Successful freedmen keen to advertise their status.
- Sodales or Sacerdotes Augustales.
- Gaius Calventius Quietus and Gaius Munatius Faustus received *bisellia*.
- Sons of freedmen
  - Numerius Popidius Amphilatus.



A fresco from the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum, showing a man in a dark tunic and a woman in a light tunic standing in front of a wall with large, stacked jars. The man is on the left, looking towards the right. The woman is on the right, looking towards the left. The wall behind them is covered with large, stacked jars, likely for storing food or wine. The fresco is in a state of significant disrepair, with many areas of the original paint missing and the surface heavily eroded.

# The poor in Pompeii

# Attitudes to poverty

---

- Complex Latin terminology: *inopia*, *egestas*, *mendicitas*
- Seneca the Younger – “poverty” (*paupertas*) viewed as a virtue.
- *CIL* IV 9839b: “I hate the poor. Whomsoever wants something free of charge is a fool. Give the money and accept the thing.” [i.e., pay for it]



# Poverty in Pompeii



- Food poverty: “Then the common crowd, whom rude poverty does not allow any other choice of food and forces to find foul supplements and free feasts for their shrunken stomachs, rushed up to these banquets that our set out everywhere.” – **Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 4.14.**
- In aggregate – a range of local and non-local foodstuffs available.
  - e.g., Carvo V sewer in Herculaneum.
- Some “price data” from graffiti. 9