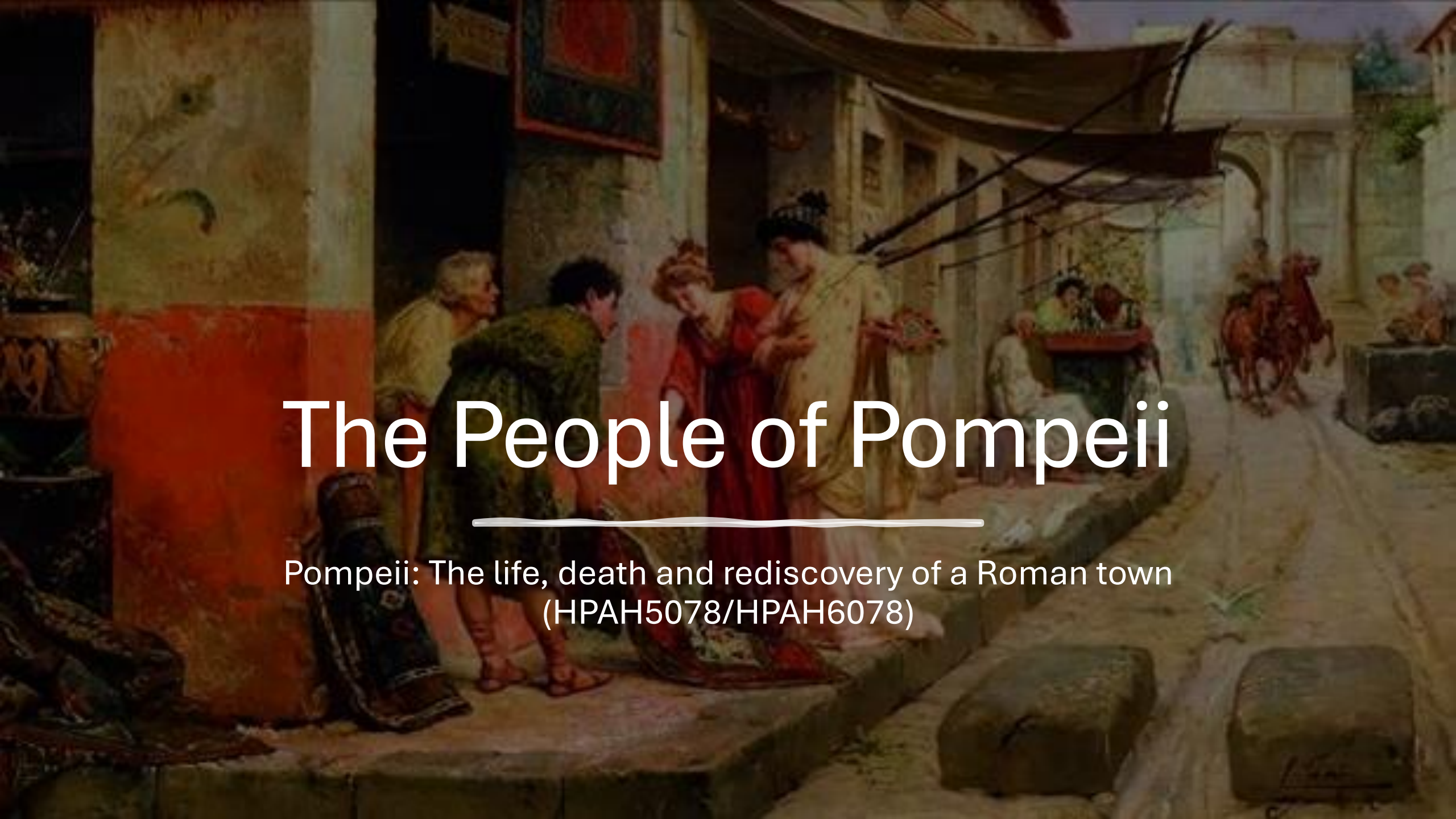


The background of the slide is a detailed painting of a Roman street scene in Pompeii. In the foreground, a man in a green cloak and sandals is walking towards the left, followed by a woman in a red dress. To their right, a man in a yellow robe is walking. In the background, a chariot pulled by two horses is visible, and other figures are scattered along the street. The buildings are made of stone and have a red lower section. The overall scene is a typical representation of ancient Roman life.

The People of Pompeii

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

Ground-Up History

- What was life like for the first century AD inhabitants of Pompeii (and Herculaneum)?
 - Size and composition of the population
 - Their prosperity
 - Local dependency and trade
 - Their health and well-being



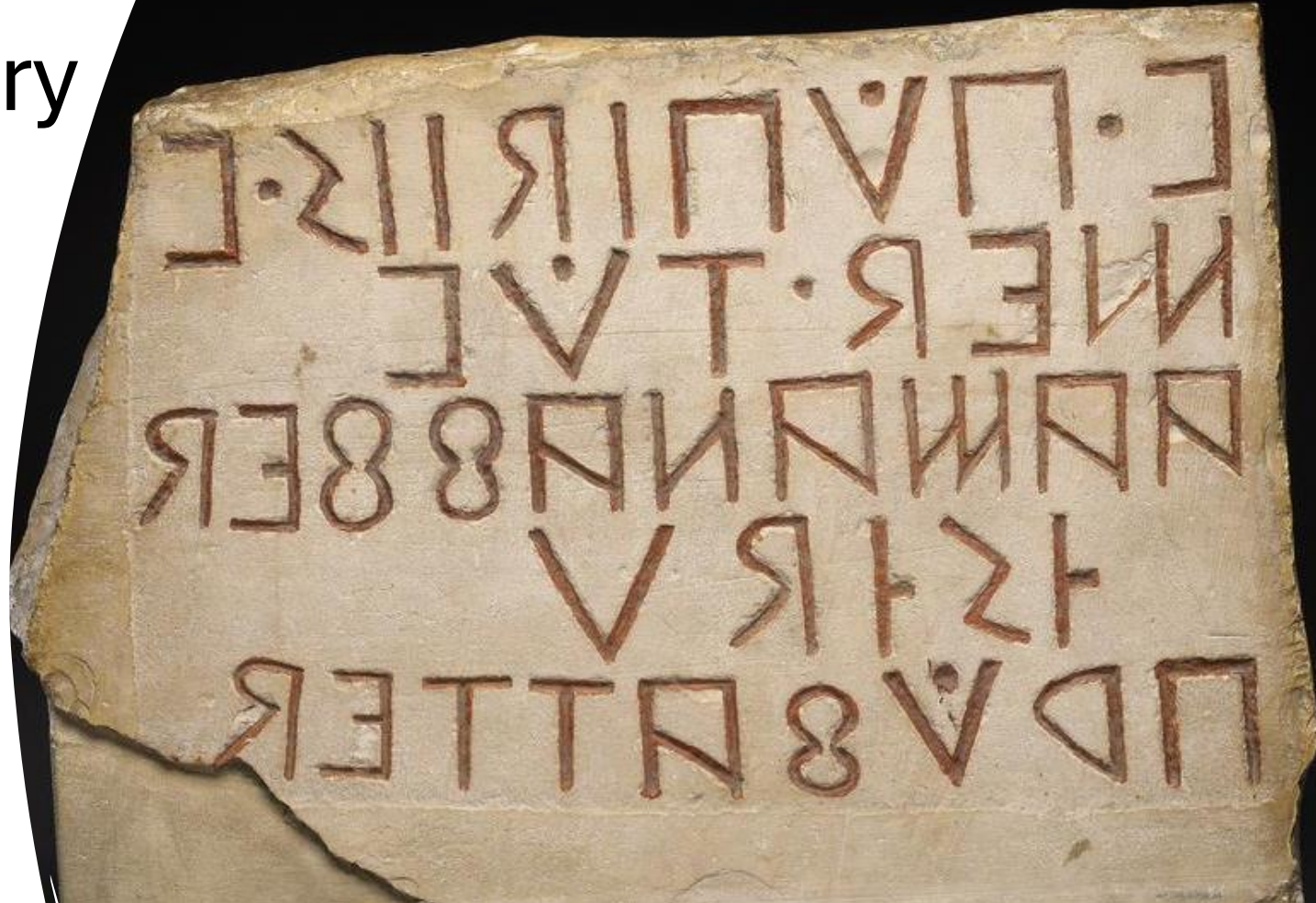
A painting of a Roman street scene. In the center, three women are gathered around a white stone table. One woman on the left wears a yellow dress and holds a basket. A second woman in a white dress is leaning over the table. A third woman on the right, wearing a blue and white striped dress, stands with her back to the viewer, balancing a large brown jar on her head. A small white dog sits on the table. The ground is paved with irregular stones, and a broken jar lies on the left. The background features red and white painted walls and a doorway. The text "How do we know about the people of Pompeii?" is overlaid in white.

How do we know about the
people of Pompeii?

Textual and documentary evidence

- Some literary testimony.
- Far more epigraphic evidence.
 - Evidence for linguistic, cultural and socio-economic diversity.

‘I like my Tusculan and Pompeian houses very much, only I, who saved so many creditors, ran into debt up to my ears on account of building them.’ – **Cicero *Letters to Atticus* II.1.11.**



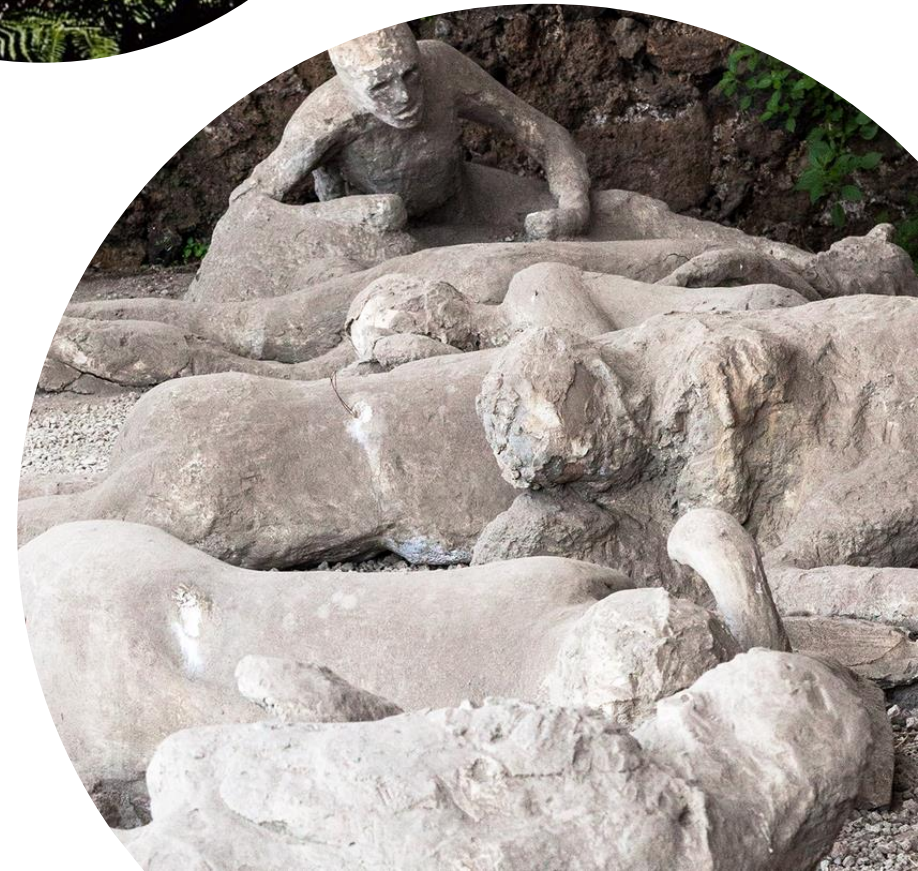
‘Vibius Popidius, son of Vibius, chief magistrate (*meddix tuticus*) had this built, the same person passed (it) as completed.’ – British Museum: 1867,0508.76

Physical remains and material culture

- Structural remains
- Material remains
- Organic remains
 - Human, botanical and faunal
- Plaster casts



Palaestra at Pompeii (II.7).
Plaster-cast of the
root of a large tree.
Photo by Stanley A.
Jashemski (1964).





Scientific archaeology

- Conservation and (dis)articulation.
- Fairly full demographic range in skeletal remains.
 - Numbers at Pompei unclear; around 345 victims at Herculaneum.
- Evidence for tuberculosis and brucellosis, but also hyperostosis frontalis interna in around 360 female skulls.

Population
size,
prosperity
and economic
integration





How to estimate Pompeii's first century AD population?

Possible methods

- Seating capacity of the Amphitheatre
 - Ca. 20,000
- Total area of Pompeii (inside walls)?
 - Questions of density and suburbs.
- Number and variations of housing units?
 - *domūs*, *tabernae*, apartments
- Estimates ranging from 7,500 to 20,000 people.

What was the size of the hinterland?

- Estimates range from 100-200 km².
 - Purcell: 130 (115 usable and 75% under cultivation).
- Carry capacity 9,100 tons of grain?
 - Notionally 45,500 people at subsistence level.
- Pompeii probably not above 12,000-13,500.

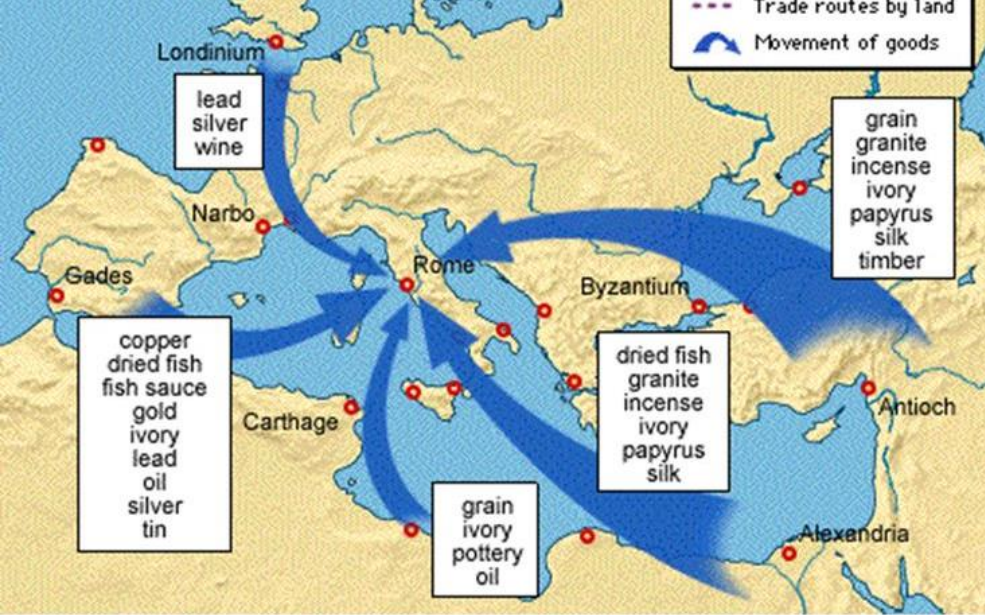


House of Venus and the Four Gods
(Apollo, Jupiter, Mercury and Diana)
[Pompeii 9.7.1].



Inequality and the relative prosperity

- **How do we measure levels of inequality?**
- Number and types of different buildings?
 - 25% of people living in apartments and small taberna [units above shops] – 75% in different sized “houses”.
 - Presence of peristyle gardens and/or porticos (about top 25% of *domūs*).
 - Decorations and renovations?
 - Even some *tabernae* had decorations.



Economic integration into the Empire



- More than subsistence.
 - Consumption of imported goods.
 - Grain from Egypt?
- Sources of wealth in Pompeii?
 - Trade and exports.
 - Textiles, wine, garum?
 - Elites with “holiday” homes in the area?

A detailed mosaic artwork depicting a variety of marine life. In the foreground, a large, light-colored fish with a dark stripe along its side is prominent. Above it, a long, yellowish eel with a dark patterned body is coiled. To the left, there are several smaller fish and crustaceans, including what appears to be a crab. The background is filled with more intricate details of sea creatures, all rendered in a mosaic style with small, dark tiles. The overall color palette is dominated by earthy tones like browns, yellows, and greys, with some highlights of red and blue.

Diet and health

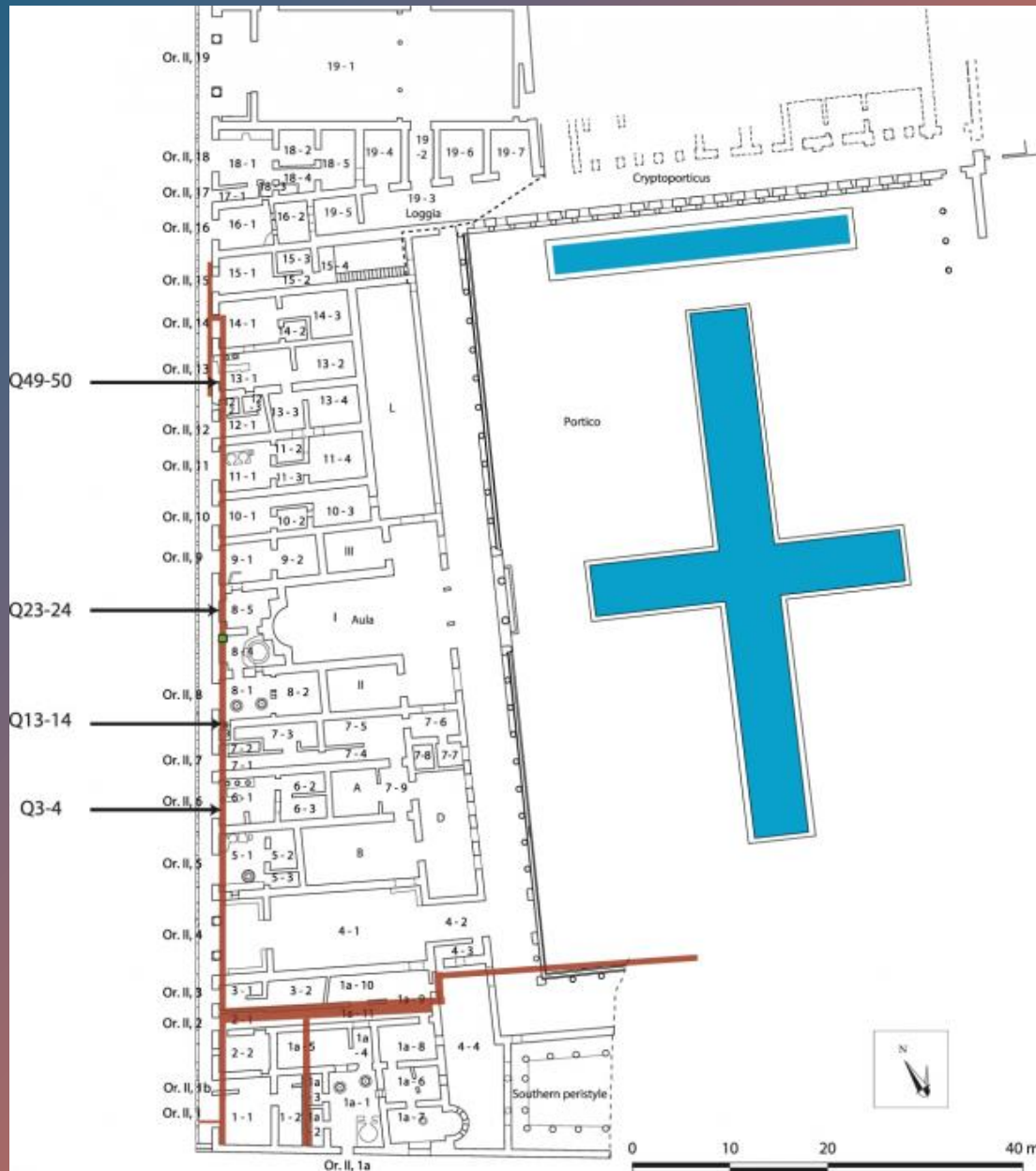


Health of the population

- **Can skeletal height tell us about levels of health?**
- Diet not exclusively determined by wealth.
- Diversity of diet:
 - Various types of cereals, 20 different types of fruits, nuts, herbs, fish and eggs.

House of Julia Felix in Pompeii,
Naples National Archaeological
Museum

Consumption habits



- Cardo V sewer (Herculaneum): 114 different edible foodstuffs identified
- Insula Orientalis II – “middling income inhabitants”
- More imports and variety.
 - Compare 4th to 2nd century BC House of Amarantus at Pompeii.