



Lecture 14. Food Supply in ancient Rome

Roman diet: basics

- ***Grain***
- ***Vegetables***
- ***Cheese***
- ***Condiments*** (oil, herbs, spices, fruit and honey)
- ***Meat, fish***
- ***Garum***
- ***Wine***

- ***Receipts by Apicius, *Cookbook***



Alimenta: food programme in Italy by emperor Trajan



Annona

- *Annona* was a personification of plenty. Related to Ceres.
- Product of the annual harvest of corn.
- Imperial institution created by Augustus and dealing with the food provisioning of Rome



Cornerstone of the Roman diet, either in the form of bread or as a kind of porridge.

Grains used encompassed millet, wheat and barley boiled up and eaten plainly or flavoured with cheese, honey, eggs or milk.

The high density of population of the city of Rome and Italy made them dependant on massive imports mostly from Egypt.

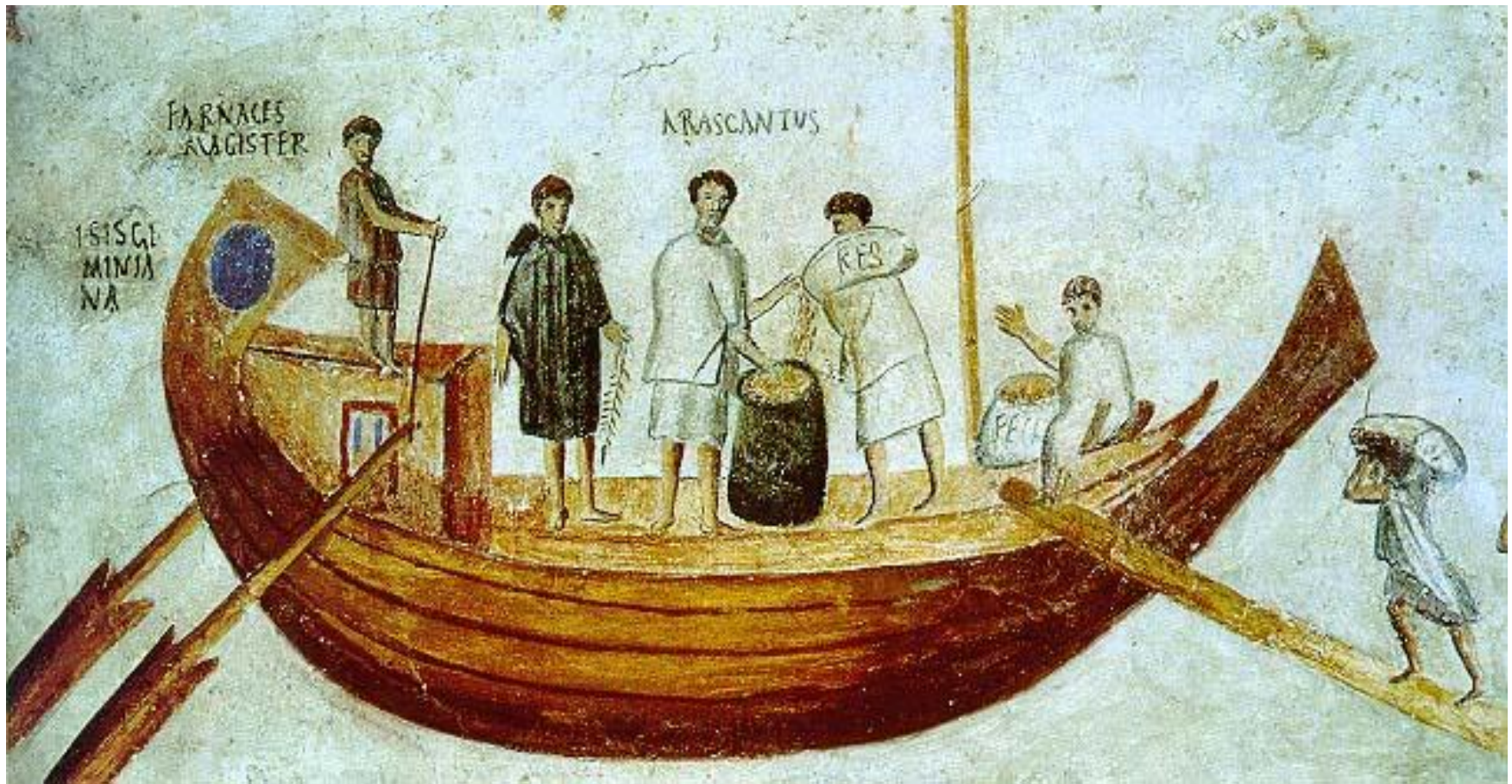
Grain



Grain supervision



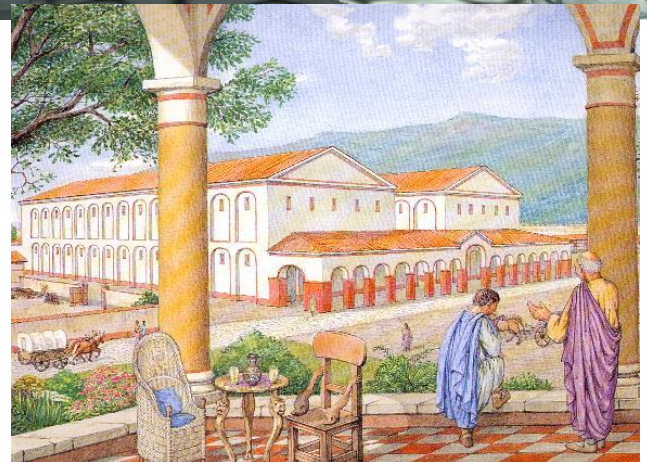
Grain: The Isis Geminiana. Fresco, Ostia



Horrea

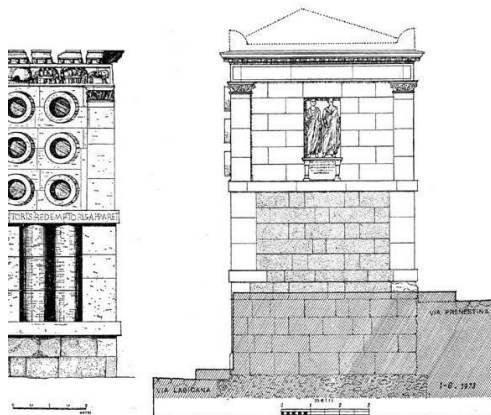


**Horrea Epagathiana,
Ostia**



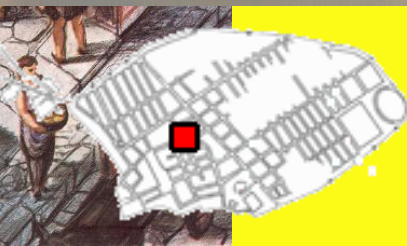
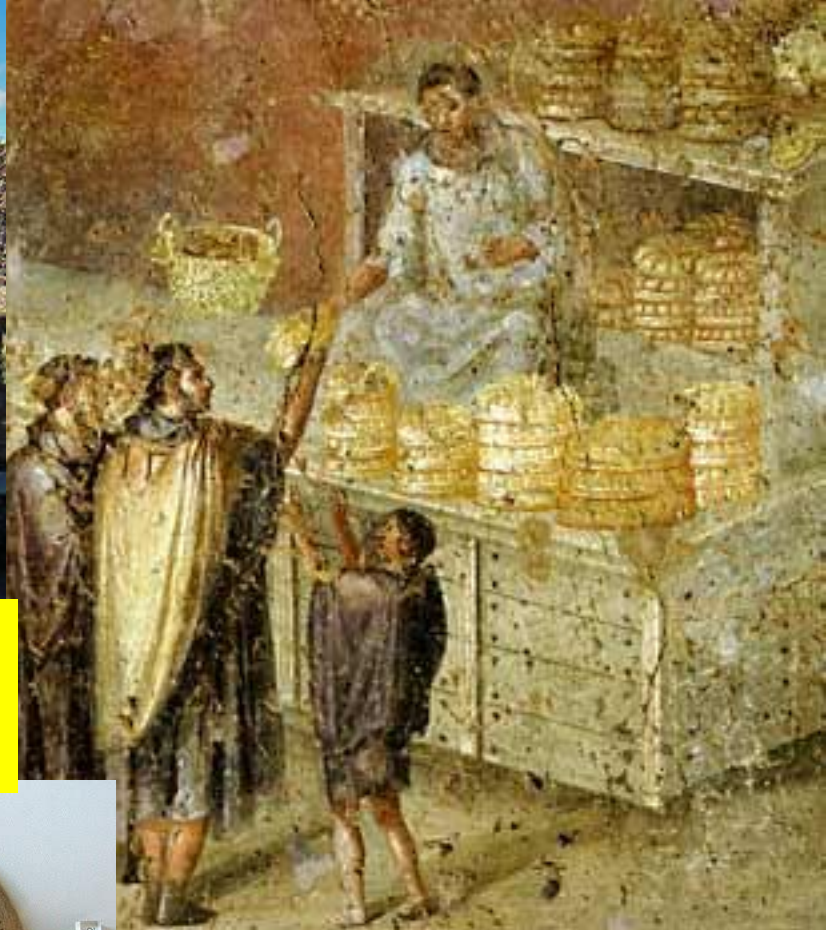
Tomb of the baker M. Vergilius Eurysacis

Tomb located on the via Praenestina of the Aurelian wall. The inscription (CIL 12, 1203-5) reveals that Eurysacis was a *pistor* or baker. The horizontal and vertical cylinders in rows possibly are designed to represent measures for grain or vessels for mixing dough. Above these cylinders is a cornice, and a frieze covered with reliefs representing the various operations of breadmaking.



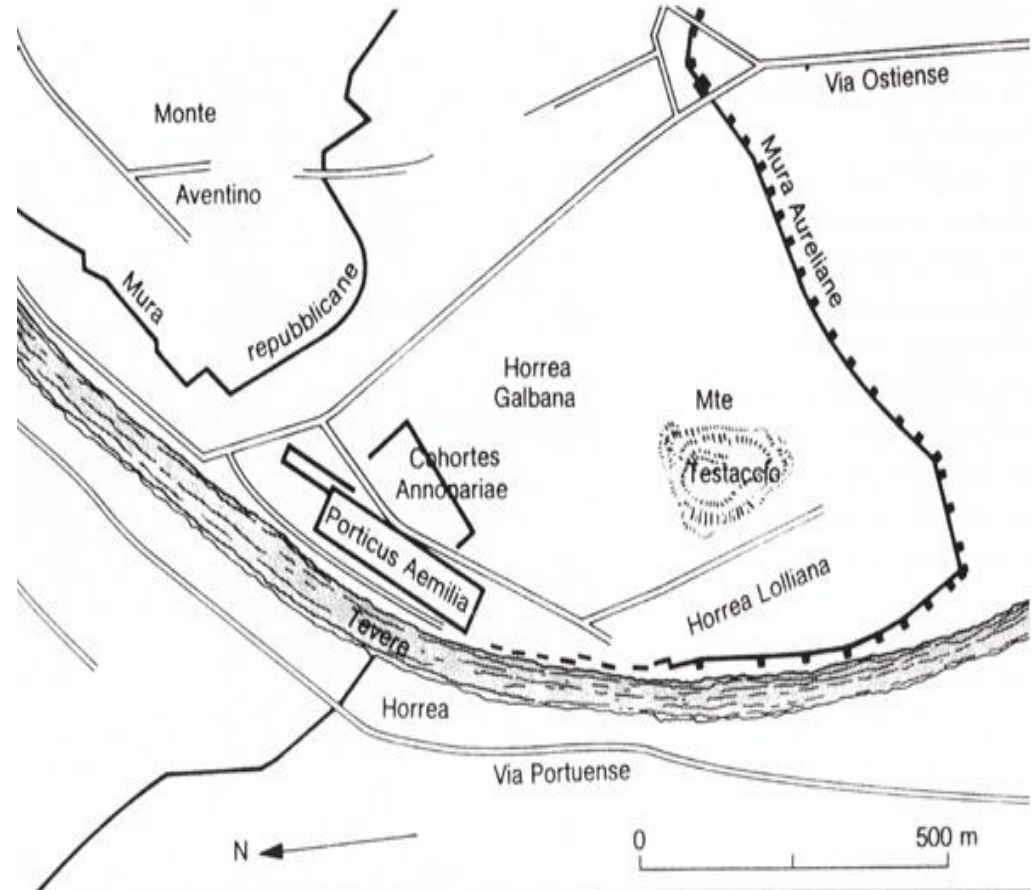
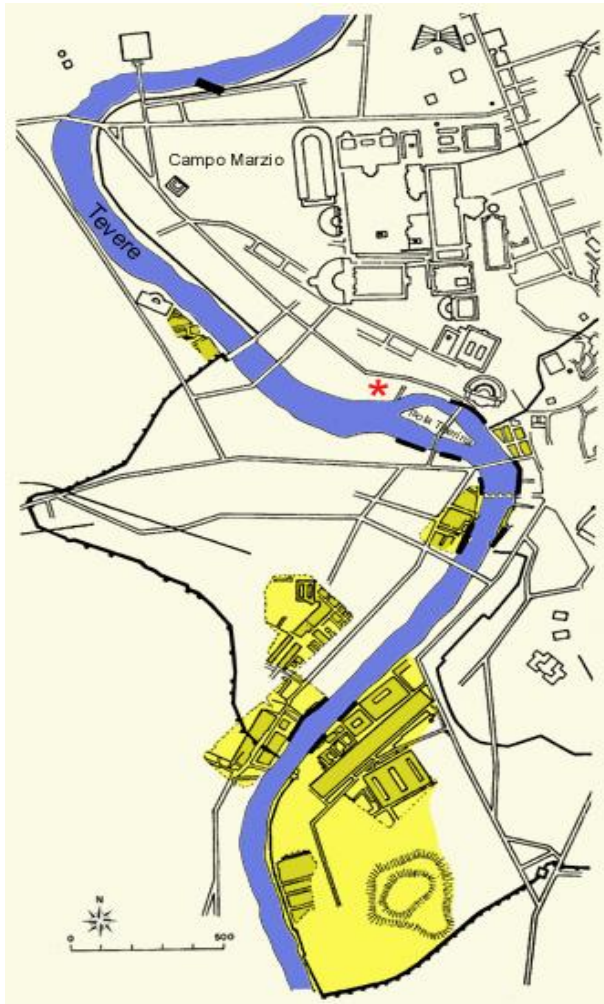


Bakery of
Popidius
Priscus



**Mills and
bakeries in
Pompeii**

Oil in Rome. Emporium and Monte Testaccio

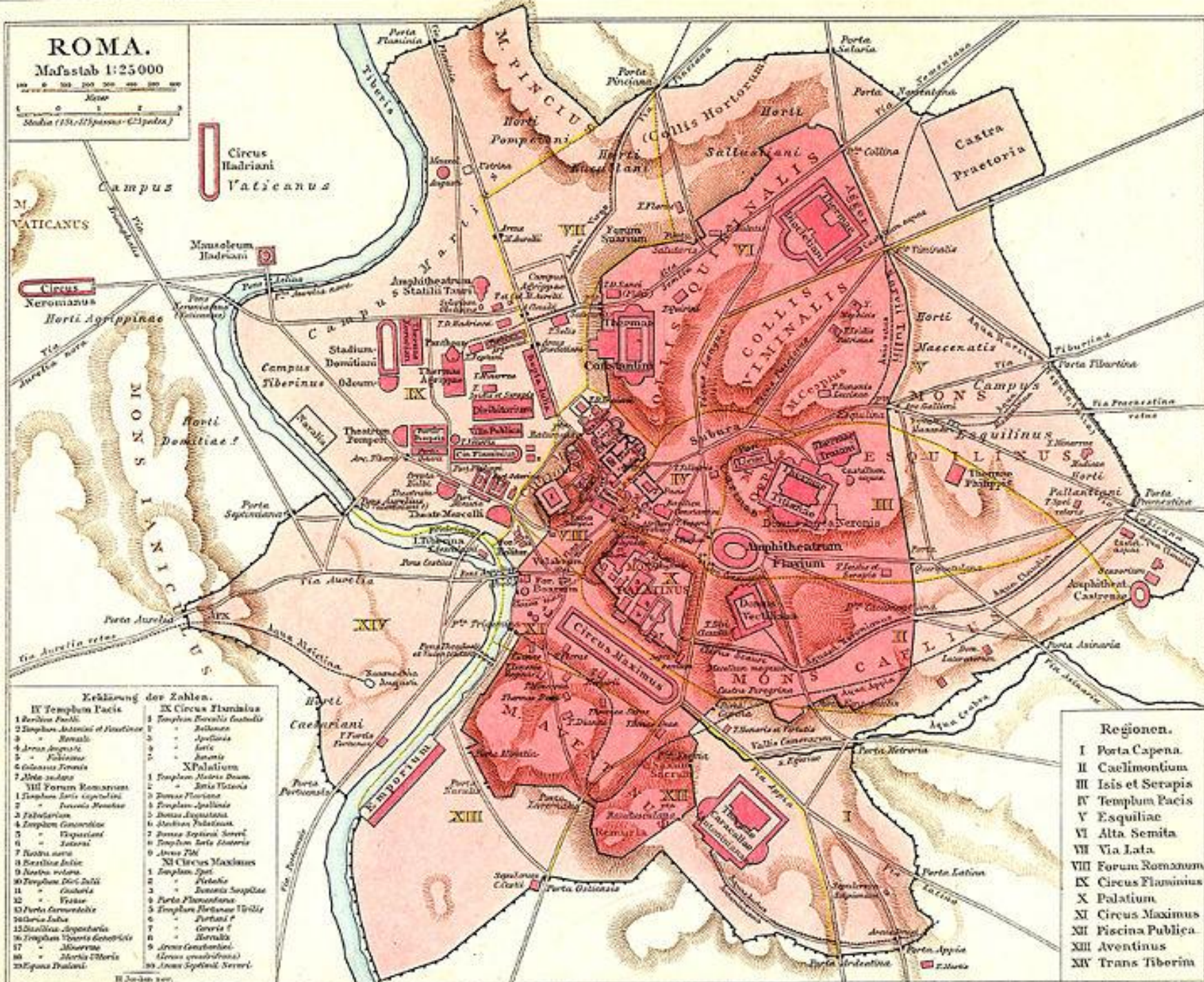
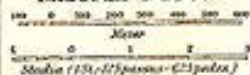


Monte Testaccio



ROMA.

Maßstab 1:25 000

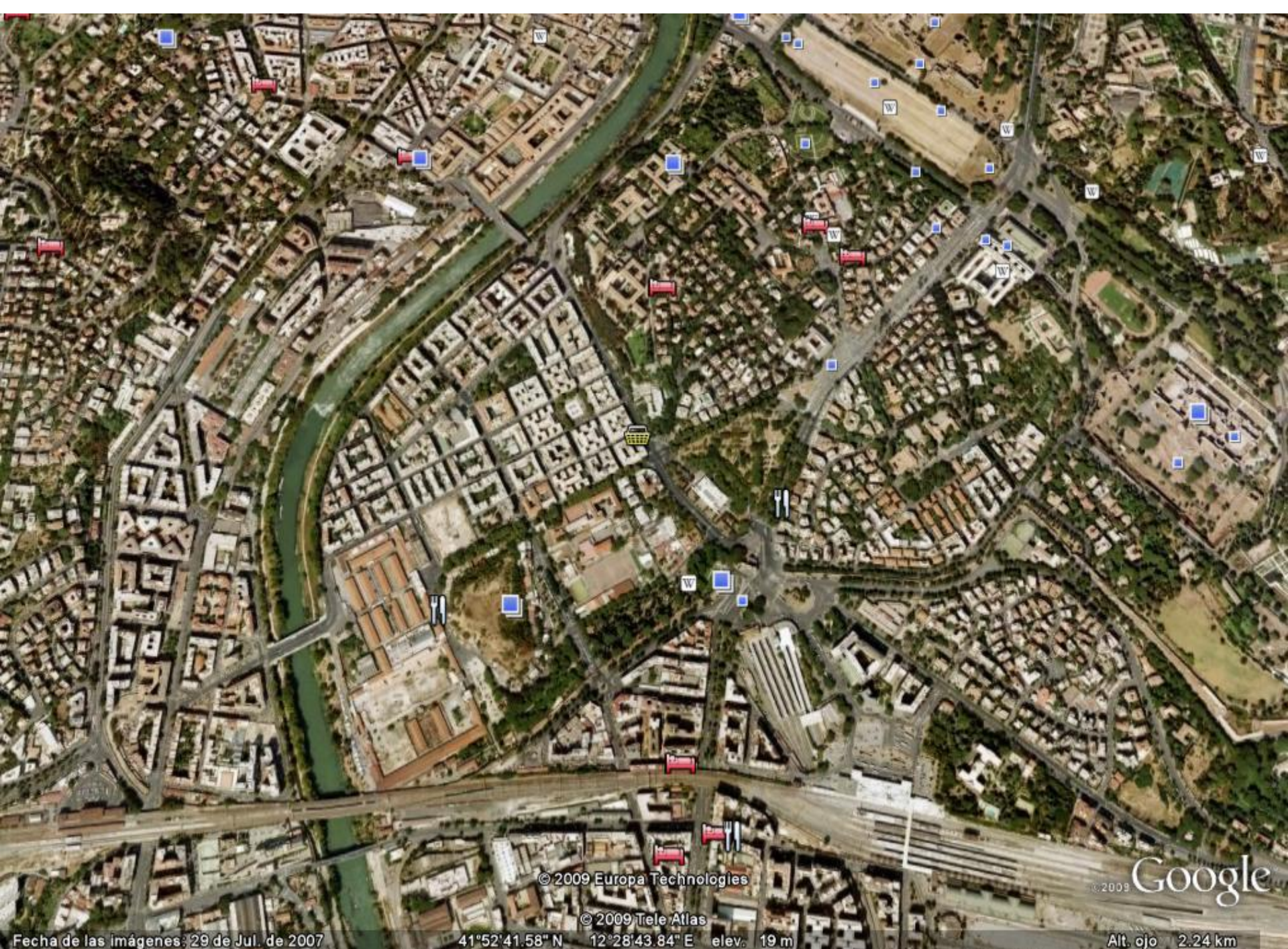


Erklärung der Zahlen.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| IV Templum Pacis | IX Circus Flaminus |
| 1 Basilica Pacis | 1 Templum Pacis |
| 2 Templum Antonini et Faustinae | 2 Basilica |
| 3 - Basilica | 3 Basilica |
| 4 Arva Augusti | 4 Basilica |
| 5 - Basilica | 5 Basilica |
| 6 Basilica Traiana | 6 Basilica |
| 7 Basilica Julia | 7 Basilica |
| VIII Forum Romanum | X Palatium |
| 1 Templum Iovis Capitolini | 1 Templum Iovis Capitolini |
| 2 - Basilica | 2 Basilica |
| 3 Templum Saturni | 3 Basilica |
| 4 Templum Concordiae | 4 Basilica |
| 5 - Basilica | 5 Basilica |
| 6 - Basilica | 6 Basilica |
| 7 Basilica Julia | 7 Basilica |
| 8 Basilica Julia | 8 Basilica |
| 9 Basilica Julia | 9 Basilica |
| 10 Templum Iovis Capitolini | 10 Basilica |
| 11 - Basilica | 11 Basilica |
| 12 - Basilica | 12 Basilica |
| 13 Basilica Julia | 13 Basilica |
| 14 Basilica Julia | 14 Basilica |
| 15 Basilica Julia | 15 Basilica |
| 16 Basilica Julia | 16 Basilica |
| 17 - Basilica | 17 Basilica |
| 18 - Basilica | 18 Basilica |
| 19 Basilica Julia | 19 Basilica |
| 20 Basilica Julia | 20 Basilica |

Regionen.

- I Porta Capena
- II Caecilium
- III Isis et Serapis
- IV Templum Pacis
- V Esquilinae
- VI Alta Semita
- VII Via Lata
- VIII Forum Romanum
- IX Circus Flaminus
- X Palatium
- XI Circus Maximus
- XII Piscina Publica
- XIII Aventinus
- XIV Trans Tiberina



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Fecha de las imágenes: 29 de Jul. de 2007

41°52'41.58" N 12°28'43.84" E elev. 19 m

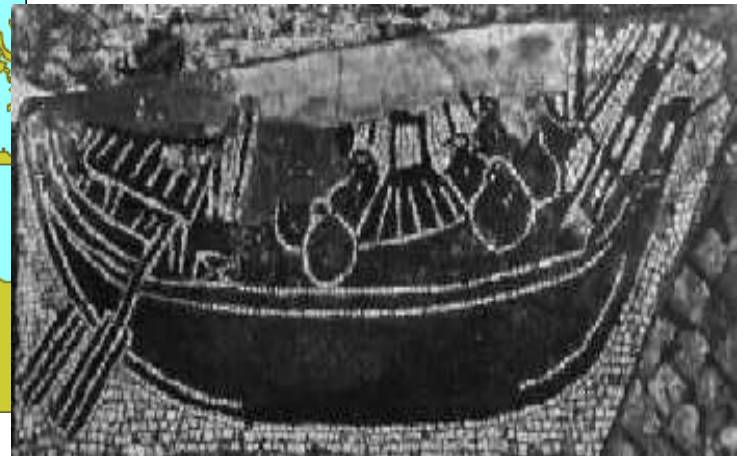
Alt. ojo 2.24 km



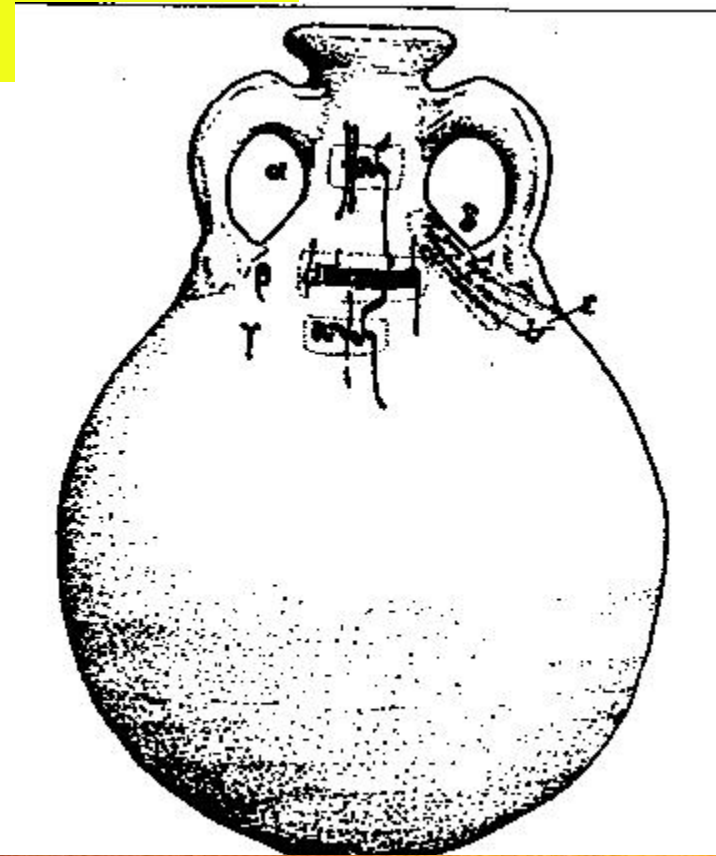
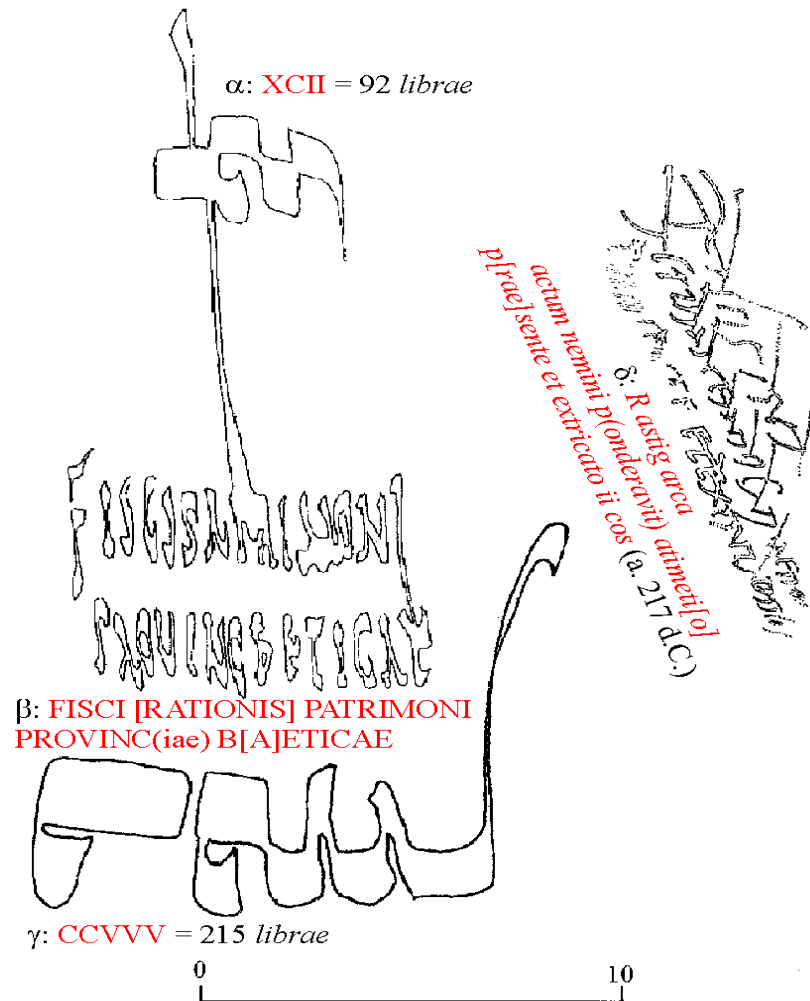
Monte Testaccio:
millions of Roman
oil amphorae



Baetican Oil Amphorae. Distribution



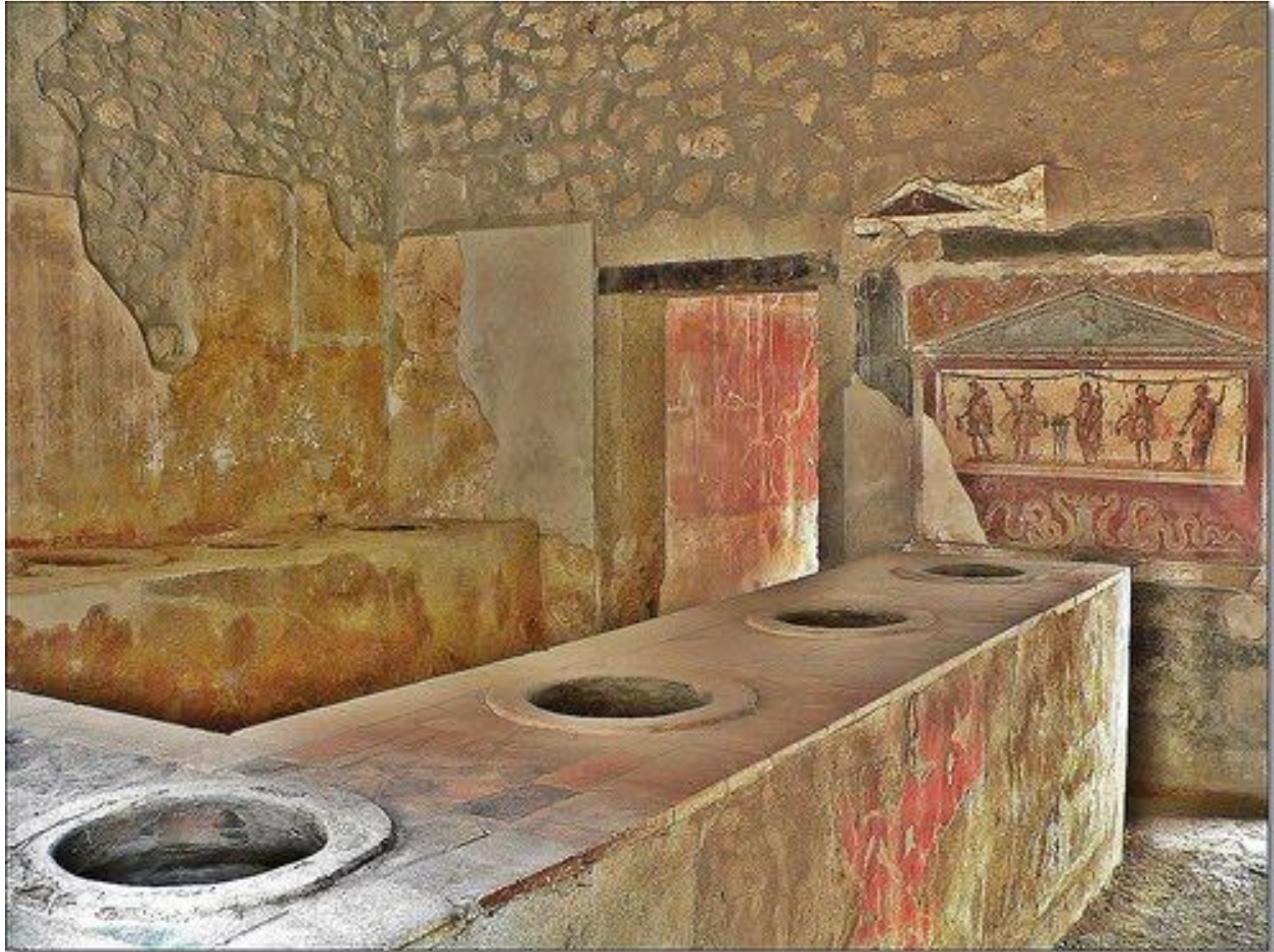
Baetican Oil Amphorae. Epigraphy



Tabernae



Taberna (Thermopolium – Warm drinks) of Vetutius Placidus in Pompeii



Wine in Pompeii



Wine in Pompeii

- **Pliny the Elder**, *Natural History* 14, 35:
“For around Vesuvius is the Murgentine vine, a very strong species from Sicily, which some call Pompeian, productive only in fertile soil, like the Horconian variety, which is grown only in Campania.”

Wine in Pompeii. Graffiti

- Inscription on the walls of a bar, Street of the Augustales: **CIL IV 1679**: “Hedone says, ‘You can drink here for one as, if you give two, you will drink better, if you give four, you will drink Falernian.’”

Garum or fish sauce

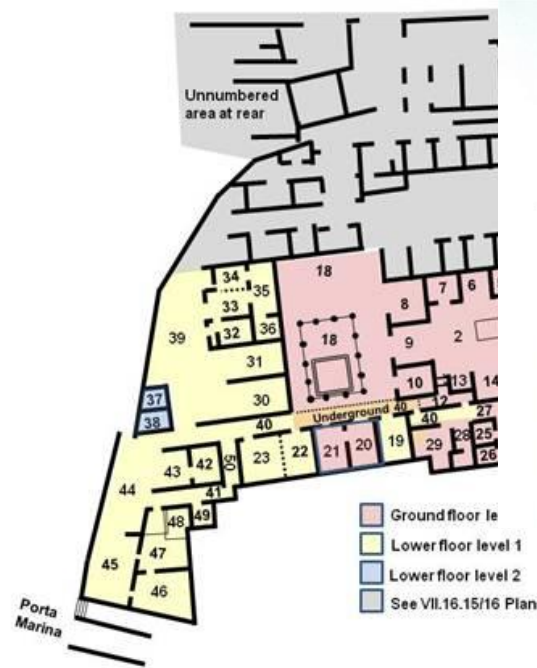
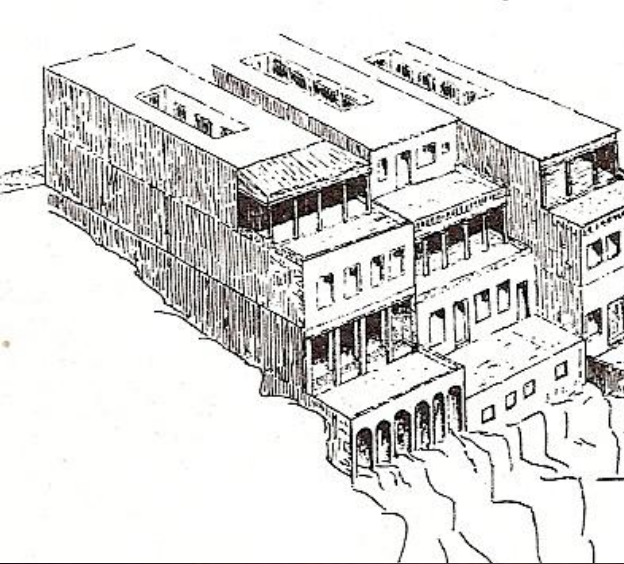
- ***Garum***. Made by fermenting mackerel and other fish in huge vats, it was transported all over the Roman Empire.
- However, it does not feature as an ingredient in regular recipes where salt was more commonly used.
- It is however regularly included in recipes found in Apicius's, cookbook. This suggests it was more of an expensive elite condiment.

Fish sauce or *garum*

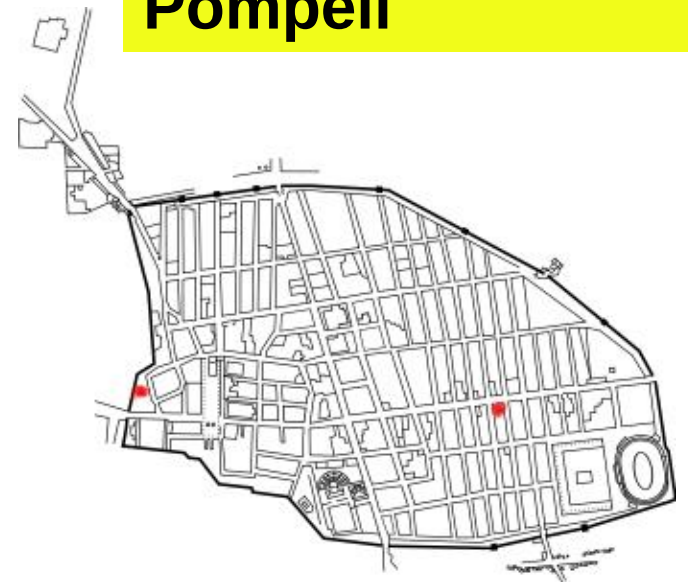
- **Pliny the elder**, *Natural History* 31, 93-94:
“Furthermore, there is another type of choice fluid, called garum, produced from the guts of fish and anything else which would have been discarded, steeped in salt – in other words, it is the fermentation of decaying matter... these days, the most popular garum is made from the mackerel in the fisheries of New Carthage.., and around twelve pints costs 1000 sesterces. Almost no fluid except for perfume begins to fetch a greater price, bringing fame to the countries of origin... Clazomenae too is praised for its garum, as are Pompeii and Leptis...”

A roman garum producer and trader: the case Umbricius Scaurus

- Local producer of *garum* from Pompeii.
- Scaurus and his son run a successful garum bussinness in the 60s and 70s of the 1st century AD.
- 50 small one handed containers found linked with him.
- Around 30 per cent of inscriptions on fish sauce containers in Campania relate to his workshops.
- One fish sauce container inscribed with his name has even been found at Fos-sur-mer in southern France.

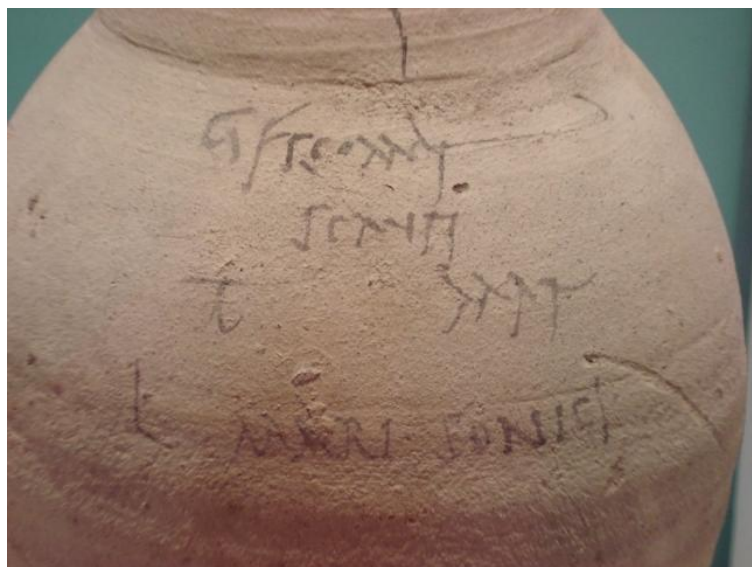


The Umbricii Scaurii: garum traders from Pompeii



Pompeiiian
mosaic of a
"flower of
garum" pitcher
with the *titulus*
G(ari) F(los)
SCON
SCAURI EX
OFFI(CI)NA
SCAURI

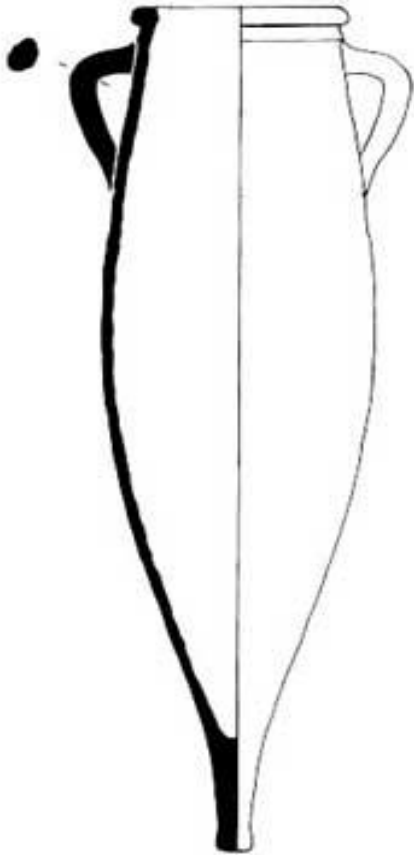
Scaurus. Garum amphorae



GARVM FLOS
SCOMBRI
SCAVRI
EX OFFICINA NINHTI
CIL IV, 5692



Garum amphora



I: Wines; preservation of various foods.

II: Minced dishes

III: Vegetables

IV: Quiches, timbales and related food.

V: Peas, beans, lentils.

VI: Fowl

VII: Roast meats, mushrooms and truffles, egg dishes.

VIII: Venison, lamb, pork.

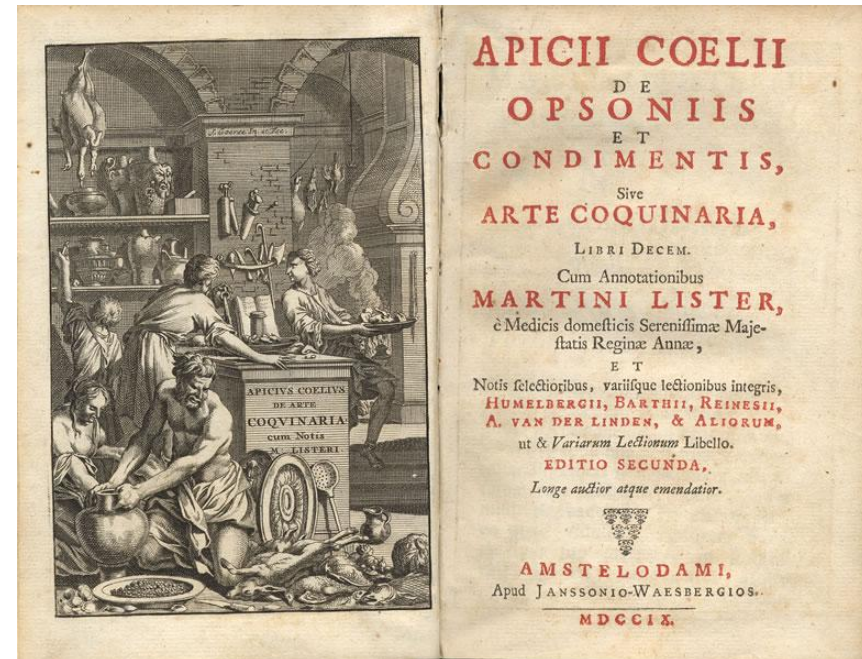
IX: Seafood.

X: Sauces for seafood.

Excerpts by Vinidarius: Seafood, pork, lamb.

* *Text of the receipts available in LacusCurtius*

Apicius, De Re Coquinaria. 1st century AD



Apicius' Cookbook examples

- **Book I: 3 Roman Vermouth, Absinthium Romanum**
- Roman vermouth or Absinth is made thus: according to the recipe of Camerinum you need wormwood from Santo for Roman vermouth or, as a substitute, wormwood from the Pontus cleaned and crushed, 1 Theban ounce of it, 6 scruples of mastich, 3 each of nard leaves, costmary and saffron and 18 quarts of any kind of mild wine. Filter cold. Charcoal is not required because of the bitterness.

Book I. Preservation of food

- **11 To Keep Cooked Sides of Pork or Beef or Tenderloins**
Callum porcinum vel bubulum et unguellae coctae ut diu durent
Place them in a pickle of mustard, vinegar, salt and honey, covering meat entirely. And when ready to use you'll be surprised.
- **12 To Make Salt Meat Sweet Ut carnem salsam dulcem facias**
You can make salt meats sweet by first boiling them in milk and then finishing them in water.
- **13 To Keep Fried Fish Ut pisces fricti diu durent**
Immediately after they are fried pour hot vinegar over them.
- **22 To Preserve Fresh Figs, Apples, Plums, Pears and Cherries**
Ficum recentem, mala, pruna, pira, cerasia ut diu serves
Select them all very carefully with the stem on and place them in honey so they do not touch each other.

Book VII: Roast meats, mushrooms and truffles, egg dishes

- **261 Ostian Meat Balls Offellae Ostienses**
- Prepare the meat in this manner Clean the meat of bones, sinews, etc. Scrape it as thin as a skin and shape it. Crush pepper, lovage, cumin, caraway, silphium, one laurel berry, moistened with broth; in a square dish place the meat balls and the spices where they remain in pickling for two or three days, covered crosswise with twigs. Then place them in the oven to be roasted, when done take the finished meat balls out. Crush pepper, lovage, with the broth, add a little raisin wine to sweeten. Cook it, thicken with roux, immerse the balls in the sauce and serve.

Roast meats, mushrooms and truffles, egg dishes

- **271 Sauce for All Boiled Dishes**
Jus in elixam omnem
- Pepper, lovage, origany, rue, silphium, dry onion, wine, reduced wine, honey, vinegar, a little oil, boiled down, strained through a cloth and poured under the hot cooked meats.

Book VII. A desert?

- **294 Home-made sweets**
Dulcia domestica et melcae
- Little home confections (which are called dulciaria) are made thus: little palms or (as they are ordinarily called) dates are stuffed — after the seeds have been removed — with a nut or with nuts and ground pepper, sprinkled with salt on the outside and are candied in honey and served.



Book IX. Seafood

- **398 Broiled Lobster**
Locustas assas



Makes thus if broiled, they should appear in their shell; which is opened by splitting the live lobster in two season with pepper sauce and coriander sauce moisten with oil and broil them on the grill. When they are dry keep on basting them more and more with oil or butter until they are properly broiled.

