

THE RURAL LANDSCAPE OF ROME'S SUBURBS THROUGH THE CENTURIES AS DOCUMENTED IN THE *CARTA DELL'AGRO ROMANO*: THE CASES OF VIA OSTIENSE AND VIA TIBURTINA

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1. Rome as palimpsest: from the *Carta dell'Agro Romano* to the *Carta per la Qualità* (M. Marcelli – M. Munzi)

In this paper we analyse the development of the rural landscape of Rome's suburbs, from ancient to modern times. In our approach, Rome is basically considered as a palimpsest: pre-historic evidence, proto-historical settlements, archaic centres, Roman Republican and Imperial age farms and villas, medieval towers and fortified villages, modern farmsteads (*casali*) and the infrastructure of areas reclaimed in recent times, all are elements of a complex and articulated multi-period puzzle, which could be analysed in synchronic layers and/or in diachronic ways. On the other hand, reading this history only in terms of development and decline is too simplistic. It is also of great relevance to understand the changing interaction between this special city and the rural world outside. Contemporary Rome is at the same time the product of its urban and rural cultural heritage.

The analysis focuses on two exemplary cases, the territories along the via Ostiense and the via Tiburtina (limited within the municipal boundaries of Roma Capitale), two of the most important roads connecting Rome to the neighbouring region (fig. 1)¹ and whose existence goes back to proto-historical times. During the centuries, according to need, both roads were adapted, regularized and prolonged, but always remained the main axes of organization of the surrounding districts. The two roads form a line which passes through Rome from NE to SW, connecting the city on one side with the eastern hinterland and on the other with the sea. They represent the long history of complex and sometimes difficult relations between centre and periphery. We present here a synthesis of this contrast, following the transformations of the rural space from the ancient *suburbium* to the contemporary periphery, on the basis of documents collected in the archives of the Sovrintendenza Capitolina.

At the beginning of the 1960s, in order to prepare the new General Urban Plan of Rome, it became necessary to identify, catalogue and map all the historical heritage in the territory around Rome. Topographical surveys in Rome's district, carried out by archaeologists, architects and art historians, led up in 1980 to the publication of the *Carta storica archeologica monumentale e*

¹ For this approach: Bjur/Santillo Frizell 2009; see also Marcelli/Matteucci/Sebastiani 2009.

paesistica del suburbio e dell'Agro Romano (Historical Archaeological Monumental and Landscape Map of the Roman Suburbs and Countryside)² (Fig. 2). The purpose of the new instrument was to preserve not only the monumental complexes, but also all the suburban historical elements which were in danger of being destroyed during the wild urbanization in progress: those elements included, for example, archaeological structures and pottery sherds, towers, farmhouses and historical estates. In the following years the *Carta dell'Agro Romano* was completed with some thematic annexes: in 1990 the *Carta del Parco Regionale dell'Appia Antica* (Appian Way Regional Park Map); in 1992 the *Carta dei vincoli*, i.e. the map of the elements protected by law, and in 1996 the *Carta dell'Archeologia Industriale* (Industrial Archaeology Map).

At a later stage data were merged into a Geographical Information System GIS (par. 2), in order to transfer them to a new map, the *Carta per la Qualità* (Urban Quality Map), incorporated in the General Urban Plan adopted in 2003 and approved in 2008 (Fig. 3). The *Carta per la Qualità* concerns not only the hinterland but also the city inside the Aurelian walls: together with the archaeological, monumental and landscape elements, resulting from the *Carta dell'Agro Romano*, the new map records also modern architecture, public buildings and urban morphologies. The new cartographic instrument is currently used by the Sovrintendenza Capitolina to evaluate new building and urban projects.

2. The GIS of the *Carta dell'Agro Romano* (M. Marcelli)

In 2000 all data collected in the archive of the *Carta dell'Agro*, revised and updated, were digitalised and merged into a Geographical Information System (GIS) based on ESRI technology³: the historical elements represented on the *Carta* were mapped on a geo-referenced cartography of the Rome district and connected to a relational database. The aim of the project was to integrate all data relating to immovable sites and monuments that must be preserved in future urban planning, in order to obtain a useful tool to protect, maintain and value the suburban historical landscape of Rome⁴.

In 2010 the *Carta dell'agro* GIS was annexed to the general Catalogue Information System of the Sovrintendenza, created to classify and manage the entire artistic, archaeological, cultural and historical heritage of Rome (SIMART: *Art Museums Territory Information System*). A specific sector of the census of Rome's historical heritage contains information concerning approximately 8000 topographical elements, both medieval/modern and archaeological, organized within specific typological categories⁵ and linked to bibliographic, cartographic, historical and archival sources. The system also includes an iconographic patrimony of over 49,000 digital images, coming from the photographic archive of the *Carta dell'Agro*.

The geographic component of the information system is available through an intranet Web-GIS, accessible even to inexperienced users (Fig. 4). The items listed are identified using vector

² Approved with Del. C.C. 959/1980. The map used the aero-photogrammetric SARA-Nistri, 1:10.000, the same of the General Urban Plan. Edited in 1982–1988, it consists of 38 sheets comprising the entire municipal territory outside the perimeter of the Aurelian Walls. About 6000 historical, monumental and landscape elements were surveyed and marked with special colour symbols, in order to make immediately perceptible their typology, chronology and state of conservation.

³ The ESRI software initially used for vector mapping is ArcGIS 3.2, later replaced by ARCMAP 9.3.1: Marcelli/Schingo 2013.

⁴ About the *Carta per la Qualità* GIS, see: Marcelli, Schingo 2013; Asor Rosa, Rossi 2013 with previous bibliography.

⁵ The main diachronic categories are: rural and residential settlements and houses, roads, water infrastructures, funerary systems and tombs, religious buildings, towers and fortresses, archaeological remains, industrial sites, ecc.: Marcelli/Schingo 2013; Asor Rosa/Rossi 2013; Lanna et al. 2014.

layers (points, lines, polygons), provided with a data table, in which one can perform queries based on different attributes (e.g. category, name, address, typology, property).

The Web-GIS aims to integrate GIS technology in the structure of SIMART, in order to handle geographical queries and spatial analysis. In particular it provides interfaces that allow users to browse from maps to data sheets and vice versa. The system provides specialized role-based access to create and edit geographical elements and to connect them to the related information. Currently it includes data on all historical farmsteads of the Roman countryside, all archaeological sites and monuments property of the city of Rome, and buildings of industrial archaeology.

The system also provides the main historic maps of Rome and many geo-referenced background themes (street map of Rome, cadastres, roads, hydrology, geology), essential tools to create thematic maps.

Finally the GIS can be considered not only a scientific system to study the historical evolution of the suburban landscape, but a proper instrument for land use and urban planning, in which all the historical elements that have marked the territory find their place and are appropriately evaluated. In this way, by means of an accurate documentation and knowledge of the territory, it is possible to preserve and manage in the best possible way the historical and cultural heritage in the development of the modern urban and suburban landscape.

3. Roman policy in Dacia and the changing interface between Rome and its *suburbium* (M. Munzi)

The meaning of the Latin term *suburbium* has changed through the centuries. In Imperial times the sense of the word was extended to indicate all of central and southern Italy, from the *Italia suburbana* of Pliny, the Elder to the *regiones suburbicariae* of the *Codex Theodosianus* and *Notitia Dignitatum*⁶. But, strictly speaking, the term referred to the lands between Rome and the surrounding urban centres, most of them of proto-historic or archaic origin. Human activity, settlement and production (agriculture, mining, commerce) in the Roman suburbs, left traces over the centuries which, properly documented and interpreted, make known the various forms of development of the landscape.

The interface between *urbs* and *suburbium* has a very articulated history that stretches through the centuries, according to the development of the city of Rome since its proto-historic formation. During the Republican and Imperial ages the urban boundary was sacredly marked by the *pomerium*. Being originally the limit between *urbs* and *ager*, under the emperors Claudius and Vespasian it became also the symbol of the imperial frontier in expansion, as declared by the inscriptions on the pomerial boundary stones: *auctis Populi Romani finibus pomerium ampliavit terminavitque*. As a consequence, it was enlarged several times by those generals and emperors who had expanded the territory under the dominion of Rome⁷. The boundary between urban and suburban was also represented, in a physical way, by the Servian city walls during the Monarchy and the Republican period and then later by the Aurelian Wall. It is relevant to underline that Dacia left a mark not only in the monumental history of Rome – the Dacian wars of AD 101–102 and 105–106 were immortalized in Trajan's Column and in the historical reliefs of Trajan's Forum, built thanks to the enormous Dacian booty – but also in the diachronic recon-

⁶ Columella, *De re rustica*, 11, 2, 61 (*sicut suburbana regione Italiae*); Pliny *Naturalis Historia*, 26, 19 (*Siccentur hodie Meroide Pomptinae paludes tantumque agri suburbanae reddatur Italiae!*); *Codex Theodosianus*, 11, 16, 12, AD 380 (*suburbicariis partibus*), 11, 1, 19, AD 365 (*suburbicarias regiones*), 11.28.12, AD 418 (*Picenum vero et Tusciam suburbicarias regiones*); *Notitia Dignitatum*, Occ., 12 (*suburbicarias regiones*); cfr. De Dominicis 1939.

⁷ Andreussi 1999.

figuration of the boundary between the city of Rome and its suburb. This aspect is certainly less known, but some late-antique literary sources allow us to reconsider this argument.

The *Historia Augusta* preserves the only mention of an extension of the *pomerium* attributed to Trajan: «no emperor can expand the *pomerium*, until he has subjected to the dominion of Rome some foreign territory. Therefore, until then, only Augustus, Trajan and Nero had been able to do so»⁸. Even without any comparison in the remaining literary or epigraphic documentation, this reference to an expansion of *pomerium* realized during the principate of Trajan seems rather plausible, at least so it appeared to the late antique biographer of Aurelian, and certainly explainable on the basis of the Dacian conquest accomplished by Trajan, certainly well known to the biographer⁹.

Another link between the Dacian events and the evolution of the boundary dates to the time of Aurelian. This emperor, born in *Pannonia* or in that part of *Maesia* that thanks to him became the province of *Dacia Ripensis*¹⁰, in the year AD 271 began the construction of the new massive city walls (the *muri Aureliani*) in order to defend Rome from the barbarian invasions and at the same time abandoned the province conquered by Trajan, creating a new *Dacia* on the right bank of the Danube, which was divided into two provinces: *Ripensis* along the river and *Mediterranea* in the hinterland¹¹. The need to surround the capital with defensive walls was the direct result of the concern generated by the incursions of Iuthungi and Alamanni: in late AD 270 or early 271 they passed the Alps and came down into the Po Valley until Aurelian, after a first defeat suffered in Piacenza, beat them at Fano and Pavia¹². Arriving in Rome after the victory, Aurelian in the spring of AD 271 had to deal with the rebellion (*sedition*) of the mint's workers headed by the *rationalis* Felicissimus, which had become a sort of urban revolt and civil war¹³. In the clashes, which surely were particularly cruel, according to the *Vita Aureliani* 7000 soldiers of the Imperial army fell, at least part of which originated from the Dacian sector of the Danubian *limes*¹⁴.

4. Via Tiburtina and via Ostiense

4.1 Via Tiburtina (M. Munzi)

The *via Tiburtina* was in origin a path of seasonal transhumance, used by shepherds who periodically moved their flocks from the Apennine mountains to the Tyrennian coast, along the *Anio* river valley. In historical times it took the name of *Tiburtina* from the allied town Tibur

⁸ *Historia Augusta, Vita Aureliani*, 21: «His actis cum videret posse fieri ut aliquid tale iterum, quale sub Gallieno venerat, proveniret, adhibito consilio senatus muros urbis Romae dilatavit. Nec tamen pomerio addidit eo tempore sed postea. Pomerio autem neminem principum licet addere nisi eum qui agri barbarici aliqua parte Romanam rem publicam locupletaverit. addidit autem Augustus, addidit Traianus, addidit Nero, sub quo Pontus Polemoniacus et Alpes Cottiae Romano nomini sunt tributae».

⁹ Theoretically possible according Giardina 1995, p. 124–125; accepted by Bennett 1997, p. 150, in connection with the conquest of Dacia, as a symbolic re-foundation of Rome, materialized through a large program of public building of monuments.

¹⁰ *Historia Augusta, Vita Aureliani*, 3, 1: *divus Aurelianus ortus, ut plures loquuntur, Sirmii familia obscuriore, ut nonnulli, Dacia ripensi*; Eutropius, 9, 13: *Aurelianus suscepit imperium, Dacia Ripensi oriundus*.

¹¹ On the abandonment of Dacia: Bador 1973; Găzdac 2002 and 2010 for the numismatic documentation.

¹² Dexippus, *FGrH* (F. Jacoby ed.) 100 F6.4 and 100F7; *Historia Augusta, Vita Aureliani* 18, 3–6 (Marcomanni); Zosimus, 1, 49; Aurelius Victor, *Epitome de Caesaribus*, 35, 2; cfr. Saunders 1992.

¹³ Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus*, 35, 6 and *Epitome de Caesaribus*, 35.2; Eutropius, 9, 4; cfr. Cubelli 1992, p. 8–52; in general cfr. Watson 1999.

¹⁴ *Historia Augusta, Vita Aureliani*, 38: *Hi compressi sunt septem milibus Lembariorum et Ripariensium et Castrianorum et Daciscorum interemptis. Unde apparet nullam mihi a dis immortalibus datam sine difficultate victoriam*.

(now Tivoli), to which it led after 19 miles. Tibur, the main centre of the Equi, was situated in a high strategic position, controlling the pass of the last natural barriers before arriving to the plain of Rome.

Following the Roman expansion eastward in the late 4th and early 3rd centuries BC the road was prolonged by a magistrate of the *gens Valeria*, taking the name of *Tiburtina Valeria*. With further expansion the *via Tiburtina* reached the Adriatic coast at Ostia Aterni (Pescara), with a total length of 125 *milia*.

The road left Rome from the *porta Esquilina* of the Servian walls (arch in via S. Vito, restructured by Augustus and Gallienus) and crossed the Aurelian walls at *porta Tiburtina*, in origin a monumental arch of the *aquae Marcia*, *Tepula e Iulia* (built by Augustus in 5 BC) incorporated in the urban walls. The road passed twice the *Anio* River, over the bridges later named Ponte Mammolo and Ponte Lucano, the latter situated at the foot of Tibur hill. Near the modern Setteville started a secondary road connecting Tiburtina with Salaria and southern Sabina¹⁵. From Ponte Lucano another secondary road led to *via Praenestina*. Maintenance works are documented by milestones until late 4th century AD¹⁶.

The road was equipped, at least since the 1st century BC, with infrastructures for the comfort of travellers, such as *mansiones* and *stationes*. Properly maintained, they remained in use until late antiquity. Along the Tiburtina road-infrastructures have been identified by excavations in via Stanislao Cannizzaro (a *stabulum*) at the V mile, and in the locality of Settecamini (a *mansio*) between VIII and IX miles¹⁷.

The continuity of use of the road until the present-day is well exemplified by the vicissitudes of Ponte Mammolo. The medieval name of the bridge is attested to already in 1030 (*pons Mammi*, while in 962 it is called *pons Marri*). The double arched bridge of the late Republican era reconstruction in *opus quadratum* of tufa, still partially preserved, was probably damaged by the Goths of Totila in 547¹⁸, rebuilt by the Byzantine general Narses and fortified in the medieval period. With the treaty signed in 1111 in the vicinity of Ponte Mammolo (*in agro iuxta pontem Mammeum qui Romanos a Teutonicis dirimebat*) pope Paschalis II was forced to grant the emperor Henry V the right to lay investiture. Until the 15th century the bridge with its fortification (*turris*) maintained a strategic military relevance and was often involved in the local skirmishes. The tower was in ruin when the bridge was drawn by the engraver Giuseppe Vasi (c. 1760). Seriously damaged in 1849 by the French troops attacking the Repubblica Romana, it was replaced by a new bridge 400 m downstream by pope Pius IX in 1853–1866, which in 1867 was interrupted to prevent an attempt to enter Rome by Giuseppe Garibaldi and again in 1870 against the Italian army (Fig. 5), so that the bridge now in use is the result of modifications of the late 19th century¹⁹.

4.2. Via Ostiense (M. Marcelli)

The ancient *via Ostiensis*²⁰ led from Rome to Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber, as its name implies, covering a distance of 16 miles. Probably it followed the course of a very ancient path, maybe the *via Salaria*, in use before the foundation of Rome, which led to the salt pans (*salinae*)

¹⁵ The so-called Tiburtino-Cornicolana: Coste 1999, p. 70–73; Moscetti 2009, p. 27–29.

¹⁶ About the road and the surrounding territory cfr. in general: Tomassetti 1979; Olivanti 1997; Mari 1983, p. 18–25; Mari 1991, p. 20–23; Giuliani 1992; Calci 1998; Calci/Mari 2003. On the milestones: Mari 1989–1990.

¹⁷ Caiola *et alii* 1986; Staffa 1986; Calci *et alii* 1989–1990.

¹⁸ Together with Ponte Lucano: Procopius, *De Bello Gothico*, 3, 24.

¹⁹ On Ponte Mammolo: De Rossi 1969, p. 127–128; Quilici, Quilici Gigli 1996, p. 119–125; Calci 1998, p. 66–72, 127–129. On the Tiburtina in the Middle Ages: Coste 1983, p. 467–471.

²⁰ About the ancient road and the surrounding territory: Tomassetti 1979; Pellegrino 1991; Fogagnolo 2006; Serra 2007a; Marcelli 2012; Roggi 2012.

situated at the mouth of the Tiber. The arrangement of the road dates probably to the 4th century BC, together with the foundation of the *castrum* of Ostia²¹. Archaeological data show important phases in 3rd century BC, when the road was enlarged and paved with volcanic stones (*basoli*).

In the Republican age the *via* originated from the *porta Trigemina* of the Servian wall, flanking the NW-SW sides of the Aventine and then ran due south, crossing the *Almo* river by a bridge still preserved under the modern road²². In the 3rd century AD, it crossed the Aurelian walls under the *porta Ostiensis*, in later times called Porta S. Paolo from the medieval basilica of St. Paul Outside the Wall. Then it ran in a straight course on the left bank of the Tiber, cutting through the low hills carved by the tributaries of the river (Fig. 6). A recent discovery of a 400 m segment near Acilia (Via Ostiense km 11)²³ testifies that the road ran over a viaduct and was protected from the floods of the river by a wall. The bridges over the tributaries of the Tiber, belonging mostly to the 2nd–1st centuries BC, are still preserved and in use (Fig. 7), with the exception of the bridge over the stream of Malafede (Ponte del Risaro) destroyed during World War II²⁴. Three miles from Rome it passed through a village known as the *Vicus Alexandri*²⁵, where the *via Laurentina* detached direct to *Laurentum*. The *miliarium* XI of the road (3rd century AD) was discovered near the modern locality of Malafede. Nearby there was a sanctuary dedicated to Mars Ficanus, as attested to by an inscription of late 2nd century AD²⁶. Entering Ostia by *porta Romana*, the *via Ostiensis* crossed the town from NE to SW, becoming the *decumanus* of the colony.

During the Imperial age the road must naturally have been an extremely frequented route as revealed by the presence of utilities for travellers (*mansiones* and *stationes*) and small villages. The decline of the road started with the progressive abandonment of the city of Ostia in the 5th century AD and with the barbaric incursions into the suburbs of Roma. In the 6th century the *via Ostiensis* was invaded by vegetation and hardly practicable, as we know from Procopius²⁷.

In spite of this, the ancient road was never abandoned and remained in function till modern times, because of its important function of connecting Rome with the sea and with the salt pans, still operative. In medieval times it was defended by fortresses and towers, drawn in historical maps and prints. At the beginning of 20th century, after the placement of the Industrial Zone in this sector and according to the Fascist urban plan envisaging the expansion of Rome toward the sea²⁸, the *via Ostiense* was restored and enlarged, taking the name of Via del Mare, and all the bridges in use until that moment were covered by an asphalt pavement.

5. The landscape from antiquity until today (M. Marcelli-M. Munzi)

5.1. Antiquity: the Roman rural landscape (Fig. 8–9)

Several archaeological discoveries attest to a diffuse frequentation in prehistoric times in both areas. In the west sector, on both sides of the Tiber²⁹, lithic industry attributable to

²¹ The foundation of Ostia (from *ostium* = mouth of river), according to tradition, dates to king Ancus Marcius, but first archaeological evidence refers to the 4th century BC, the age of the new military colony: Pavolini 2006, with bibliography.

²² Quilici 1996, p. 54–56; Marcelli/Matteucci/Sebastiani 2009; Marcelli 2011, p. 83.

²³ Izzi/Pellegrino 2001. Other sections of viaducts and walls are known through archival documents: Marcelli 2011, p. 82; Marcelli 2012.

²⁴ Quilici 1996, p. 54–56.

²⁵ Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, 17, 4, 14; Barbini 2001.

²⁶ Pavolini 2006, p. 7.

²⁷ Procopius, *De Bello Gothico*, 5, 26, 13.

²⁸ D'Errico/Travaglini 2012, p. 37–63. The new road was inaugurated in 1928; during the works many ancient buildings and structures were discovered and destroyed.

²⁹ Gioia 2009 and De Santis/Mieli/Sebastiani 2013 with previous bibliography.

Middle Palaeolithic, early Upper Palaeolithic and Neo-eneolithic ages, was collected, mainly near Malafede³⁰. Archaeological surveys also highlighted other areas with the presence of pottery dating from the prehistoric period to the Iron Age³¹. Noteworthy in the Eastern area are the Paleolithic finds at Ponte Mammolo, Rebibbia-Casal de' Pazzi, Ripa Mammea and the Eneolithic site of Casale del Cavaliere³².

By the beginning of the 1st millennium BC some rural settlements rose up, in prevalence on the tops and the terraces of the small hills overlooking the Tiber and its major tributary, the Anio. In the territory north to Tiburtina, not far from via Nomentana, a centre called Ficulea by the ancient sources, whose location is still debated (the hill of Marco Simone Vecchio and that of Capobianco have been credited), arose to proto-urban status in the 8th century BC.³³ Another relevant settlement appeared near the crossing of the Anio, not far from Ponte Mammolo: its identification with Caenina, a minor Latin centre soon absorbed in the space controlled by Rome, lacks a general consensus³⁴.

Between via Ostiense and Tiber, on the hill today named Monte Cugno, archaeologists locate the proto-urban centre of Ficana³⁵. According to literary tradition it was founded on a pre-existing settlement by king Ancus Marcius (640–616 BC), together with the creation of the port of Ostia and the establishment of salt-works at the mouth of the river³⁶. Archaeological remains of an urban centre discovered on the hill date to the 8th century BC, even if the site was frequented from the mid-Paleolithic Age and a permanent residential settlement is attested to from the final Bronze Age.

In the 6th century BC there was a relevant increase of sparse rural settlement in both areas, testifying diffused agricultural land use and demographic boom. Beside to small agricultural plots with huts³⁷, archaeological excavations and surveys document the diffusion of a more articulated structure, made up by several rooms and covered with a tile roof: the farm³⁸.

Settlement in the eastern area was troubled during the 4th century BC by a continuous state of war between Rome and Tivoli, whose *ager* should start at the X mile of the via Tiburtina (or before). With the Gallic invasion in 387 BC Tibur denounced the treaty established a century before with Rome, which in 362–361 BC had started a military campaign to subdue it. In 339–338 BC the *Tiburtini* participated in a new Latin rebellion against Rome; after the new Roman victory, the city obtained the recognition of *civitas foederata*. Not until the times of the Social War, in 90 BC, was the city promoted to the rank of *municipium* and received Roman citizenship. At the same time Tibur was embellished with the construction of the monumental sanctuary of *Hercules Victor*.

³⁰ Arnoldus-Huyzendveld *et alii* 1996.

³¹ Gioia 2009.

³² Anzidei/Ruffo 1998; Gioia 1998; Anzidei *et al.* 1999; Anzidei 2001; Arnoldus-Huyzendveld *et alii* 2007.

³³ Quilici, Quilici Gigli 1993; Calci/Sorella 1995; Panciera, Di Gennaro 2009–2010 with bibliography. The centre, mentioned for the origins by Dionisius of Halicarnassus (*Antiquitates Romanae*, 1, 16), was captured by Tarquinius Priscus (Livy, 1, 38, 4), then became a *municipium* (Pliny *Naturalis Historia*, 3, 64); in the neighbourhood Atticus (Cicero, *ad Atticum*, 12, 34) and Martial (*Epigrammata*, 6, 27, 2) owned estates.

³⁴ Quilici/Quilici Gigli 1993, p. 30, 464; Cifani 2008, p. 193–194.

³⁵ According to Festus (298, 6–9, W.M. Lindsay ed.), the city was by the river port of *Puilia Saxa*, near the XI mile of the Via Ostiense, not far from the hill. About the archeological surveys on the site: Fischer-Hansen 1990; Rasmus Brandt 1996; Pietilä Castrén 2012.

³⁶ Livy, 1, 33; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Antiquitates Romanae*, 3, 38.

³⁷ See the site of Torrino, phase I: Cifani 2009, p. 318 with bibliography.

³⁸ The high density of sparse settlement in the 6th century BC is well documented in the via Tiburtina area by Quilici/Quilici Gigli 1993. In the *ager Ostiensis* see the sites of Acqua Acetosa Laurentina (building V) and Torrino (phase II), both dating to late 6th century BC: Cifani 2009, p. 318–319 with bibliography.

Anyway nearer to Rome archaeological evidence from the mid-Republican period is not lacking: for example inscriptions, statues and *ex voto*, found between the I and II mile of the Tiburtina, document the presence of a sanctuary dedicated to Hercules, Minerva and other female divinities in the 3rd–1st centuries BC.³⁹ In the same period (since the 2nd century BC) on both sides of the Anio river large quarries of tufa (*tufo lionato*) were opened (Fig. 10) and, maybe just a bit later, within the Acque Albule basin, about 30 km east of Rome, quarries of travertine (*lapis Tiburtinus*) started to be used⁴⁰. According to Strabo the trio of building stones (travertine, *Lapis Gabinus* from Gabii on the *via Praenestina*, and the red tufa i.e. the Lionato) quarried along the Anio, were easily transported by water to Rome⁴¹.

The mid-Republican period was instead crucial in the western *suburbium*. Actually, in the fourth century, Ostia was deducted as a colony, *via Ostiensis* was restructured and the landscape was populated with a sparse settlement of small family farms, helped by the proximity of the river and the fertility of soils. Archaeological surveys reveal a strong concentration of mid-Republican farms mainly in the areas of Malafede, Monti S. Paolo (Acilia) and Dragoncello⁴². Recently attributed to the first colons of *Castrum Ostiense*⁴³, most of the small and medium-sized farms flourished from the end of the IV century BC, entering into crisis in the middle of the III century, concurrently with the Punic Wars, and were abandoned during the following century.

The classical landscape of *villae rusticae* started in the 3rd–1st centuries BC. The density of rural settlements grew during the Imperial age when villas became articulated structures, not only residential but also functioning as organization centres of the agricultural activities, carried out in single plots managed by slaves or *liberti*. From historical and epigraphic sources concerning the Imperial period we know the names of many owners, members of the Roman élite⁴⁴ (Tab. 1).

Tab 1. The villas of Roman aristocracy

Via	Km	Cent. AD	Owner
Ostiensis	?	II	M. Annius Verus
Ostiensis	1–2	I	L. Cassius Longinus
Ostiensis	9,1/2	II	M. Antonius Antius Lupus
Ostiensis	?	IV	Q. Aurelius Symmachus
Ostiensis	?	I – II	L. Nonius Asprenas
Ostiensis	?	III	L. Fabius Cilo
Ostiensis	18	?	Acilii Glabrones
Ostiensis	20	II	C. Vitorius Hosidius Geta
Ostiensis – Severiana	?	II	C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus
Tiburtina	?	III	L. Mummius Felix Cornelianus
Tiburtina	5 –6	I	M. Aquilius Regulus
Tiburtina	10–11	IV	Betitius Perpetuus Arzygius
Tiburtina	11	II	Gallonii Niger et Fronto
Tiburtina	12,5–13	I	Q. Veranius
Tiburtina	15,9	II	L. Plotius Sabinus
Tiburtina	17 ca.	III	Ser. Calpurnius Dexter
Tiburtina	17 ca	II	Sex. Pedii Hirruti
Tiburtina	17 ca	II	M. Valerius Quadratus

³⁹ Data from a recent excavation in Munzi 2005.

⁴⁰ Jackson/Marra 2006.

⁴¹ Strabo, *Geographica*, 5.3.11.

⁴² Pellegrino 1983 and 1984.

⁴³ Pavolini 2006.

⁴⁴ Bruun 2003; Chioffi 2003 and 2005.

Most of the villas overlooked the main roads or were positioned on the terraces gravitating towards the Anio and Tiber. The construction of drainage infrastructures permitted the diffusion of agricultural settlements also in the alluvial plains.

On the via Tiburtina numerous *villae* were originally built in (2nd-)1st century BC, monumentalized in 1st-2nd century AD and frequented until 4th-5th century AD, among them those in the localities of Casal Bruciato, S. Eusebio-via Carciano, Casal Bianco, Ripa Mammea, Tenuta del Cavaliere (called *domus Galloniana* in an inscription of the second half of the 2nd century AD)⁴⁵, most of them enriched by thermal baths. From a Greek epigram found in Settecamini we know that baths (*loutra*) were built by C. Caeionius Rufius Volusianus Lampadius, *praefectus Urbi* in AD 365-366⁴⁶ (to be identified in one of the thermal complexes between Settecamini and Casal Bianco).

Several archaeological discoveries of late Republican-Imperial villas were made on the hills east of via Ostiensis, near the modern Torrino, Acilia, Dragoncello and on the site of ancient *Ficana*⁴⁷. Many of those were endowed with luxurious decorations (paintings, marbles, and mosaics) and private baths, testifying to the owners' prosperity (Fig. 11).

The proximity to rivers permitted goods and agricultural products to be quickly transported to Rome⁴⁸. By the third mile of Ostiensis there was a *vicus*, mentioned by *Ammianus Marcellinus* as *Vicus Alexandri*, with a harbour on the Tiber⁴⁹. Fluvial villas with private piers are documented on both the rivers; the best known are the villa of Pietra Papa on the right side of the Tiber (1st century BC - 2nd century AD)⁵⁰, the already mentioned villa of Ripa Mammea and another in the locality Tor Cervara⁵¹ on the Aniene River. Several other villas are attested to on the seashore. At the beginning of the 4th century AD the agricultural use of western suburban lands is still documented; late ancient sources attest to the fact that emperor Constantine owned two properties near Ostia, *Quirinis* and *Balneolum* (perhaps modern Casale Bagnolo, at km 21 of the Via Ostiense)⁵².

Since the 1st century BC funerary structures also intensively marked the suburb along the roads: Tiburtina and Ostiensis were no exception. On the Tiburtina a mausoleum of 1st century AD have been recently excavated just outside *porta Tiburtina*⁵³; many other *sepulchra* were scattered along the via, among them the marble sarcophagi in via Cave di Pietralata (one with scenes of battle between Romans and Barbarians, 2nd century AD)⁵⁴, the circular mausoleum in the villa of Casal Bruciato (2nd century AD), and the monumental mausoleum of the Plautii at Ponte Lucano (founded for M. Plautius Silvanus, consul in 2 BC, and used in the course of the 1st century AD), a large drum faced with travertine which stands on a lower square base⁵⁵.

Via Ostiensis from its beginning to the second mile was bordered by an intensive cemetery (dating from 1st century BC to 4th century AD), consistent remains of which are still visible

⁴⁵ Calci 1998, p. 58-63, 78-85, 119-120, 152, 192-194; Iodice Di Martino 2002; Calci/Mari 2003, p. 199-203; Mari 2005; De Franceschini 2005, p. 112-114, 122-126, 129-131, 139-144. The villa of Grotte di Cervara, built in 2nd century BC, was probably abandoned already in the mid-Imperial period: De Franceschini 2005, p. 131-133.

⁴⁶ Moretti 1984-1985, p. 233-241; Calci, Mari 2003, p. 186-188.

⁴⁷ Pellegrino 1983 and 1984; Pellegrino *et alii* 1999; Labbadia 2004; De Franceschini 2005, p. 251-260.

⁴⁸ On private and public docks discovered by the Tiber south to Rome: Fedeli 2013.

⁴⁹ Barbini 2001.

⁵⁰ Iacopi 1943.

⁵¹ Messineo/Sorella 1991.

⁵² *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 184; cfr. Pavolini 2006, p. 6-7.

⁵³ Munzi *et alii* 2008.

⁵⁴ Calci 1998, p. 53-54 with bibliography.

⁵⁵ CIL XIV, 3605-3608; Eisner 1986, p. 105-108; Mari 1991, p. 196-210; on the Plautii cfr. Beard 1998, p. 98-114.

near the church of St. Paul⁵⁶. According to tradition, recently confirmed by archaeological data, the apostle Paul, condemned to death in year AD 61, was buried in one of these graves which a Christian woman named Lucina owned. His tomb immediately became a place of veneration and, probably in the 3rd century, a memorial chamber was built above it, replaced in the following century by the first Christian basilica⁵⁷. Many monumental tombs belonging to aristocratic families grew up along the road: in addition to the famous Pyramid of Caius Cestius (18–12 BC), we remember here the mausoleum of Gens Claudia, destroyed during the construction of the railway, and that of Antonius Lupus drawn by Pirro Ligorio and other artists⁵⁸ (Fig. 12). Extensive burial grounds are recorded also outside of the walls of Ostia⁵⁹: the *necropolis Ostiensis* extended for over 8 km from *porta Romana* to modern Acilia. Nearby some relevant graves were discovered, including the famous sarcophagus of Acilia attributed to the father of the emperor Gordian III⁶⁰.

During the Imperial age, in the Ostiense suburb, some Roman pozzolana quarries were adapted and reused as catacombs, initially pagan and at a later stage Christian. Closer to the road there were the *Coemeterium Commodillae* and, to the south of this, a little underground basilica dedicated to the martyr St. Tecla with a cemetery, both of the 4th century AD⁶¹.

Since the 3rd century AD other Christian burials appeared in the necropolis along the *viae*. Between the I and II mile of the Tiburtina, in the Verano area, some Christian martyrs were buried: the schismatic bishop Ippolitus, martyred in Sardinia in AD 235; the *diaconus* Laurentius (St. Lawrence) martyred in AD 258 by Valerianus; and Novatianus, the schismatic theologian martyred in the same year (or even a young Roman martyr with the same name, who died during the persecution of Diocletian). Immediately the deposition of martyrs generated, around them, large cemeteries *sub divo* and catacombs⁶².

To commemorate the presence of the graves of St. Paul and St. Lawrence in the suburban cemeteries of Ostiensis and Tiburtina, already in the age of Constantine the first churches (*basilicae*) dedicated to them were built. The Constantinian circiform or ambulatory church over the tomb of St. Lawrence (the *basilica maior*) was then enlarged during the 5th century with a monastery, two *balnea* and hostels for pilgrims (*habitacula pauperibus*). In the following centuries, the churches, endowed with monasteries and care facilities, became the center of little suburban and agricultural settlements⁶³.

Other churches dedicated to martyrs were built on both roads farther from Rome. On the Tiburtina, at the X mile, a basilica was built at the beginning of the 4th century AD, modifying a triabsidate mausoleum where the Tiburtine martyr St. Symphorosa and her seven sons were buried; a century later, a large basilica was added⁶⁴. A church dedicated to the Aurea, martyr under Claudius the Goth (AD 268–270) was built near Ostia, probably in the 5th century AD, by the grave of St. Monica – the mother of St. Augustine – dead at Ostia in AD 387. The *basilica Sanctae Aureae* is already remembered as being in ruins in the 7th century⁶⁵. A little chapel was

⁵⁶ Fogagnolo 2006; Serra 2007a, p. 39–40; Roggio 2012; Marcelli 2012.

⁵⁷ The tomb, recently discovered, is visible under the church. See: Pietrangeli 1988; Filippi 2004; Liverani 2012.

⁵⁸ Tomassetti 1979, p. 69–80; Serra 2007a, p. 52–53; Marcelli 2011 and 2012.

⁵⁹ About the most recent discoveries see: Pannuzi *et alii* 2006 and 2012.

⁶⁰ Bianchi Bandinelli 1954.

⁶¹ Carletti 2004; Serra 2007a, p. 46.

⁶² Giordani 1992; Serra 2007b.

⁶³ On the church of Saint Paul: Pietrangeli 1988.

⁶⁴ At the IX mile, counting from the Aurelian walls, according the *Passio Sanctae Sympherosae in the Martyrologium Hieronymianum*: Stapleford 1976; Moscetti 1998.

⁶⁵ Serra 2007a, p. 67–69.

built by pope Onorius I (AD 625–638) at the mid-point of the via Ostiense (Mezzocammino), on the grave of the martyr Cyriacus⁶⁶.

The decline of the rural system is evident in the 5th century AD, as testified to by available archaeological data, which attests to a massive abandonment of farms and villas⁶⁷. The economic and settlement crisis was worsened by the barbaric incursions in the suburbs. In the 6th century AD, Procopius described the region of *via Ostiensis* as deserted and dangerous. Concurrently the progressive abandonment of the city of Ostia began. Its citizens in the 7th century AD took refuge in the village that had risen around the church of St. Aurea, restored by pope Serge I. With the desertion of Ostia, *Portus* became the only harbour of Rome⁶⁸.

5.2. The Middle Ages: churches, fortresses and towers

In the 9th century because of the situation of widespread insecurity and in order to defend the area from incursions of the Saracens, a fortified settlement near the church of S. Aurea was built east to Roman Ostia. It was named Gregoriopolis by pope Gregory IV (827–844), and is situated in the modern village of Ostia Antica⁶⁹. Nearer to Rome the monastery of Saint Paul on the via Ostiense was also fortified, taking the name of Iohannipolis (880), by pope Iohannis VIII. Much later (end of 12th – beginnings of 13th centuries) the fortification of the monastery grown around the basilica of St. Lawrence on the Tiburtina took place, which probably took the name of *castrum sancti Laurentii* or *Laurentiopolis*⁷⁰ (Fig. 13).

The marshes at the mouth of the Tiber now became a lake, and the area was infested by malaria. The only economic activities that never ceased have been fishing and the extraction of salt from the salt pans of the Tiber, practiced without interruption until the land reclamation of the 19th century⁷¹.

In 12th–13th centuries guard towers were built to protect Rome and its surroundings, both nearby the coast and along the roads; most of the towers no longer exist or are incorporated in later farmhouses, but we know well the precise location of them from the historical maps⁷² (Fig. 6). Fortified farmsteads (called casali) appeared in the same period testifying to a revival of agriculture⁷³. Today, by the sea, still survive some of these, Tor Boacciana, built perhaps on the lighthouse of ancient Ostia, and Tor S. Michele, originally located on the coastline; in the eastern sector, those of Pietralata, Ponte Mammolo, Casal Monastero, Tor Vergata, Pratolungo⁷⁴ (Fig. 14), Settecamini, S. Eusebio, Casa Rossa, the fortified Casale del Cavaliere, Monte del Sorbo etc.⁷⁵. In the 15th century the castle of Gregoriopolis, together with the houses and the walls of the village, was rebuilt on a project of Baccio Pontelli (1483–1486) (Fig. 15). The new fortress served as the seat of the Papal Custom Houses, which regulated the payment of excise taxes on goods arriving in Rome by sea. After a major inundation in 1557 the meandering Tiber changed its course and the branch along the castle was cut off and became a lake⁷⁶. After this event, the castle lost its

⁶⁶ Tomassetti 1979, p. 211–229.

⁶⁷ About Tiburtina: Mari 1991, p. 24–49; Calci/Mari 2003.

⁶⁸ Procopius, *De Bellum Gothicum*, 5, 26, 13.

⁶⁹ Pannuzi/Germoni 2005.

⁷⁰ On the Church of Saint Paul and the religious settlements in the urban stretch of via Ostiense: Torelli Landini 2008b, with bibliography. On the first mile of the Tiburtina in late antique and medieval periods cfr. Serra 1994 and 1998.

⁷¹ Pannuzi 2012.

⁷² In particular the maps of Eufrosino della Volpaia (1547) and of the Catasto Alessandrino (1660).

⁷³ In general Carocci/Vendittelli 2004 and Esposito 2005.

⁷⁴ Identified by J. Coste (1984) as the early medieval *domusculia Sanctae Caeciliae*.

⁷⁵ For the fortified settlements on the via Tiburtina: De Rossi 1969, p. 127–134; Coste 1983, p. 471–512; on the Torraccia di S. Eusebio: Esposito 2005, p. 171–189.

⁷⁶ Now filled with earth it is known as the Fiume Morto.

function and a new fortress was built at the mouth of the Tiber, Tor S. Michele, from a project of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1570).

This landscape is well represented in the map of Eufrosino della Volpaia (1547), which was made to be used by hunters. It is the first to depict in detail the monumental elements of the Roman Countryside (for example towers, houses, aqueducts and ancient ruins)⁷⁷. This map shows both the ancient roads still in use (Fig. 16).

5.3. Modern and contemporary ages: farmhouses, reclamation

In modern times the territory of Rome is still articulated in Urbe, Suburbio and Agro. This distribution is clearly mapped out in historical cadastres and cartography since the 17th century⁷⁸. The Suburbio was the sector nearest to the city; it was divided into plots with plantations of grapevines, fruit trees and vegetables; small colonies of farmhouses, churches and productive activity marked its landscape. The Agro, farther from the inhabited centre, unpopulated and malarial, consisted of big agricultural estates (called *tenute*), which were property of the Church, ecclesiastical orders or Roman aristocratic families; there were only a few farmsteads (called *casali*), towers and some sporadic fortified hamlets.

Only after the unification of Italy and the new role of capital assumed by Rome (1870), it was decided to reclaim the external lands⁷⁹. On coastal estates, first partial attempts to reclaim the marshes had been made in the 17th and 18th century but only a special law promulgated in 1878 implemented definitive efforts at reclamation and an agricultural policy directed to the Agro. The coastal lakes were dried up and the land was divided into allotments on which farmsteads were built and given to the families of colonists. In that context modern cattle ranches also appeared. (Fig. 17). As a consequence of the special law promulgated in 1910, some agricultural villages (*borgate rurali*) were founded to promote the distribution of the population in the country, as Borgo Acilio on the Via Ostiense (now Acilia)⁸⁰. They would become the future urban suburbs. The reclamation work was carried out during Fascism⁸¹.

Between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, zones closer to the city in both the areas were destined to undergo industrialisation by urban planning. After World War II, in the whole *suburbio* agriculture was gradually abandoned and substituted by increasing residential, industrial and commercial functions.

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⁷⁷ Ashby 1914.

⁷⁸ Collected in Frutaz 1972.

⁷⁹ On the transformation of the Agro Ostiense in modern times: D’Errico 2007; Torelli Landini 2008a; D’Errico, Travaglini 2012; about land reclamations of the Agro Romano: D’Errico 2012.

⁸⁰ D’Errico 2007, p. 117–123.

⁸¹ After two other special laws approved in 1919 and 1921: D’Errico 2012, p. 14–18.

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THE RURAL LANDSCAPE OF ROME'S SUBURBS THROUGH THE CENTURIES AS DOCUMENTED IN THE CARTA DELL'AGRO ROMANO: THE CASES OF VIA OSTIENSE AND VIA TIBURTINA (Sommario)

Il paesaggio rurale del suburbio di Roma attraverso i secoli nella documentazione della Carta dell'Agro Romano: gli esempi delle vie Ostiense e Tiburtina. La Carta dell'Agro Romano è stata realizzata negli anni '60-'80 del secolo scorso per censire le presenze storico-archeologiche e monumentali del suburbio di Roma. Dal confronto fra la documentazione storicizzata della Carta, le informazioni tratte dalla cartografia storica e i dati dei recenti rinvenimenti archeologici, gestito per mezzo di un sistema informativo territoriale (GIS), si analizzano le trasformazioni insediative ed infrastrutturali della Campagna Romana. L'intervento riserverà particolare attenzione a due campioni significativi del suburbio romano, l'uno incentrato sulla via Ostiense, principale asse di collegamento verso il mare, l'altro sulla via Tiburtina, importante direttrice stradale verso il settore orientale dell'entroterra.

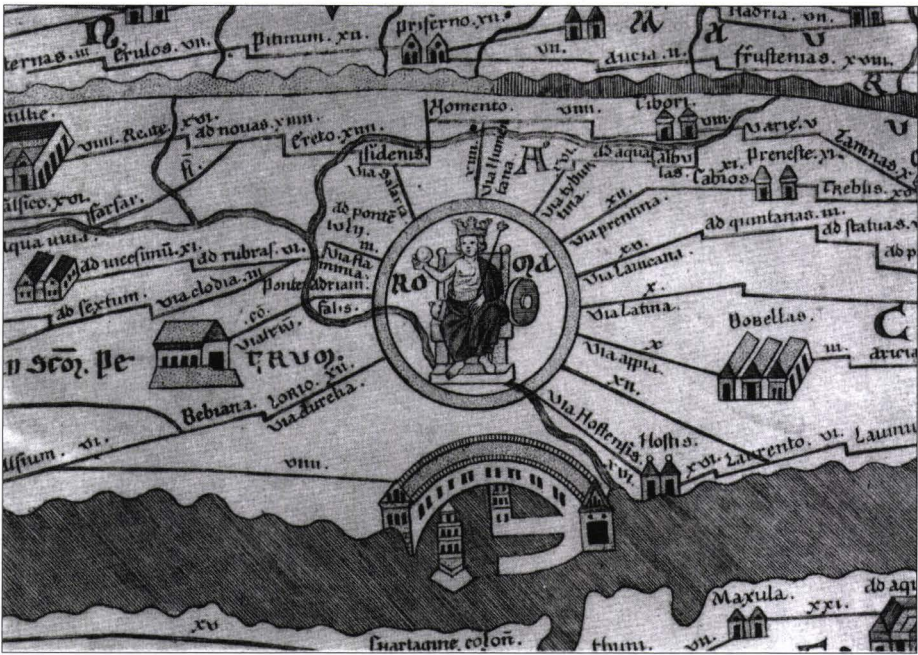


Fig. 1. Via Tiburtina and via Ostiensis in the *Tabula Peutingeriana*

Carta storica archeologica monumentale e paesistica del suburbio e dell'agro romano

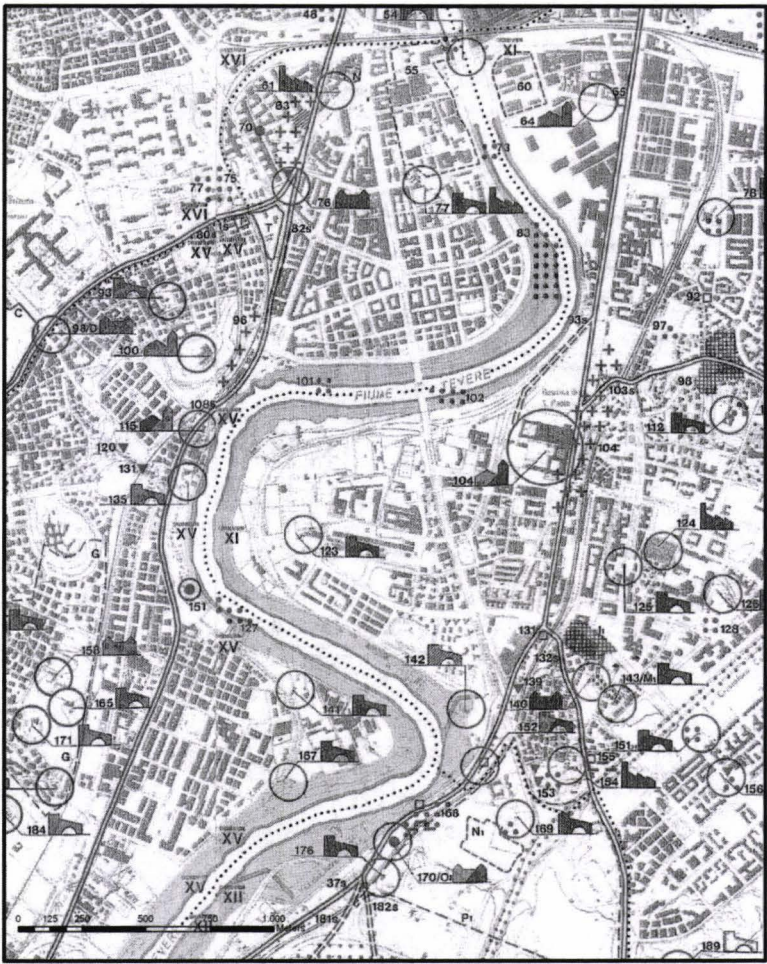


Fig. 2. The zone of the Via Ostiense closer to Rome, in the *Carta dell'Agro Romano*

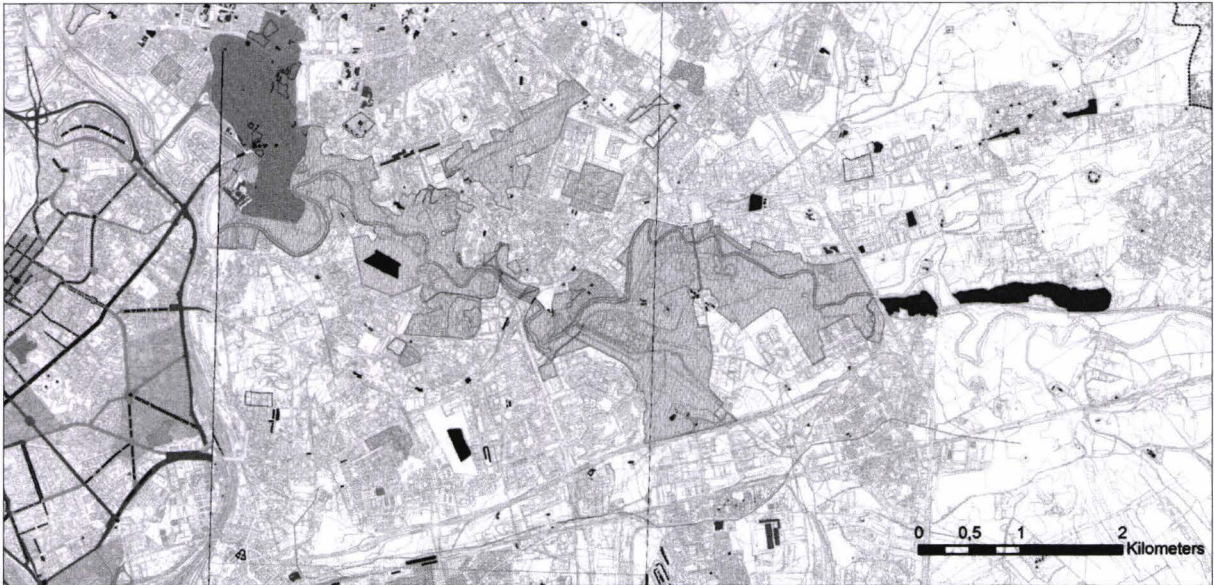


Fig. 3. The zone of the Via Tiburtina within the modern municipal boundaries, in the Carta per la Qualità

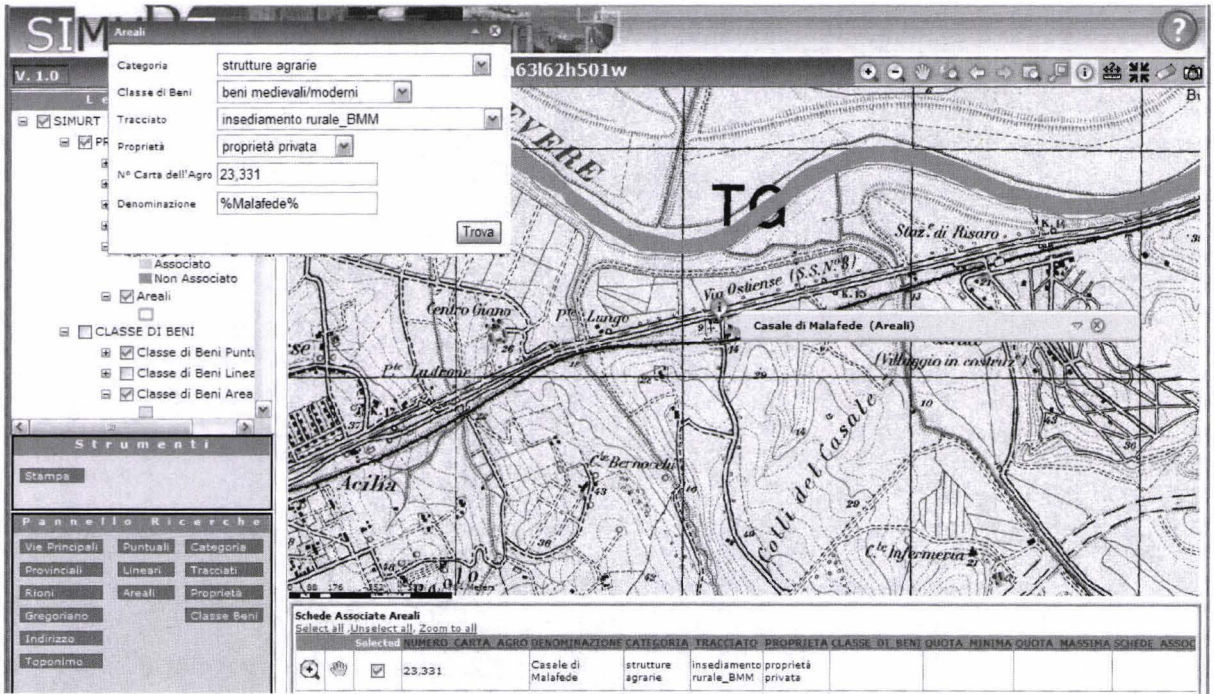


Fig. 4. Farmsteads along the Via Ostiense in a SIMART WebGIS elaboration



Fig. 5. Surveyors of the Sovrintendenza near the new Ponte Mammolo, 1972 (*Carta dell'Agro Romano*, Photographic Archives)



Fig. 6. The Via Ostiense in the Catasto Alessandrino, 1662



Fig.7. Ponte di Tor di Valle (*Carta dell'Agro Romano*, Photographic Archives, photo G. Schingo)

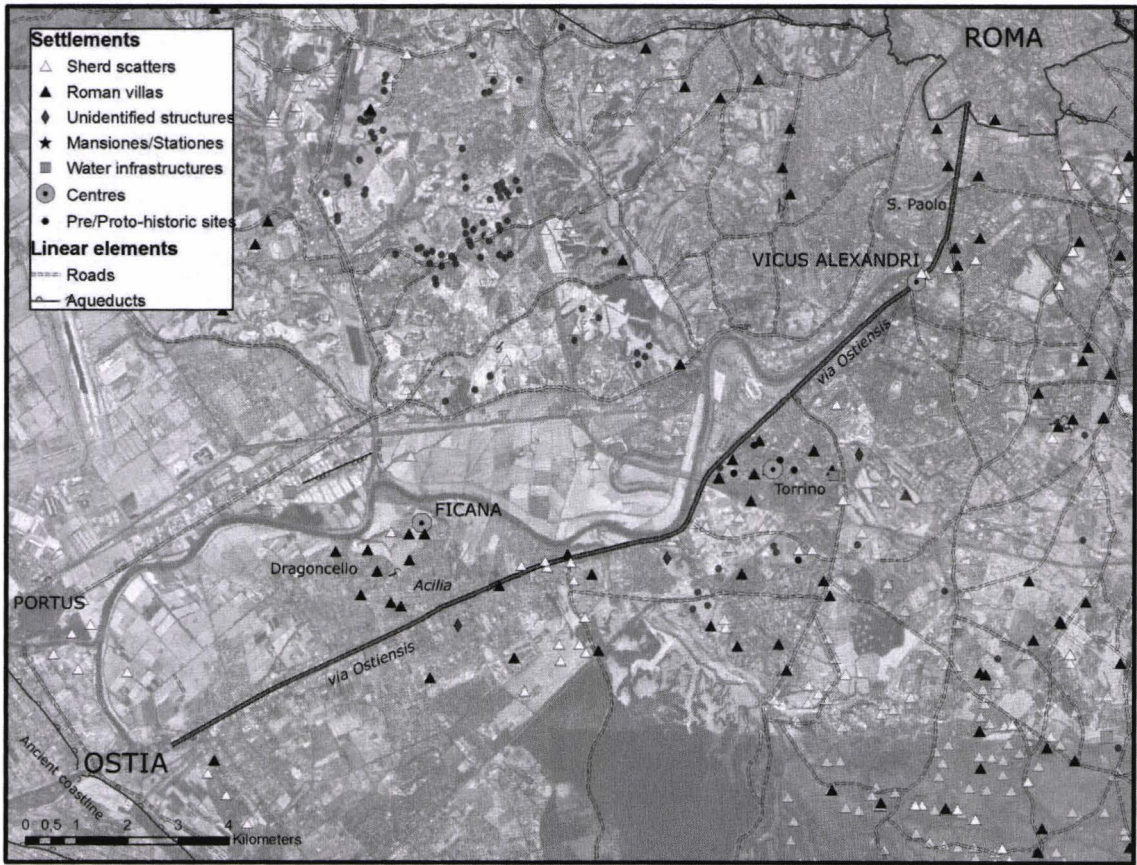


Fig. 8. Via Ostiense: archaeological map (GIS elaboration)

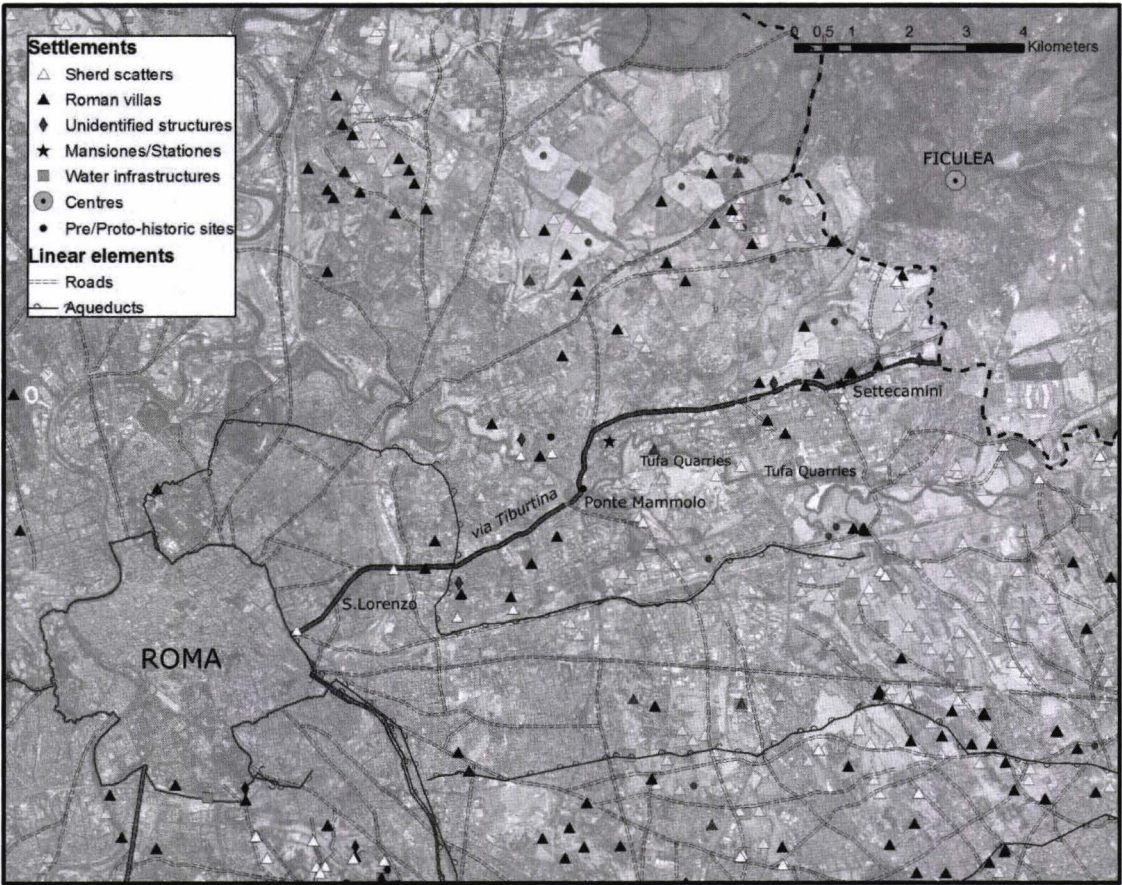


Fig. 9. Via Tiburtina: archaeological map (GIS elaboration)



Fig. 10. Tufa quarries called Latomie di Salone, 1977 (*Carta dell'Agro Romano*, Photographic Archives)



Fig. 11. The so-called Villa of Plinius the Younger near Ostia (Sovrintendenza Capitolina, Archivio Storico)

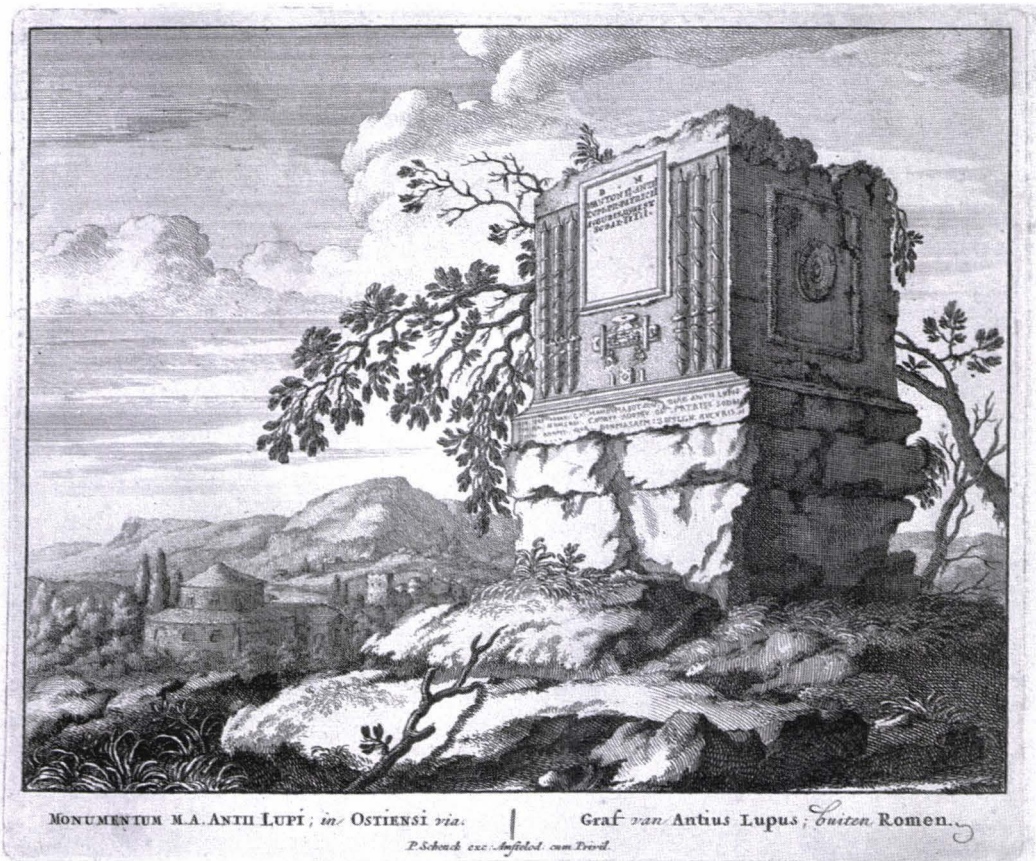


Fig. 12. Pieter Schenk, *Monumentum M. A. Antii Lupi in Ostiensi via*, 1700–1750 (Sovrintendenza Capitolina, Gabinetto Comunale delle Stampe, Fondo Muñoz)



Fig. 13. Basilica of St. Lawrence out of the Walls (P. M. Letarouilly, *Edifices de Rome*, around 1880; Sovrintendenza Capitolina, Museo di Roma)



Fig. 14. The fortified Casale di Pratolungo by the Via Tiburtina, 1996
(*Carta dell'Agro Romano*, Photographic Archives)

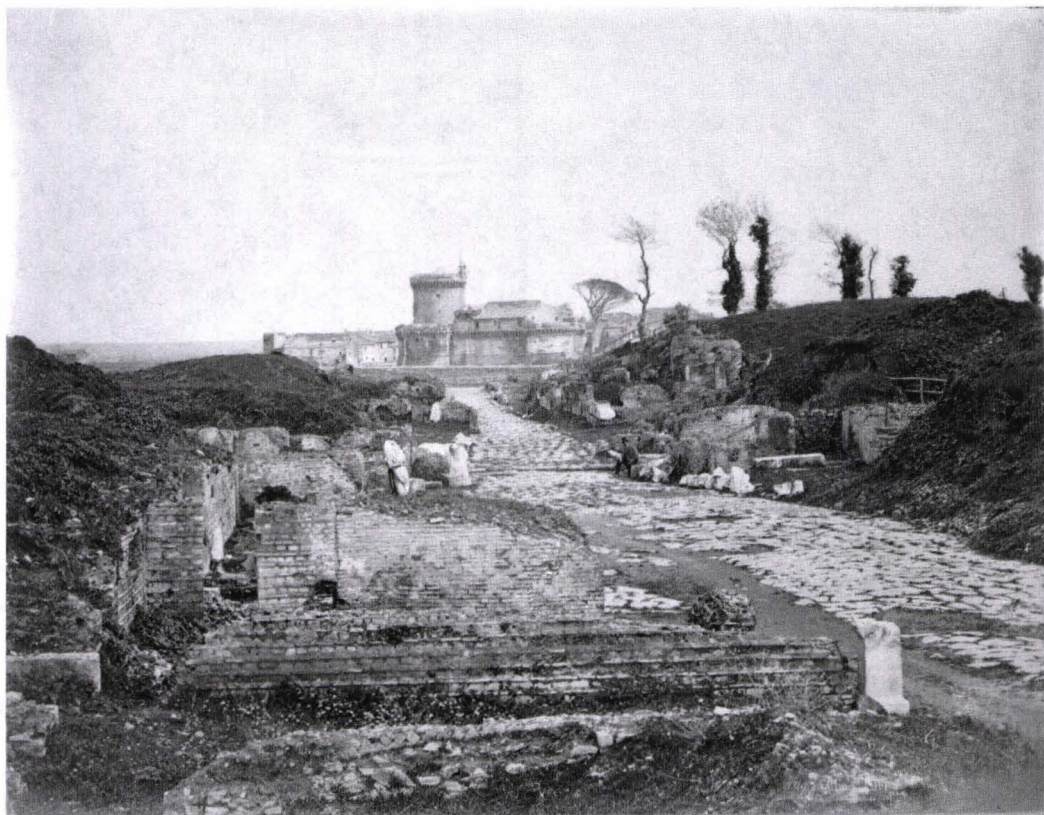


Fig. 15. The Castle of Ostia Antica seen from the ancient *via Ostiensis* at the entrance of Ostia, 1860–1870 (Sovrintendenza Capitolina, Museo di Roma, Archivio Fotografico)



Fig. 16. Roman countryside in the map of Eufrosino della Volpaia (1547): on the left *Via Ostiense*, on the right *Via Tiburtina*



Fig. 17. Vaccheria Nardi, built by the Via Tiburtina in 1900–1903 for the intensive production of milk, butter, cheese and eggs, photographed in 1978 (*Carta dell'Agro Romano*, Photographic Archives)