

There is no Garbage for Romans - Especially not Food

Ivana Ožanić Roguljić

DOI: 10.17234/9789531757232-13

The biggest change in relation to food and groceries can be seen in the way food was prepared, stored, handled and put back on the table. Romans used it in a clever and efficient way, and they would use any means or ideas related to the food they would encounter. This is especially evident in the preparation of food, especially meat. Animals were used as a source of food, but they were also treated as a source of raw material (bone, skin) and fuel (fat). Recycling or reusing resources is one of the main features of the Roman civilization. Although, according to archaeological data and the data from ancient sources it seems that the Romans generally had a cost-effective attitude towards waste, especially food, but they also caused several ecological disasters, including a complete disappearance of some plant species (e.g. *lasericium*, *silphium*).

At first glance, it could be said that the richer parts of the population were distorted and the poor kept every little thing, but actually, the re-use of various products and their packaging would not have been possible without the great logistical support, and it was an activity common among all parts of the society. Preparation (cleaning, filling) of the amphora for reuse could take place in the household or in some large economic facilities. The characteristic of the Roman period is the high standard and diversity of food products that came about thanks to the high level of organization of the economy in which reuse has certainly had its share.

List of figures:

Fig. 1: Drawing of construction made of Dressel 20 amphoras and pylons, Trstenik - Kaštela (after: Radić-Rossi 2009: 500-501) – p. 208