

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES: IN SEARCH FOR ANCIENT POMPEII AND HERCULANEUM

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### INTRODUCTION

The ancient and modern are often juxtaposed in an inseparable way in cities which are continuously inhabited since their foundation in antiquity. The architectural splendor of ancient Rome for example, is visible and traceable in several fragmented contexts in the heart of modern Rome; remains of ancient architecture are embraced and invaded by the modern city that grew around and over the ruins of its ancient counterpart. In only rare instances, such as the Pantheon, the Markets of Trajan and the Colosseum, or the impressive façade of the Temple of Zeus inserted into a later building, is it possible to see the monuments that once adorned ancient Rome still standing to their full height.

The remains of many other ancient cities on the other hand, are found at a distance from nearby modern settlements and are not encroached by buildings. These ancient cities are actually more potent in revealing and displaying the ancient urban context in an un-fragmented state. Yet the fact that these are often not well preserved and that large portions remain unexcavated hinder that potential, and to an untrained eye, the ancient city often looks like a spread of ruins. While monuments like theaters or baths are in general well preserved and might partially stand to their full height, the 'ancient city' is often conceived as a walking track with a collection of building stones. In several cases the remains of buildings whose walls are rarely preserved to their full height do not give a sense of how they once looked like. Finding a still standing ancient building, let alone an ancient city, and wandering inside, therefore, is not a common experience.

Renowned for their superb preservation, Pompeii and Herculaneum are two exceptional examples. The archaeological character and context of these two ancient cities, especially those of Pompeii, are exceptional in many respects:

Pompeii occupies a special place in Roman archaeology, for this city and its neighbors, notably Herculaneum, were remarkably well preserved under the



Figure 1. Pompeii (from an old postcard).

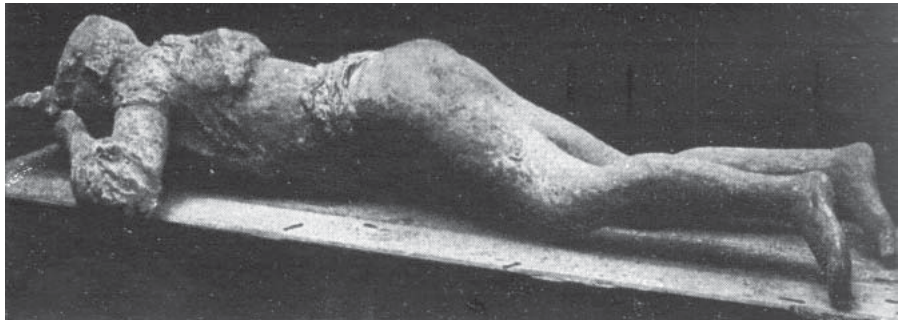


Figure 2. Cast of a young Pompeian woman (Maiuri, 1953, Pl. LVI).



Figure 3. Via dell'Abbondanza in Pompeii (Maiuri, 1953, Pl. XXXVI) and "House of Wooden Partitions in Herculaneum", overhangs are modern additions (Maiuri, 1945, Pl. XIII).

volcanic debris that rained down from Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. The ruins give an unequalled glimpse of the daily life of town dwellers during late republic and early Empire. In contrast, in Rome itself, because of continuing

1. A comprehensive study on the architectural history of Pompeii is Richardson (1988). Mau (1982) (originally published in 1902 in German as *Pompeji in Kunst und Leben*) is one of the earliest guidebooks on Pompeii while the most recent and revised guidebook on Pompeii by La Rocca and de Vos (2002) is an inclusive and well illustrated publication.

2. By 1860 when Italy was unified, more than 9 hectares was already uncovered, Berry (1998, 7). At present three-fourths of ancient Pompeii is excavated while in Herculaneum only four city blocks are entirely revealed due to the hardened soil conditions (Jashemski, 2002, 8).

3. A comprehensive English publication on the history of excavations in Pompeii and Herculaneum is Parslow (1995). For shorter accounts see Deiss (1995, 37-49) for Herculaneum; Mau (1982, 25-30) and Cooley (2003, 65-96) for Pompeii. The most recent study is Gardner Coates and Seydl (2007).

rebuilding throughout the Empire, remains from these periods are only sporadically preserved (Gates, 2003, 343).

The fact that it was destroyed by a single natural disaster which rendered it largely (though not totally) inaccessible to the survivors and to succeeding generations means that what we have has not been altered, by later demolition, by the construction of buildings of later generations, and that by uncovering it what has been discovered is a unity, fixed in time. We can see Pompeii as it was on that fateful day, whereas all the other cities in this book are only partial survivals, with buildings and other evidence often belonging to widely separate periods in their existence (Tomlinson, 1992, 175).

The on-going excavations in both cities brought to light not just individual buildings and artifacts but an urban fabric (**Figure 1**)(\*). In both towns not only monumental public buildings, as is often the case in several sites, but houses, streets, public buildings, commercial units, drainage channels, fountains, wells, city walls, cemeteries, parks and even some unfortunate inhabitants are unearthed (**1**)(**Figure 2**). In many areas the remains are preserved well up to their first storey, in some even up to the second, thus displaying the actual building size and appearance (**Figure 3**). This is truly a rare case where both the public buildings and the private architecture of two neighboring ancient cities are uncovered in such a big scale and with such intensity.

Unearthing and revealing such a vast and almost intact ancient context is an unusual phenomenon and has a remarkable history (**2**). The excavation history of Pompeii and Herculaneum is a complex and long narrative displaying the gradual progress in not only the archaeological uncovering of an ancient urban context in its entirety but also in methods, objectives and documentation of this vast exposure (**3**). This paper offers an informative insight into the first epoch of the excavations undertaken in Pompeii, Herculaneum and the nearby sites in the 18th century and illustrates the dynamics of excavation in the early Bourbon Period during which the digging narrative of Vesuvian archaeology was initiated; within the limits of an article it would be unfair to attempt to cover the entirety of this long, complicated and still evolving tale narrated by several events and actors.

## THE 'MYTH OF CAMPANIA'

### AD 79: Pompeii and Herculaneum

In Roman antiquity the region roughly bordered by the bay of Naples on one side and the Vesuvius on the other was called Campania (**Figure 4**). There were many moderately sized ancient Roman towns in this area, especially scattered at the low plains lying in between the volcano and the bay. Not far from the imperial capital Rome the bay strip was a popular resort destination for Roman magnates and was dotted with several sea-side villas. Pompeii and Herculaneum were among the prosperous cities located in close proximity. As in many other Roman cities both towns were adorned with monumental public buildings such as theaters, baths, temples, basilicas, commercial establishments and city squares that demonstrate the presence of a lively urban community that extended to the countryside by means of villas and farm houses.

In the first century AD, two natural catastrophes hit Campania and changed the fate of the region in an irreversible way. The first one came on February 5, AD 62, in the form of a large earthquake which affected the shoreline of the gulf of Naples and damaged several public and private

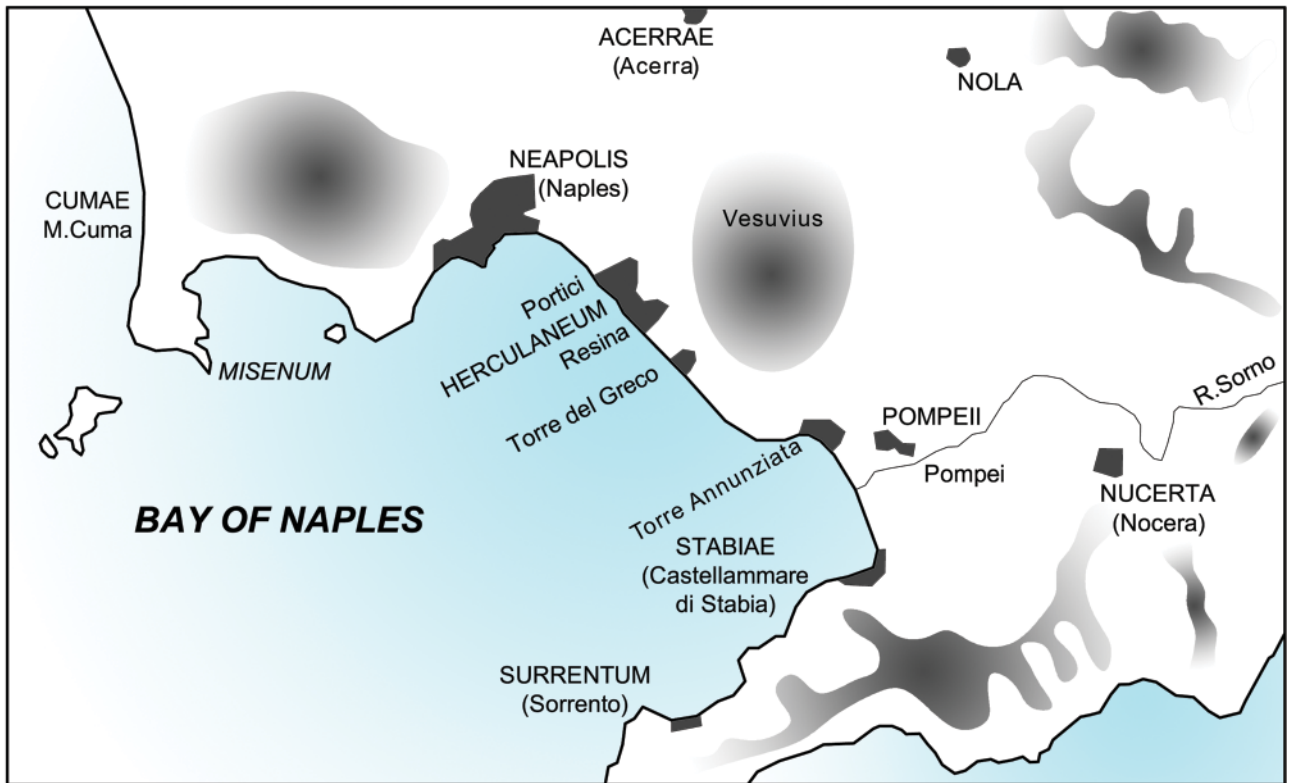


Figure 4. Bay of Naples.

buildings in many settlements including Pompeii and Herculaneum where the collapse of the water reservoirs resulted in flooding and hence more damage (Sigurdsson, 2002, 34). Buildings that would have survived with partial collapses were disintegrated and swept away by the hit of the flood, thus leaving not only smashed and collapsed buildings behind but also a massive amount of mud mixed with building material. As noted by the Roman author Seneca, the major damage was in Pompeii and Herculaneum where many public buildings were completely destroyed and many houses were either partially collapsed or received major and threatening cracks (Table 1).

The second disaster came shortly after, on August 24, AD 79, when many Campanians were still busy with repairing their homes and public edifices that were damaged by the earthquake 17 years before. The threat this time however, was more serious and devastating; a series of initial tremors signaled the coming of not another big earthquake, as opposed to what the Campanians had thought from previous experience, but instead a massive and devastating volcanic explosion and eruption hitherto unknown to the settlers of this region (4). Vesuvius was dormant for centuries and no eruption was recorded in memory up until AD 79. This was an unfortunate lack of information, for the inhabitants of the Campanian towns could not foresee the fatal and grave consequences of a volcanic explosion; many remained stationed in their hometowns and houses assuming that the catastrophe will be a short-termed one like the earlier earthquake (5). Contrary to this belief the eruption lasted for about three days, initially burying the villas and the farms at the higher altitudes and gradually reaching the lower levels and covering the cities found within a radius of 24 kilometers around Vesuvius. The hot mixture of volcanic gas, mud, pumice and ash flowing continuously and with an increasing speed and

4. Earthquakes, unlike volcanic eruptions, were known from Campania and mentioned by ancient authors. As reported by Seneca (*Questiones Naturales* VI) a large number of sheep was found dead due to poisoning on the slopes Vesuvius in the AD 62 earthquake, a fact which undeniably indicated the gradual release of volcanic gases prior to a major eruption. Other short notice pre-eruption symptoms, such as tremors accompanied with the drying of wells and springs also evidenced the coming of a major volcanic explosion shortly before it happened; none of these unfortunately were recognized as a warning by the Campanians, Sigurdsson (2002, 35).

5. Deiss (1995, 32-33); Strabon, the Greek geographer noted the curious summit of Vesuvius a few generations before AD 79. Since then Vesuvius erupted several times, most recently in 1944, Cooley (2003, 36). For the ancient references to Vesuvius see Sigurdsson (2002, 32-33).

6. On the excavated unfortunate inhabitants see Brion (1960; 35-37); Biesel (1986) for a study and preliminary report of the 139 skeletons found in the boat houses lined along the harbor in Herculaneum by 1987 and also Sigurdsson and Carey (2002, 55-58).

7. For a more detailed account of the pre and post eruption history of Pompeii; see Cooley (2003, 17-49) and Sigurdsson and Carey (2002, 37-64).

8. It is roughly estimated that at least one tenth of the population in Pompeii were killed in the AD 79 disaster (Cooley, 2003, 48).

density for three days eventually poured in from the windows and roofs, filled the interiors and flattened the buildings, thus burning, poisoning and burying those who chose to take refuge in deeper corners or basements rather than to evacuate (6):

Vesuvius' victims would have been asphyxiated by the hot gases contained in the dust-laden cloud, which would have covered the distance from the crater to Pompeii in a mere six minutes" (Cooley, 2003, 45).

At the end of the third day, an almost 9 m. thick lava layer was accumulated over the Campanian towns including Pompeii and Herculaneum, thus making the area on which they once spread look like an empty flat plain, as if not settled before (7).

An ancient account of this disaster is preserved in the letters of Pliny the Younger, a Latin author who was an eyewitness of the eruption at the age of seventeen with his uncle (Table 2). His letters addressed to the ancient historian Tacitus, when he was forty-two years old, in response to the historian's query about how his uncle Pliny the Elder died in the bay of Naples during the eruption provide information on the tragic last days of Pompeii. At the time of the disaster Pliny the Elder who was a renowned scholar was acting as the Roman navy commander and his fleet was stationed at the cape of Misenum located 32 km. across the harbor of Pompeii. According to one of the letters, the elder Pliny had abandoned his ship and rushed to the harbor of Pompeii to make a closer observation of this previously unknown and undocumented natural calamity and to record it in detail. Had he and his tablets survived a much better account of the disaster, its aftermath and the fate of the Vesuvian cities would be known. (8).

## THE START OF 'ARCHAEOLOGY' AT CAMPANIA

### AD 1710: Herculaneum and d'Elbeuf

What happened in the immediate aftermath of the eruption remains as an unknown episode in the history of Campania. No written account of this period survived, except some in passing references found on a funerary inscription and in some poems and epigrams (Cooley 2003, 50-57). Undoubtedly many settlements completely vanished and many others were beyond repair and recovery. It is likely that some survivors returned to their towns to dig channels with the hope of rescuing and pillaging their valuable remains or finding the bodies of their relatives and family members after the lava layer cooled and hardened enough to dig. Some signs of post eruption scavenging have been recorded in various spots both by the early and later excavators but whether these digs were actually done by the ancient inhabitants or the later treasure hunters is not yet clear. The reigning emperor Titus is known to have devised a plan for the economic recovery of Campania but the details and the method of this plan is not known (Cooley, 2003, 53; Parslow, 1995, 113). The emperor might have conceived of unearthing the Campanian towns and repopulating them but it is clear that the empire lacked the technical means and knowledge to undertake this massive clearing and restoration project which even for today is an almost impossible mission. It is likely that the survivors of the AD 79 eruption moved to the nearby cities and started a new life, perhaps receiving a compensation grant from the empire.

The names of the Campanian towns have survived in memory at least for some time as illustrated by the Peutinger Table of the twelfth century,

**Table 1.** The Younger Seneca on AD 62 earthquake (Natural Questions 6.1.1-3)(cited from Cooley, 2003, 17)

"We have heard, my dear Lucilius, that Pompeii, a busy town in Campania, situated where the shore of Sorrento and Stabiae form one side and from the other the shore of Herculaneum come together and encircle with a beautiful bay the sea where it has been brought in from open waters, has subsided under an earthquake. All the surrounding areas have also been affected. What is more, this happened during winter, a time our ancestors used to promise us was free from danger of this kind. This tremor was on the 5th February in the consulship of Regulus and Verginius, and it inflicted great devastation on Campania, a region never safe from this evil, yet which has remained undamaged and has so often got off with a fright. For part of the town of Herculaneum too fell down and even the structures that remain are unstable, and the colony of Nuceria, though it escaped disaster, nevertheless is not without complaint. Naples too lost many private buildings, but no public ones, being stricken only lightly by the great evil; even villas have collapsed, everywhere things shook without injury. In addition, the following events occurred: a flock of six hundred sheep died and statues split, some people have lost their minds and wander about in their madness. Both the texture of my proposed work and the coincidence of the misfortune at this time demand that we explain the reasons for these things."

**Table 2.** Pliny the Younger on AD 79 eruption (Letters, LXV, To Tacitus)(tr. by William Melmoth; revised by F. C. T. Bosanquet, The Harvard Classics, Vol. IX, Part 4. (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909-14) [Bartleby])

"YOUR request that I would send you an account of my uncle's death, in order to transmit a more exact relation of it to posterity, deserves my acknowledgments; for, if this accident shall be celebrated by your pen, the glory of it, I am well assured, will be rendered for ever illustrious. And notwithstanding he perished by a misfortune, which, as it involved at the same time a most beautiful country in ruins, and destroyed so many populous cities, seems to promise him an everlasting remembrance; notwithstanding he has himself composed many and lasting works; yet I am persuaded, the mentioning of him in your immortal writings, will greatly contribute to render his name immortal. Happy I esteem those to be to whom by provision of the gods has been granted the ability either to do such actions as are worthy of being related or to relate them in a manner worthy of being read; but peculiarly happy are they who are blessed with both these uncommon talents: in the number of which my uncle, as his own writings and your history will evidently prove, may justly be ranked. It is with extreme willingness, therefore, that I execute your commands; and should indeed have claimed the task if you had not enjoined it. He was at that time with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud which appeared of a very unusual size and shape. He had just taken a turn in the sun, and, after bathing himself in cold water, and making a light luncheon, gone back to his books: he immediately arose and went out upon a rising ground from whence he might get a better sight of this very uncommon appearance. A cloud, from which mountain was uncertain, at this distance (but it was found afterwards to come from Mount Vesuvius), was ascending, the appearance of which I cannot give you a more exact description of than by likening it to that of a pine-tree, for it shot up to a great height in the form of a very tall trunk, which spread itself out at the top into a sort of branches; occasioned, I imagine, either by a sudden gust of air that impelled it, the force of which decreased as it advanced upwards, or the cloud itself, being pressed back again by its own weight, expanded in the manner I have mentioned; it appeared sometimes bright and sometimes dark and spotted, according as it was either more or less impregnated with earth and cinders. This phenomenon seemed to a man of such learning and research as my uncle extraordinary and worth further looking into. He ordered a light vessel to be got ready, and gave me leave, if I liked, to accompany him. I said I had rather go on with my work; and it so happened, he had himself given me something to write out. As he was coming out of the house, he received a note from Rectina, the wife of Bassus, who was in the utmost alarm at the imminent danger which threatened her; for her villa lying at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, there was no way of escape but by sea; she earnestly entreated him therefore to come to her assistance. He accordingly changed his first intention, and what he had begun from a philosophical, he now carries out in a noble and generous spirit. He ordered the galleys to be put to sea, and went himself on board with an intention of assisting not only Rectina, but the several other towns which lay thickly strewn along that beautiful coast. Hastening

then to the place from whence others fled with the utmost terror, he steered his course direct to the point of danger, and with so much calmness and presence of mind as to be able to make and dictate his observations upon the motion and all the phenomena of that dreadful scene. He was now so close to the mountain that the cinders, which grew thicker and hotter the nearer he approached, fell into the ships, together with pumice-stones, and black pieces of burning rock: they were in danger too not only of being aground by the sudden retreat of the sea, but also from the vast fragments which rolled down from the mountain, and obstructed all the shore. Here he stopped to consider whether he should turn back again; to which the pilot advising him, "Fortune," said he, "favours the brave; steer to where Pomponianus is." Pomponianus was then at Stabiae, separated by a bay, which the sea, after several insensible windings, forms with the shore. He had already sent his baggage on board; for though he was not at that time in actual danger, yet being within sight of it, and indeed extremely near, if it should in the least increase, he was determined to put to sea as soon as the wind, which was blowing dead inshore, should go down. It was favourable, however, for carrying my uncle to Pomponianus, whom he found in the greatest consternation: he embraced him tenderly, encouraging and urging him to keep up his spirits, and, the more effectually to soothe his fears by seeming unconcerned himself, ordered a bath to be got ready, and then, after having bathed, sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (what is just as heroic) with every appearance of it. Meanwhile broad flames shone out in several places from Mount Vesuvius, which the darkness of the night contributed to render still brighter and clearer. But my uncle, in order to soothe the apprehensions of his friend, assured him it was only the burning of the villages, which the country people had abandoned to the flames: after this he retired to rest, and it is most certain he was so little disquieted as to fall into a sound sleep: for his breathing, which, on account of his corpulence, was rather heavy and sonorous, was heard by the attendants outside. The court which led to his apartment being now almost filled with stones and ashes, if he had continued there any time longer, it would have been impossible for him to have made his way out. So he was awoke and got up, and went to Pomponianus and the rest of his company, who were feeling too anxious to think of going to bed. They consulted together whether it would be most prudent to trust to the houses, which now rocked from side to side with frequent and violent concussions as though shaken from their very foundations; or fly to the open fields, where the calcined stones and cinders, though light indeed, yet fell in large showers, and threatened destruction. In this choice of dangers they resolved for the fields: as resolution which, while the rest of the company were hurried into by their fears, my uncle embraced upon cool and deliberate consideration. They went out then, having pillows tied upon their heads with napkins; and this was their whole defense against the storm of stones that fell round them. It was now day everywhere else, but there a deeper darkness prevailed than in the thickest night; which, however, was in some degree alleviated by torches and other lights of various kinds. They thought proper to go farther down upon the shore to see if they might safely put out to sea, but found the waves still running extremely high, and boisterous. There my uncle, laying himself down upon a sail-cloth, which was spread for him, called twice for some cold water, which he drank, when immediately the flames, preceded by a strong whiff of sulphur, dispersed the rest of the party, and obliged him to rise. He raised himself up with the assistance of two of his servants, and instantly fell down dead; suffocated, as I conjecture, by some gross and noxious vapor, having always had a weak throat, which was often inflamed. As soon as it was light again, which was not till the third day after this melancholy accident, his body was found entire, and without any marks of violence upon it, in the dress in which he fell, and looking more like a man asleep than dead. During all this time my mother and I, who were at Misenum- but this has no connection with your history, and you did not desire any particulars besides those of my uncle's death; so I will end here, only adding that I have faithfully related to you what I was either an eye-witness of myself or received immediately after the accident happened, and before there was time to vary the truth. You will pick out of this narrative whatever is most important: for a letter is one thing, a history another; it is one thing writing to a friend, another thing writing to the public. Farewell."

9. Fontana, the architect responsible from the channel project accidentally discovered some inscriptions, and also buildings with colored wall-paintings but could not relate these finds to Pompeii. The city was firmly identified as Pompeii in 1763 after an inscription bearing the name *Pompeis*, Berry (1998, 7).

a revised version of a late antique map, on which the Campanian towns were marked correctly (Cooley, 2003, 51). In between the publication of this map and the early 18th century when Herculaneum and Pompeii were re-discovered and identified correctly as such, the ancient Campanian towns fell into oblivion and the area which lied over the buried Pompeii came to be called *la Civita* (Brion, 1960, 39).

During the course of the 16th and 17th centuries coincidences led to some chance discoveries of ancient building materials and artifacts from the buried Campanian towns. These however did not create a sensational response and reaction. The city of Pompeii for example was actually spotted for the first time in the 16th century, during a construction project devised by count Muzzio Tuttavilla who planned to divert the water of the Sarno river to his villa in Torre Annunziata underneath of which was another buried site (Parslow, 1995, 44). The planned underground channel of the shortest route happened to pass across the ruins of Pompeii. It entered the city from the amphitheater side, extended to the forum and crossed the necropolis of the Herculaneum Gate, thus making the longest cut through Pompeii. During the digging of this channel under the direction of architect Domenico Fontana from 1592 to 1600 several inscriptions were unearthed by the laymen who were not aware of the fact that they were excavating over the top surface of a 66 hectares ancient city lying deep below (9). An inscription bearing two clearly visible words, *decurio pompeis*, referring to a Pompeian magistrate, was an archaeologically diagnostic evidence but was misinterpreted as referring to the villa of the Roman general Pompey and not to the Roman city of Pompeii. Its discovery therefore did not arouse further discussion or interest (Cooley, 2003, 63). The canal was already completed when Lucas Holstenius, a German antiquarian visited the area in 1637 and proposed correctly that Pompeii and *la Civita* were the same. His proposal was not welcomed. Another inscription bearing the name Pompei found in 1689 however aroused a controversy on its identification between an architect named Picchetti and a historian named Bianchini. Picchetti suggested that the name referred to the Roman general Pompey while Bianchini claimed that it indicated the city of Pompeii. This intellectual debate aroused further personal interest and made one Macrini return to the site in 1693 and go down to the tunnels. Although Macrini noted the ruins of ramparts and buildings and suggested excavation to clarify whether these ruins belonged to the ancient city of Pompeii called *la Civita* no attempt was made until 1710 (Brion, 1960, 41).

The credit for discovering Herculaneum is held by the Austrian prince Duc d'Elbeuf (Emmanuel-Maurice de Lorraine) who, having married a Neapolitan Princess in 1710, decided to build a sumptuous seaside villa and settle down at Portici, a site which is close to Herculaneum. At about the same time a peasant from the nearby town of Resina found several pieces of buried marble while digging a well in his land. All of the unearthed pieces were immediately purchased by the prince who following the trends in the decoration of the aristocratic mansions of his time was interested in embellishing his villa with marble statuary and accessories.

d'Elbeuf had realized that the marble pieces he acquired were not ordinary building materials but actually came from monumental ancient buildings and bought the land to make excavations. The first 'archaeological excavations' in the region of Campania, in this respect, began under the personal initiative of prince d'Elbeuf. Horizontal canals were tunneled out from the already dug well by his seven workers who by chance first hit the





**Figure 5.** The front stage of the theater at Herculaneum as excavated (Maiuri, 1945, Pl. XL)

wall of the stage building of the theater in Herculaneum which was one of the most decorated public buildings of the ancient city. The building however was mistakenly identified as the Temple of Hercules by d'Elbeuf (**Figure 5**). The stage was discovered in its integrity, together with its polychrome marble revetments, columns and statuary thus yielding much more valuable pieces than the prince could have ever expected. In 1716, at the end of an intensive nine month long tunneling and digging period d'Elbeuf was summoned back to Austria. Until his departure however, his workers, despite working in cramped conditions in the narrow tunnels which were lit and smoked with torches and received air only from the well, were able to present him with a fairly rich collection of antiquities that included portrait heads, decorative marbles and a group of marble portrait statues. This was the first private yet undocumented collection unearthed from Herculaneum.

In this opening epoch of the excavation history Prince d'Elbeuf acted like an aristocratic treasure-hunter mesmerized by the amount and quality of the art work cleared from the stage building. Even for his private interest the prince did not feel the urge or the need to document and record the method and progress of the excavation, the clearing and destruction of levels and the position, status, identification and description of the in-situ finds. The sole motive was to decorate his private residence in the manner of a museum of antiquities, and for that he luckily found the right building in the first attempt. On the other hand without actually realizing the future consequences of his private mission and despite all his efforts of secrecy, the Prince aroused both a scholarly and public interest and was recorded as the first 'excavator' in the long digging narrative of Pompeii and Herculaneum. In 1711, the news about his finds was published in the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia*, after a manuscript written by Andrea Simone Imperato, the rector of S. Maria di Pugliano in Resina (Parslow 1995, 22-23). The manuscript was written with the intention of documenting all the known eruptions of Vesuvius to provide information on the post-eruption state of the landscape, inhabitants and the countryside around Resina and reported also on the location of the wells where antiquities were found and the activities of Prince d'Elbeuf. This manuscript and the newspaper report are the earliest written and published texts concerning the documentation history of Campanian archaeology. A letter dated to 1731, moreover, reports about the first site-visiting tours and the exposure of the ruins at Resina to the visitors, not yet identified as Herculaneum (Parslow, 1995, 22).

After the departure of Prince d'Elbeuf, his villa was bought first by Duca Giacinto Falletti di Cannaloga, who adorned it with his own private collection composed of another group of unrecorded ancient statuary cleared from the site under his supervision. The villa and the collection it housed were later bought by the King of Naples, Charles of Bourbon in 1746. Several minor eruptions that occurred in between 1717 and 1737 in the meantime must have discouraged any other long-term excavation.

## THE 'BOURBON ARCHAEOLOGY'

### AD 1738: Herculaneum, Alcubierre and Bardet

The excavation history of Herculaneum and Pompeii took another route towards the middle of the eighteenth century with the arrival of Charles of Bourbon to Campania to establish a new and independent domain of power based at Naples. Among the European courts of the time, possession

10. Louis XIV of France, the great-grandfather of Charles for example was renowned as an art lover, patron and collector and he built the magnificent Versailles palace and opened an Opera house in Paris during his reign, Cooley (2003, 66).

and display of ancient art work was conceived as a major agent in planting a new political power and regime. The antiquities that could be confiscated from both of the ancient towns and other nearby buried villas, from 1738 onwards, would thus serve for the very same purpose for Charles of Bourbon and his successors. In this context, the antiquities of Campania would be collected for the first time exclusively to form not a private collection but a royal one under the imperial patronage and control of the Neapolitan Kings. The unearthed antiquities would be classified and treated as national treasury and would thus be protected and displayed under the auspices of the royal court in Naples. Their export and transport, by any means and for any purposes, outside the kingdom of Naples without the acknowledgement of the court would also be forbidden. This was clearly a much more conservative, protective and possessive attitude towards the preservation of antiquities uncovered elsewhere in Italy at that period; of the antiquities found in the domains of the Papacy, in contrast, the Pope claimed only one-third and felt free to issue export permits (Cooley, 2003, 69; Gardner Coates and Sedy1 2007, 38-39).

The eighteen year old Charles of Bourbon (Charles VII) assumed the throne of the 'Kingdom of Two Sicilies' which covered the area from Sicily to the borders of the Roman states that lie beyond the territory of Naples after winning a battle against the Austrians in 1734. This was a crucial victory, for Naples became an autonomous kingdom next to Spain and Austria. It became a state in need of a royal court and a capital active and dominating not only politically but also culturally for official recognition among the more rooted contemporary European courts and capitals. Following the footsteps of both the preceding and contemporary monarchs, Charles initiated foremost a building program to adorn Naples with cultural edifices including an opera-house and its countryside with imperial palaces filled with art work (10). Of the three proposed imperial palaces during his reign one was to be built at Portici as a hunting mansion where Prince d'Elbeuf had built his villa and already did some excavation in ancient Herculaneum. The archaeological wealth of the area was already made known to Charles VII who resumed the excavation abandoned by d'Elbeuf in 1738. The royal palace he later built at Portici would be used to house the first ever-expanding royal collection and hence the first museum of Campania, *Museo Ercolanese*.

During the Bourbon reign the excavations in Campania were conducted under the directorship and management of a group of technical professionals, none of whom had any prior knowledge and experience in an archaeological undertaking. Among them some played a more decisive role in not only initiating and navigating the course of the early Bourbon phase of the excavation history but also in the birth and development of modern archaeology. Two leading figures in this early episode were Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre and Karl Jakob Weber. Both ended up in Naples following Charles of Bourbon.

Alcubierre was a Spanish military engineer serving in the Spanish corps in 1733 and arrived to Naples in 1734 with Charles VII at the age of thirty-two. In 1738 as both an engineer and an artillery captain he was stationed at Portici to survey the site for the building of the new summer palace and the gardens, the future *Museo Ercolanese*, of Charles VII. The project also included surveying the site for constructing a small fortress to guard the coastline. During his survey Alcubierre learned about the presence and clearing of antiquities from this area and was also shown the manuscript of Imperato.

11. Colonel Leonhard-Ludwig Tschudi was from the family of Ludwig Tschudi who is known to have established the Vatican regiment of Swiss Guards before his death in 1534, Parslow (1995, 17).

Weber was a Swiss trained initially in mathematics but later became a career officer in the infantry of Colonel Leonhard-Ludwig Tschudi (11). Weber's involvement in Campania started with his arrival to Italy as a lieutenant in the infantry which, following an agreement with Charles of Bourbon, was expected to work for the court of Naples. In 1743, after successfully completing his examinations Weber was admitted to the military engineers of the Royal Guard and worked in different projects until 1746 when he was invited by Alcubierre to work as his assistant in the excavation of Herculaneum.

In the meantime Alcubierre was already excavating Herculaneum under the auspices of the Bourbon King. The first official excavation instruction recorded for Herculaneum is decreed on October 20, 1738:

"To excavate by following the walls; in order to prevent his health from deteriorating in the grottoes, he should order the voluntary engineer Don Pietro Sbarbi to conduct the excavations with the same foremen (Minico Imperator?) as in the excavations of prince d'Elbeufi and that when structures are found to give him two or three laborers who should take care not to break the marbles which they find" (Parslow, 1995, 29).

The decree illustrates that the court was merely interested in the clearing of "marbles" or marble statuary; this approach would also guide the method and the content of the first officially acknowledged archaeological work in Campania under Alcubierre's tenure. Alcubierre's early years as the director of the excavations therefore, would be spent to fulfill this royal desire; before teaming with Weber Alcubierre focused merely on digging to find marble statuary or other portable and in-situ artifacts of value, such as wall-painting and mosaic panels and not on documentation. His first finds from Herculaneum, after those cleared by prince d'Elbeuf, pleased not only the kings but the artists of the period:

"...: a bronze, quadriga, great statues of emperors, jewels and magnificent frescoes, immediately transported to the villa at Portici, which served as museum, and rousing cries of admiration from artists who declared these paintings to be 'splendid, of striking verity, and superior even to those of Raphael.'" (Brion, 1960, 45)

For Alcubierre, the existing wells functioned as access points to the ruins. From these vertical shafts tunnels were dug following the course of the ancient masonry walls, cutting through them where necessary. These were narrow tunnels, about 2m. in height and 1m. in width which barely allowed a single worker to pass. For easing the passage of workers and finds niches were carved at certain intervals. Neither the access points and the tunnels nor the find spots along the tunnels however were marked on a draft plan. This posed no problem to Alcubierre as long as he kept finding his targeted artifacts. Until 1740 a mosaic fountain niche cut out from the wall of a house, numerous inscriptions and small bronze figures and a group of marble statuaries were already lifted up despite some criticism about the unsystematic and destructive methods of digging:

"Uncovering one part and then another in this manner, who can say how many precious objects, how many desirable monuments, perhaps could be found in the rooms and the cabinets? Proceeding blindly through tunnels and through narrow passages, much will be broken, much will be destroyed, nor will it ever be possible to see the noble buildings in their entirety, nor their facades, nor to know where and how were arranged the great number of statues and other ornaments, because with only a small space ever being open (and moreover it being necessary to fill it back in bit by bit) one returns to rebury and conceal all the walls as they were. It will also be necessary to break up many things into pieces to remove them from their site and

12. Written in a letter by a scholar named Scipio Maffei of Verona to Bernardo de Rubeis of Venice in 1747, Parslow (2005, 33-34).

13. A visitor complains about the unscientific methods; from a letter written in 1750 (Parslow (1995, 34).

transport them. Such has happened with the painted walls, many pieces of which have been sawed and carried off with much industry" (12).

"The method of digging is this: whenever they find a wall, they clear a passage along the side of it. When they come to an angle, they turn with it, and when they come to a door or a window, they make their way into it. But when they have done so, they are far from finding themselves in a spacious room or an open area, for all the rooms and places they have yet found are so filled with lava that it sticks on the sides of the walls; and they can advance no further than they can make their way by digging, which is such a labour that, when they cease to find anything worth their search, they fill up the place again and begin to dig elsewhere. By which means no place is quite cleared" (13).

As also observed by some visitors the conditions in the tunnels were severe, unhealthy and even dangerous as the tunnels were narrow, dusty, dark and damp. They received little air and were also vulnerable to accidents such as the collapse of roofs and the aboveground modern structures. Besides, there was always the possibility that earthquakes and volcanic eruptions could hit the region and bury those inside the tunnels at any moment. The laborers indeed were forced to work under these circumstances; they were chained to prevent them from escaping and were also closely watched against filling their pockets with small finds. No doubt many like Alcubierre got sick from the poisonous volcanic dust and damp air; Alcubierre was not only lowered down into the tunnels regularly on a daily basis, but also continued to supervise the royal projects at Portici as a member of the corps of royal military engineers and thus split his time and energy between digging and constructing.

In 1740, two years after the official start of the excavations and during when his health was declining Alcubierre became the target of an inquiry concerning his excavation methods. Upon the collapse of a tunnel which also damaged the foundations and walls of the modern houses above, he was given the order from his superiors to work in a more systematic fashion and to produce documents including detailed plans and elevations of the ruins and their context in relation to both stratigraphy and modern buildings. The increased task which now included also documentation as well as his poor health made Alcubierre request for his brother Felipe to become his assistant. This request was presumably declined, and following a forced leave of absence of Alcubierre due to his bad health in 1741, the prime minister of the Bourbon King appointed Pierre Bardet de Villeneuve as the director of the excavations at Herculaneum. Bardet was a French engineer and was also serving in the corps of royal engineers at Portici. Bardet continued to excavate the site for the next four years by using the tunneling method but a noteworthy change he made was to excavate along the street lines so as not to destroy and cut through any walls. By using this method he cleared areas around some important public buildings like the theater, the basilica, the Collegium of Augustales, the Galleria Balba and also some domestic and commercial structures. Of these the basilica happened to be a fortunate case, a group of marble portraits and bronze statues belonging to different emperors came from this building, which had already yielded three famous wall-paintings to Alcubierre few years earlier. Many wall-paintings of smaller size found in various spaces and buildings in the meantime, also continued to be cut out from their walls under the supervision of Bardet.

Bardet's short-termed directorship represents a fruitful period in the early archaeology of the ancient Vesuvian sites in terms of preparing inventory lists and making architectural documentation. During the four years of his

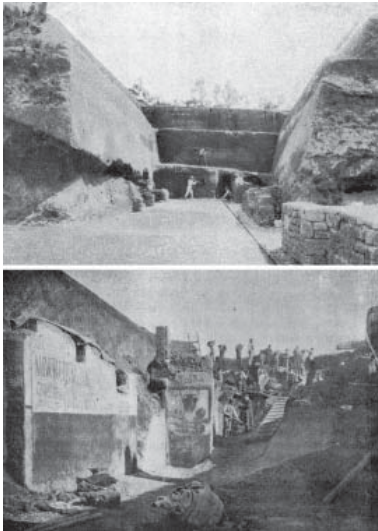
14. The copies of all the finished drawings would be sent first to the prime minister who later passed them along to the King to be stored eventually in the archives of the *Secreteria di Stato* in Naples. Thus Bardet's five plans would be collected from the archive by one of the later excavation directors in 1766. The Royal Herculaneum Academy which was founded in 1755 was responsible from the publishing of the materials discovered from Herculaneum, and in between 1757 and 1796, nine volumes of *Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte* – The Antiquities of Herculaneum Displayed – appeared, Cooley (2003, 71).

service Bardet managed to draw the plan and the extant elevation of the basilica at Herculaneum. This is the earliest extant architectural document of Vesuvian archaeology and was prepared in two versions that show the title in both French and Spanish. The plan (50cm.x 70cm) illustrated the structure and the form of the basilica in detail and had a scale bar shown below. It did not however include any graphic indication or written notes about the fact that the basilica was still remained buried (about 16 m.) and that it was excavated by means of tunnels. The plan did not include any information about the type and the find spot of the artifacts cleared from the building as well. Among the other known drawings made by Bardet is an area plan of the buildings excavated along the *Decumanus Maximus*, one of the two major avenues of ancient Herculaneum. This larger plan (59 cm. x 102 cm.) showed the relationship of buildings including the Basilica, Galleria Balba, Augustalium, Palaestra with the Corinthian Atrium and a number of shops and domestic structures in between The theater, although improperly oriented, was also shown on the corner of the plan. Two framed sections on the plan in addition, were reserved for explanatory notes regarding the features of the buildings. Neither of these two plans, nor any other ones drawn by Bardet are known to have been transferred to Alcubierre when he reassumed the directorship in 1745, after his recovery and two years of struggle (with Bardet) for the post (14).

In his second tenure Alcubierre continued to extend the tunnels of Bardet from where numerous artifacts such as mosaics, wall-paintings and small finds were discovered in large numbers. Especially valuable for the art connoisseurs of the period were the wall-paintings and thus a single wall could be pierced to obtain not only its panel painting but also the individual motifs that made or framed the composition. The finds were split between two interested parties by Alcubierre: the marble statuary to the King and the royal museum, and the wall-paintings and mosaics to the private art dealers. In this period he presented daily reports to the prime minister and also kept an inventory list of the finds. These lists included brief information about the material and dimensions, and a rough note on the subject matter of the finds. Drafting a general plan of the tunnels and preparing a more contextual visual documentation were still not in the agenda of Alcubierre and it was not possible to track the progress of his work at Herculaneum. Areas around the theater and the basilica were still excavated in a haphazard way to which were added many funerary monuments along the edge of the city. Had Alcubierre followed the method of Bardet and continued to dig along the street lines, he would have ended up with revealing at least the orthogonal grid of the city. Instead, his workers continued to cut through the walls of houses and fill the old tunnels after proceeding to a new one.

#### **AD 1748: Pompeii and Alcubierre**

Alcubierre was energetically removing all he could find from Herculaneum but nearly after a decade of excavations there had been an observable drop in the quantity of the finds. Desperately willing to keep and secure his position as the director of excavations, Alcubierre decided to explore some nearby areas and chose Torre Annunziata. Located 18 kilometers southeast of Naples, this was the town where the royal gunpowder factories had been located and to which the Sarno river, diverted by a canal built in part by architect Fontana Domenico almost two centuries ago, supplied water. As a military engineer Alcubierre was at the same time supervising the repair and maintenance of military projects and existing facilities which included the canal as well. During one of his surveys of the canal area



**Figure 6.** The first great excavation trench of the early 20th century illustrates the depth to be cleared at Herculaneum (Maiuri, 1945, Pl. IV) and the relatively shallow deposit layer at Pompeii (Della Corte, 1925, 20, Figure 6).

15. The volcanic layer in Pompeii was not as deep as in Herculaneum, the average depth being 3.96 m. in comparison to the depth of the latter which was between 6 to 18 m. and hence the excavation work progressed more quickly, Parslow (1995, 108-109). Herculaneum was originally buried up to ten meters but after the eruption of 1631 this depth increased to twenty-seven meters, Baldassare Conticello (1990, 3).

in 1748 Alcubierre was informed about the presence of some antiquities found at a site called *la Civita* near Torre Annunziata where the Sarno canal was making an underground pass. With the hope of revealing more buried treasure he got the permit to start an excavation in this area which he mistakenly identified as the ancient Stabiae. A group of workers transferred from Herculaneum started the first officially recorded dig in *la Civita*, in ancient Pompeii, in 1748. Pompeii turned out to be more advantageous in terms of digging and clearing. It had a relatively shallow deposit layer that posed less technical problems and unlike Herculaneum which was buried at an approximate depth of 23 m. it did not require tunneling (**Figure 6**)(15):

The circumstances of the burial of Herculaneum are very diverse from those of Pompeii... Whilst at Pompeii... Whilst at Pompeii there was a regular stratification of eruptive material due to the rain of ashes and fragments of lava transported by the wind, which was at the most 5 or 6 meters deep, upon Herculaneum there descended, swept down by the enormous volumes of water that always accompany great volcanic convulsions, a shapeless mass of erupted material which had previously collected around the crater and rushed down the steep mountain side upon the city in the form of an immense torrent of mud, overturning and submerging all that stood in its path. First the villas lying above the city and then the city itself, all were submerged by this terrifying alluvion which, having invaded and filled up all spaces, totally transformed the aspect of the district. This mud-lava that in its liquid state was able to penetrate into every void, now that it is solidified has assumed the appearance of a compact bank. It reaches the hardness of tufa, and presents the characteristics of a tufoid formation (pappamonte), varying both in composition and in density according to the different flows of lava. The depth of the layer thus accumulated above the buried city, including the vegetation stratum, varies from 12 to 20 meters or more. (Maiuri, 1945: 7-8)

Despite the fact that digging could be done under daylight and not in dark and cramped tunnels, the work had to be stopped for three months on July 6, 1748 for the laborers were intensively exposed to the hazardous air caused by the release of poisonous gases trapped in the *lapilli* during the excavations. When resumed the work started at the amphitheater which was clearly visible in the landscape with its elliptical form and central depression (**Figure 7**). The building however failed to provide antiquities of



**Figure 7.** Amphitheater at Pompeii, in the background is Vesuvius (from an old postcard).

16. The year 1747 as marked on the plan presumably refers to the year the plan was engraved and not to the year it was drawn for the features listed on the plan were found before 1737. The usual application in those years was to prepare a final version of a plan in the form of an engraving once the draft drawings were finalized, Parslow (1995, 60).

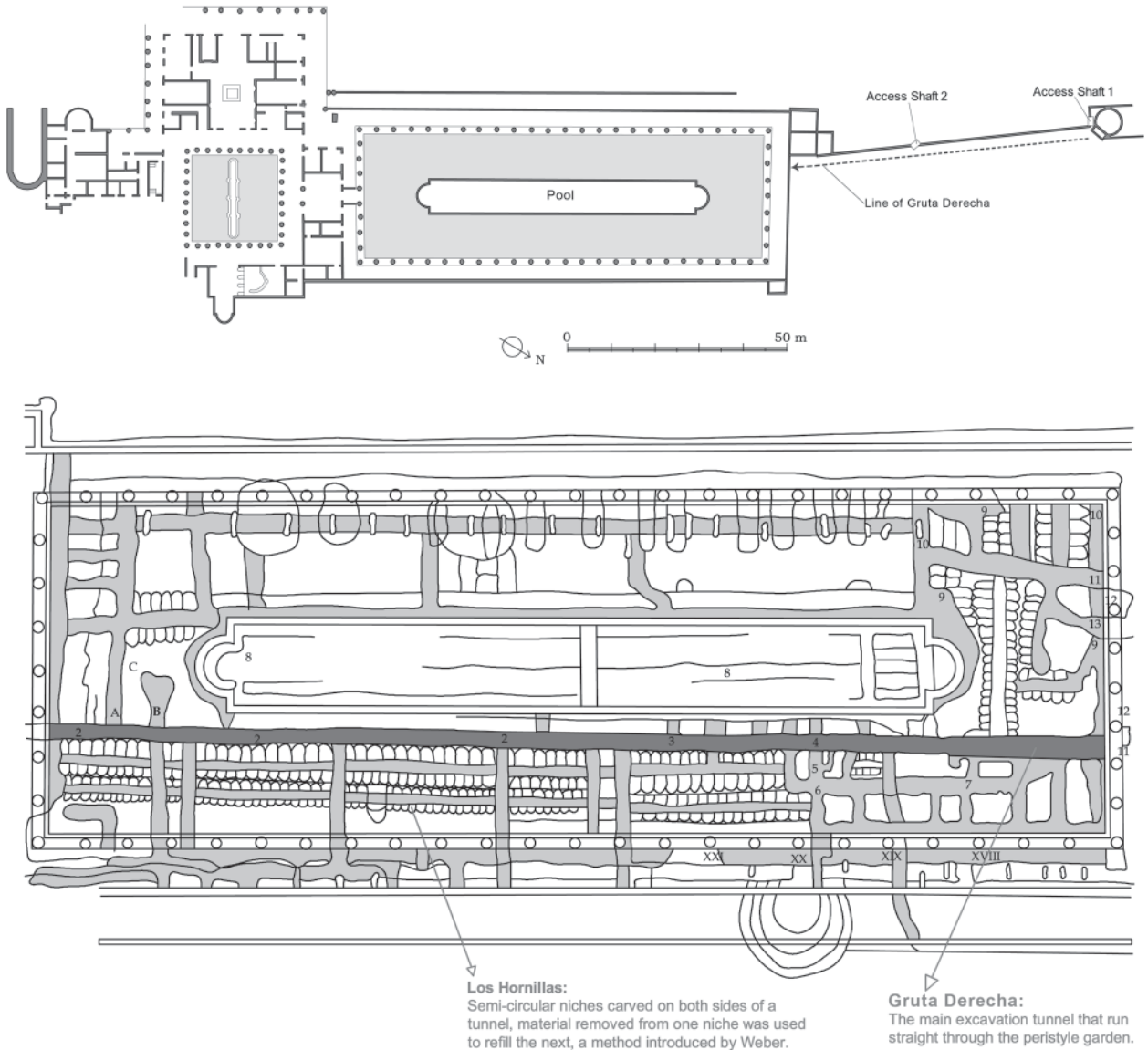
value and Alcubierre, after recording the dimensions, architectural features and some speculative information on its seating capacity, moved on to another location in *la Civita*. Despite clearing some paintings Alcubierre was not happy with the finds and diverted the excavation work to some other nearby sites in 1750. He was not aware of the fact that he dug the first recorded excavation trench at Pompeii.

Until 1750 Alcubierre produced little architectural documentation. He even could not finalize the topographical plan of the area of Portici, the site of the royal palace. His reasons of failure at Herculaneum partially relied on the lack of enough space to maneuver the *circumferentor*, a large and rotating surveying instrument that operated like a theodolite, in the narrow tunnels and partially on his ignorant attitude to planning and marking the orientation, length and inclination of tunnels on a general base map. His reliance on measurements taken not by himself but by the laborers caused further problem. The crudeness of the plans completed in his time suggests that the dimensions were presumably taken by chains and that this task most probably was undertaken by unskilled laborers as Alcubierre could become disoriented in the tunnels and thus stay inside for only a short time. From all those years of excavation (1738-1750) Alcubierre had produced at his disposal only a group of incomplete plans belonging to various monuments and the relatively more complete plan of the theater at Herculaneum, presumably engraved in 1737 and which showed only some of the tunnels (16). Among the two other plans known to have been drawn by him are the partial plan of the building called Villa of Anteros and Heracleo from Stabiae and the plan and section of the amphitheater at Pompeii, which was incorrectly labeled as the amphitheater of Stabiae. A number of unsigned plans showing some urban blocks and the theater at Herculaneum and the villa found at Stabiae are presumably prepared not by Alcubierre but by the two French engineers who were working with him.

#### **AD 1750: Pompeii, Alcubierre and Weber**

Alcubierre in the meantime was promoted as a lieutenant colonel, a position which he had to execute together with his duty in the royal corps of military engineers. This promotion required more presence at Naples and thus forced him to ask for the employment of an assistant to supervise the excavation work in the Vesuvian sites. Karl Jakob Weber was his candidate. Weber visited his new post, Torre Annunziata, for the first time on July 4, 1750.

Weber got his first instructions on the managerial issues of the excavations, now conducted at a number of sites including Herculaneum (Resina), Torre Annunziata and Gragnano. His tasks included watching over the laborers against theft, keeping a record of the monthly wages paid to the laborers and the expenses of the excavation, keeping an eye on the guards who were watching over the forced laborers at Herculaneum and Gragnano and also protecting the sites from the night burglars. Among his non-managerial duties were to draw individual plans of each building and to record explicitly what was found in each spot. Weber received a number of incomplete plans, in addition to the plan of the theater at Herculaneum, the amphitheater of Pompeii and some other unsigned plans from Alcubierre. He also received a list of the equipments, three winches, four small wagons, the air pump used to obtain fresh air inside the tunnels and a transportable wooden hut with four benches to be used for writing the daily reports.



**Figure 8.** Schematic plan of the Villa of Papyri and the first access shafts, the axis also illustrates the direction of the main excavation tunnel, *gruta derecha* (adapted from Parslow, 1995, 78).

**Figure 9.** Villa of Papyri, a partial plan showing the main excavation tunnel (*gruta derecha*) and the secondary tunnels that ran under the large courtyard (adapted from Parslow, 1995, 95).

Weber's first major success came with a large villa discovered at Herculaneum in 1750. Called Villa of Papyri, after an invaluable collection of about 1787 scrolled rolls of papyri that came from the private library of the building, this large residence was excavated by Weber in a more systematic fashion. Rather than tunneling haphazardly Weber created a linear axis that stretched from a well near the villa, which functioned as the first shaft of entrance to the underground level, all the way up to the other end of the site and first dug a relatively spacious tunnel along this axis (Figure 8, 9). This vaulted and plastered tunnel called Guruta Derecha (2.50m. wide and 2.00m. high) actually cut through the long and colonnaded open courtyard of the villa and thus became the main underground passage that helped to plan other parallel and perpendicular tunnels stretching towards the walls of the courtyard that stood in alignment with this major axis. In addition, it was conveniently used to transport the laborers, the finds and also the visitors from one end to the other in a faster and comfortable way. Functioning as the main underground artery and reference axis, this tunnel was of utmost



importance in Weber's method of excavation and recording and thus was frequently plastered to keep it in good shape. Weber moreover, also made use of the mosaic floor decorations to guide his excavations since many walls had already collapsed during the AD 79 eruption and would be of no help to make the plan of the villa. He had realized that some patterns and *emblemata* could point out the thresholds of doorways or the beginning of the corridors. Despite his more laborious and expensive method of digging, Weber was able to produce a number of detailed drawings, sketches and notes of the villa. These included a detailed plan of the nearby belvedere of the villa with its pattern of the mosaic floor decoration, three drawings showing patterns of floor decoration, a large and colored illustration of a pavement removed from a room, and a large plan of the villa showing the main and the secondary tunnels, a plan which was drawn four years after he started excavating the villa. This plan had introduced some previously unpracticed techniques of representation such as, outlining the freehand drawn tunnels in black, outlining the ruins in ruled black lines, coloring the areas which were supposed to include a water element like a pool or a canal with brown, black stippling the rooms with black-white mosaic floors and crosshatching those with colored pavements. A very detailed inventory of finds was also given underneath the plan. In this part of his representation Weber wrote about the location and depth of the access ramp and the air shafts, the places where additional investigations were necessary, number of the doors to a single room, notes about the presumed function of a room and dimensions and descriptions of finds. Prepared in a more informative and contextual manner than the previous architectural documents, this plan nevertheless had its own drawbacks as well. It, for example, was not oriented to true north. Besides, the plan was not prepared to indicate the gradual progression of excavations. Despite the fact that it gave the impression of a completed state of excavation what it actually illustrated was several phases juxtaposed on one plan.

Weber however did a much better documentation of another large complex uncovered in Pompeii. Called *Praedia Iuliae Felicis* this was a complex that developed from an atrium house and included a number of buildings such as a bath, a series of shops, dining and reception rooms. The complex yielded several well-preserved wall-paintings, statuary and the first skeleton of Pompeii (recorded on April 19, 1748) and became the first systematically and completely excavated site in the Vesuvius area. Taking advantage of the shallow burial level at Pompeii Weber was able to proceed in a much faster and efficient way, thus clearing the whole complex without tunneling (17). More accurate dimensions and descriptions were presented which in turn guided Weber to draw a detailed and accurate plan of the complex similar in technique to that of the Villa of Papyri at Herculaneum but more advanced in terms of its informative content. This plan which likewise was first outlined in pencil and then redrawn in ink and color was more inclusive and showed the exact find spot of every individual artifact correctly on the plan and every individual space marked with a number following an order from left to right that corresponded to the matching inventory list of that room. The empty spaces left around the drawing were occupied with the detailed description of the items listed in the inventory (Figure 10, 11). This plan is noteworthy as it was much more informative and comprehensive in content and representation from the previous plans. Weber for the first time paid attention to drafting shop fronts and recording examples of "common architecture" in detail as opposed to the earlier documentation that targeted describing and drafting

17. Some pre-existing tunnels were discovered by the workers of Weber which suggested that the ancients came back and dug for rescuing their valuable goods following the eruption, Parslow (1995, 93).

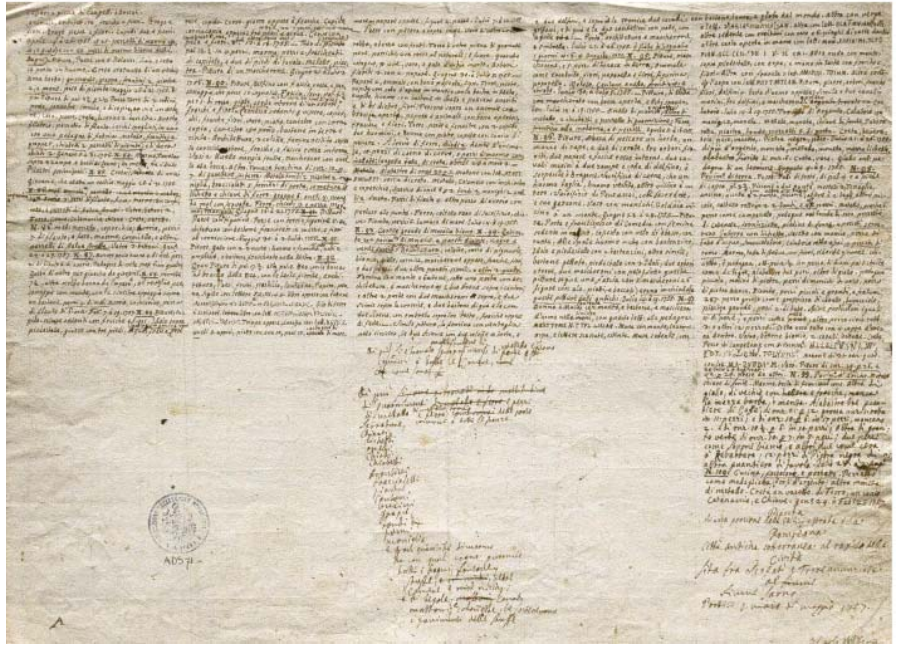
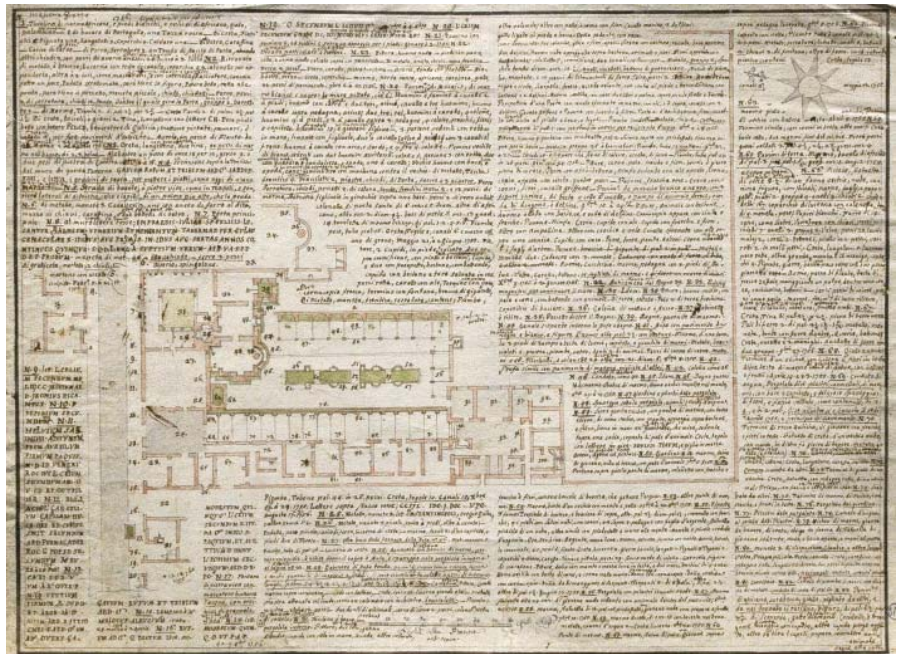


Figure 10. Preliminary draft of Praedia Iuliae Felicis in Pompeii, dated 1757 and drawn by Weber (Courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Napoli e Caserta, Archivio Disegno no 71-1 and 72-2).

Figure 11. Final and coloured copy of the plan of Praedia Iuliae Felicis, drawn by Weber (Courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Napoli e Caserta, Archivio Disegno, no 72).

18. For a recent account of this complex which offered rented accommodation see, Pirson (1997).

19. For this monograph see Parslow (1995) Appendix 3.

20. The discoveries in the Campanian cities, especially the objects of everyday use, made an impact on the artistic medium, production and discourse in Europe in the eighteenth century, Bologna (1990).

only the monumental public buildings. He also correctly identified the complex not as a villa but an agglomeration of different units (18).

In 1757 after the completion of the excavations, the complex of *Praedia Iuliae* was reburied and Weber moved on to continue working in Herculaneum and producing more drawings of buildings like temples. His major contribution to Vesuvian archaeology in this period however is on the representation methods of excavated buildings, in particular on that of the *Praedia Iuliae* complex for which he later prepared an axonometric drawing (which he apparently did in late 1759 or early 1760, when the site was already reburied). Axonometric drawing is known to have been used at least from the early sixteenth century onwards, but Weber's axonometric drawing was the first such done in the context of an archaeological documentation and representation (Parslow, 1995, 168-69). Weber is known to have drawn a series of other plans belonging to sites in Stabiae and Herculaneum as well as a monograph on Villa di San Marco in Stabiae, thus forming the first dossier of archaeological drawings of Vesuvian sites (19). One of his other projects that remained unrealized was to prepare a detailed plan of the theater at Herculaneum which was already dug by d'Elbeouf and Alcubierre before his arrival to Campania. After being exposed to tunnels and the inconvenient working conditions for thirteen years during his service his health had deteriorated sharply and Weber requested to be released for a brief period from his post in search of medical care in Naples. He left Portici on January 26, 1764 and died nine days later. His post was assigned to Francesco La Vega who became the sole director of excavations at the age of twenty-seven following the death of Alcubierre in 1780. Vesuvian archaeology would take another path after the death of Weber and Alcubierre.

## CONCLUSIONS

The excavation of Herculaneum, Pompeii and the surrounding sites contributed to the claims and efforts of Charles VII and his successors in making Bourbon Naples a cultural and political center. The excavation sites themselves, the museum at Portici which housed the selected artifacts coming from these sites and Mount Vesuvius became popular travel destinations offering historical and natural attractions for the royal courts and aristocracy of Europe, thereby making Naples and Campania a significant cultural stop along the Grand Tour in the Bourbon Era. This was also the most active period of Vesuvius with a series of eruptions recorded in 1737, 1751, 1760, 1767, 1774, 1779, 1786 and 1794. These attracted many visitors who were willing to experience a climbing excursion to its crater, even during the upsurges and also the artists who found a number of opportunities to paint dramatic scenes of the eruption commissioned by the rich art patrons (Cooley, 2003, 75)(20).

Many who visited Campania in the Bourbon period and the proceeding years did not return home without memories or souvenirs of Vesuvius. Architect Sir John Soane, who visited the site in 1779 for example, noted that he took a 'piece of cinder from Vesuvius' as well as a piece of 'painted wall plaster'. Impressed by the ancient remains Charles Dickens wrote a detailed memoir of his travel to Vesuvius and the ruins in the nineteenth century (Cooley, 2003, 76). In this first official phase of the excavations then, archaeology, despite pleasing the royal court at Naples also served for providing real souvenirs and live experiences to the participants of the Grand Tour. For distinguished visitors, such as writers like Sir Walter Scott who visited Pompeii in 1832, the site officials 'staged' live excavations at

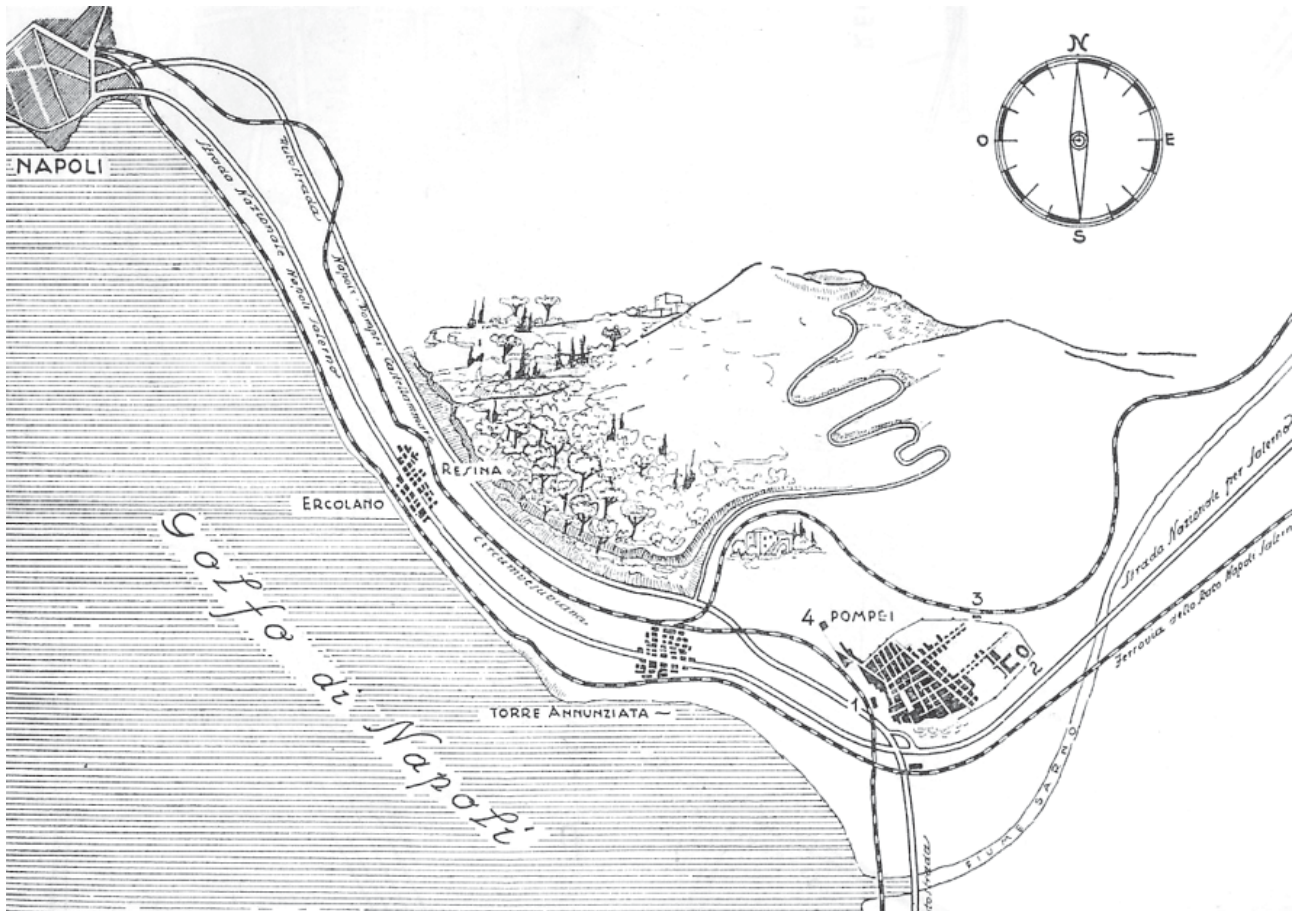


Figure 12. Circumvesuviana, Vesuvius and Pompeii (Maiuri, 1953).

particular spots which would normally produce common objects of daily use to yield valuable artifacts. Hence in the name of offering a memorable experience and publicity, objects of value which were already excavated were re-buried and then re-excavated (Cooley, 2003, 76; Brion, 1960, 49).

The ancient Vesuvian cities which were under the reserve of the royal court and notables became populated with modern visitors after the introduction of an entrance fee in 1860. The increasing interest in making a tour of the Vesuvian towns also led to the provision of better transportation means as well. A separate train service that connects the two largest cities in the bay of Naples, Naples at north to Sorrento at south, was put into operation in 1890 (21). Called *Circumvesuviana* this train since then stops at several modern and ancient towns on its way around Mount Vesuvius and still provides a frequent and rapid public transportation for the visitors of ancient Campania (Figure 12).

21. Means of transportation from Europe to Italy was improved around the 1830s when for example supporting roads to ease the vehicular traffic over St. Bernard, St. Gotthard and Brenner Passes in the Alps were constructed. The opening of these new roads made travel through the Alps into Italy easier and safer. A steamship service between Marseilles and Naples was also put into operation in the same decade. The establishment of the first railway in Italy in 1839 linked Naples to Granatello and thus Naples to Northern Italy which provided easier transportation within Italy as well, Cooley (2003, 82).

Weber's era is particularly noteworthy in this first phase of excavations in terms of preparing the first collection of documents on Vesuvian archaeology. Until Weber's appointment the laborious efforts of Alcubierre for revealing the Campanian sites was far from shedding light on the context of the ancient city; in no way did he aim to unearth the sites in a systematic way to expose the well-preserved urban fabric. When the intensity and amount of finds dropped he transferred the excavations to other promising localities (Cooley, 2003, 70). This situation changed by the involvement of Weber. For the first time since the official inception of the excavations, first in Herculaneum in the early eighteenth century, Weber

22. Villa of Papyri provided a model for the design of a modern research enterprise; The Getty Villa, which is a research centre and museum (J. Paul Getty Museum) based in Malibu, Los Angeles and devoted to the study of ancient world, see Deiss (1995, 157-171).

23. The secluded items with erotic context began to be displayed in a separate gallery called "The Secret Cabinet" in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples in 2000. For the Secret Cabinet see the gallery guide written by De Caro (2000).

approached the work and the site with an archaeological perspective. Rather than digging random and unconnected tunnels which were already practiced underneath the theater and which did not allow for any means of perception and planning, Weber aimed to clear the site, prepare draft plans and produce a final and detailed graphic document including a plan of the buildings and descriptive notes of individual spaces and finds after the completion of the excavation. Although not fully scientific in content and method in comparison to modern standards, Weber's approach was nevertheless more systematic, aiming at collecting all the possible data which could be informative about the buildings and artifacts. By producing detailed visual and descriptive accounts he presumably also aimed to publish his own monographs. To his luck the groundbreaking discoveries of two imposing sites, the sumptuous Villa of Papyri in Herculaneum which yielded a bronze collection of statutes and a priceless library of papyri, and the large complex of *Praedia Iuliae Felicis* at Pompeii were also made during his employment (22). No doubt, these large architectural complexes with rich finds also prompted Weber to take a step further from mere digging, recording and randomly accumulating de-contextualized art objects to designing a more systematically conducted, recorded and represented archaeological work. Up until his time the excavations were rather conducted in the manner of treasure-hunting for the purpose of filling the villas, palaces and museums of the contemporary royal courts and influential households in both Italy and Europe. Not systematically done these initial studies focused on clearing only the attractive finds such as sculpture, statues, domestic accessories, floor mosaics and wall-paintings without providing much descriptive and contextual notes. Prince d'Elbeuf for instance, removed several architectural fragments and marble revetments as well as statutes from the stage building of the theater at Herculaneum in order not only to decorate his villa at Portici, but also to send some selected pieces as gifts to the Austrian prince Eugene residing at Vienna (Maiuri, 1945, 8).

In the pre-Weber era, furthermore, more in-situ central wall-painting and mosaic panels had been cut off from their original localities to be displayed in museums and palaces, thus resulting in a random formation and distribution of several de-contextualized and poorly recorded collections. Pieces of artwork with erotic content and which were considered as "obscene objects" moreover, were hidden away and made inaccessible in separate rooms and museum depots (23). As such a considerable amount of the excavated material, both in-situ (such as wall-paintings and mosaic floors) and free-standing (such as sculpture, furniture, lamps, kitchen and tableware and other domestic accessories), were taken apart not only from their contexts but also from each other with no record. The flow of antiquities from Campania to Europe continued during Weber's tenure as well but the artifacts at least received a better description and record useful for keeping a track of their fate. Weber in this context did not truly introduce a purely scientific method; his was a more systematically executed treasure-hunt with future implications in methods of excavation, documentation and representation (Brion, 1960 45).

What later turned out to be highly exceptional and rewarding in Herculaneum and Pompeii is the unearthing of large residential areas which include several well-preserved houses of different size and decoration. With their relatively modest scale, repetitive architecture and adornment houses, compared to public buildings, were often seen as banal and unpretentious and received less archaeological attention in

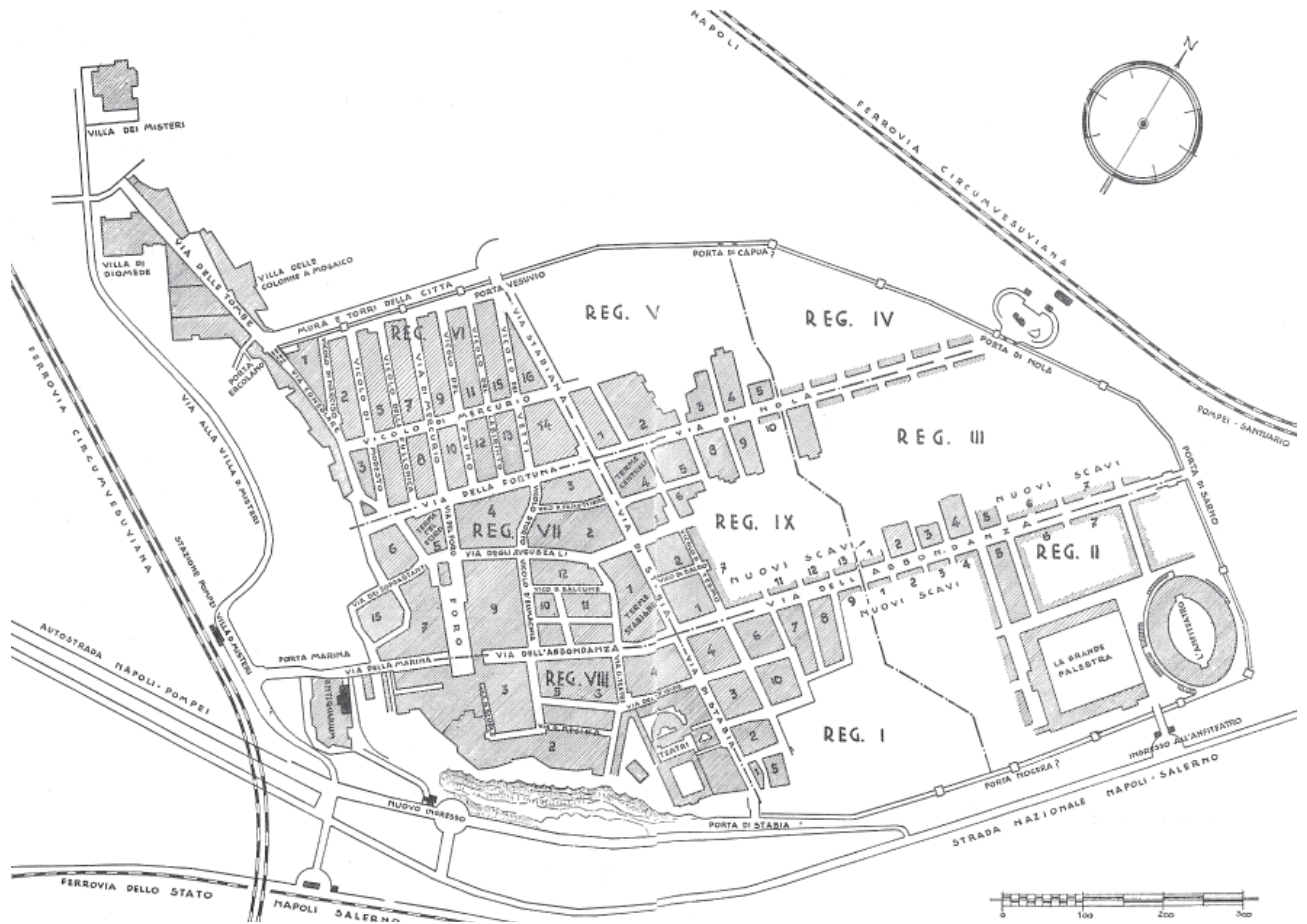


Figure 13. Plan of the excavated areas in Pompeii around the 1950s (Maiuri, 1953).

many ancient cities until recently. Monumental, decorated and impressive, remains of public architecture instead were considered as prestigious and attractive; many ancient classical cities for example are actually known by and visited for their temples, theaters or colonnaded avenues and not for their houses. Weber in this respect introduced a novelty; by drafting the commercial units in the complex of *Praedia Iulia Felicis* at Pompeii with architectural details and descriptions comparable to other more attractive and decorated rooms in the complex he acknowledged the importance of 'common architecture' in understanding the everyday dynamics in ancient cities:

Of course we know of countless temples, theaters, baths, amphitheaters, basilicas, circuses and squares, sometimes we can even recognize large parts of a city's network of streets. We can describe the development of certain architectural forms (an approach that has been followed almost to excess), and even say a little about their function in the lives of the people who used them (a subject of interest mostly to the specialists). Only in rare cases, however, are we able to analyze the overall organization of space in a city and see it in relation to the society that inhabited it, drawing connections between the use of space and residents' particular lives, habits and needs (Zanker, 1998, 1).

Some areas of Pompeii and Herculaneum and many other sites around remain un-excavated (Figure 13). At present several international teams work in both towns using the latest technology and equipment (24). Their focus, in addition to digging small excavation trenches for examining and documenting features like stratigraphy, is on making both contextual and

24. See for example Binford (1981); Fulford and Wallace-Hadrill (1998); Berry (1998) and Jashemski and Meyer (2002) for the application and use of new methods in Pompeian studies.

25. The Pompeian house for example, has been the subject of some fruitful interdisciplinary approach and discussion. Among the many see Packer (1975); Raper (1977); Jansen (1991), this is a short study on Herculaneum but it has implications on Pompeian houses as well; Wallace-Hadrill (1994); Bergmann (1994); Fredrick (1995); Grahame (1997); Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill (1997); Clarke (1991), (1998) and (2003); Capasso (2003); Allison (2004).

specific studies concerning the material remains, urbanism, economy, water management and sanitation, vegetation, natural history, restoration, preservation, site management and artifact display. The recent research in Vesuvian archaeology does not focus only on excavation; a contextual, intensive and interdisciplinary interpretation of data by using digital methods of analysis gained primacy (25). The early excavation narrative of Pompeii and Herculaneum in this sense illustrates how Vesuvian archaeology initiated by Alcubierre as a mission of 'digging for collecting', was developed into an undertaking of 'digging for collecting and documentation' by Weber. From there it gradually progressed into its current scientific and scholarly phase in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Pompeii; Herculaneum; arkeolojik kazı; belgeleme; Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre; Karl Jakob Weber.

## İKİ KENTİN ÖYKÜSÜ: ANTİK POMPEİİ VE HERCULANEUM'UN KEŞFİ

Antik Pompeii ve Herculaneum kentleri İS 79 yılında patlayan Vezüv yanardağının püskürttüğü lavlardan oluşan kalın bir tabaka ile örtülmüş ve doğal bir koruma altına alınmıştır. Bu korunmuşluk düzeyi, diğer antik ören yerleri ile kıyaslandığında, benzersiz bir bağlam oluşturmaktadır.

Hem Pompeii ve Herculaneum hem de yanardağın püskürtme menziline bulunan diğer bazı kentler ve kırsal yerleşimlerin sonunu getiren bu doğal afet, ironik bir şekilde klasik arkeoloji biliminin doğuşuna ve gelişimine yol açmış bir olay olarak da görülebilir. İS 17. yüzyılda tesadüfen keşfedilen Pompeii ve Herculaneum aynı zamanda ilk arkeolojik kazı çalışmalarının yapıldığı antik kentlerdendir. Kazı ve araştırma çalışmalarının halen devam ettiği bu iki kentteki kazı tarihçesi yaklaşık üç yüzyılı kapsayan uzun ve karmaşık bir sürece yayılmaktadır. Bu sürecin oluşum ve gelişiminde bazı olay ve kişiler etkin ve belirleyici bir rol oynamıştır.

Bu makale her iki kentte yapılmış olan arkeolojik kazıların ilk dönemi olan 18. yüzyıla odaklanmakta ve erken Bourbon hanedanı hamiliğinde gerçekleştirilen kazı çalışmaları hakkında bilgilendirici bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu çerçeve içinde ilk kazıcılar, ilk kazıların niteliği ve amacı, ilk kazı ve belgeleme metodlarının oluşumu, gelişimi ve değişimi ve buluntu yayınlarının niteliği, amacı ve kapsamı ele alınmaktadır.