

New Investigations at the Sanctuary of Venus in Pompeii: Interim Report on the 2017 Season of the *Venus Pompeiana Project*

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with contributions by

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In convenzione con il Parco Archeologico di Pompei, archeologi della Mount Allison University e della University of Missouri hanno ripreso lo studio del Tempio e Santuario di Venere. L'obiettivo principale della nuova iniziativa, il Venus Pompeiana Project (<https://www.archaeological.org/interactivedigs/pompeiiitaly/>), è quello di stabilire cronologia, estensione ed organizzazione interna del luogo di culto originario, e la natura dei rituali che vi venivano condotti, definendo le trasformazioni urbanistiche in questo settore di Pompei con la transizione alla fase romana. Si presentano in questa sede i risultati della prima campagna di rilievo fotogrammetrico e di mirati interventi di scavo archeologico nel sito. Le attività, parte di un programma triennale, complementano le precedenti ricerche con nuovi dati descrittivi e topografici, con lo scopo di sviluppare le migliori pratiche per l'integrazione e l'analisi di vecchi e nuovi dati in formato digitale. La riapertura di una trincea scavata da un team dell'Università della Basilicata nel 2006 nella corte ad E del podio, ed il suo allargamento per comprendere un settore del portico orientale, hanno portato alla luce nuove strutture che predatano il complesso esistente. I resti murari e la sequenza stratigrafica dimostrano che nel II secolo a.C. l'area aveva una differente organizzazione spaziale, essendo occupata da due isolati distinti separati da una stretta strada. Il proseguimento delle indagini consentirà di chiarire natura e funzione degli edifici all'interno degli isolati. I reperti confermano la datazione post-sillana del primo triportico e tempio. I risultati iniziali hanno importanti implicazioni per la comprensione della topografia di un cruciale settore di Pompei che si affacciava su Via Marina in diretta relazione con la Basilica.

Introduction

The imposing sanctuary dedicated to Venus, a triporticus with an axial temple, sits on a spur located in the SW corner of Pompeii, in close proximity to the city walls (fig. 1). On its W side, the sanctuary faces onto the so-called Villa Imperiale. The sacred area is bounded on the E side by the Vicolo di Championnet, which separates it from the Basilica, while on the N side it turns its back on Via Marina, one of the main thoroughfares of Pompeii, from which was the main access. From that vantage point, the temple complex overlooks the sea to

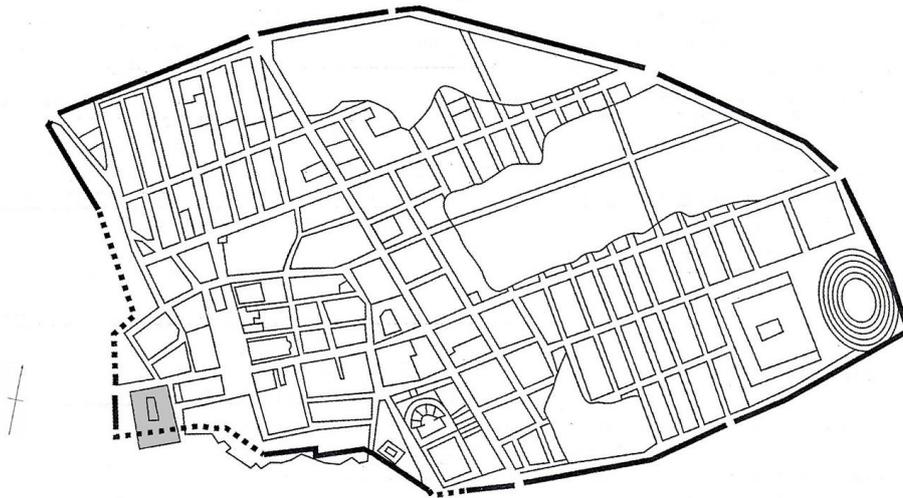


Fig. 1. Plan of Pompeii with the location of the Sanctuary of Venus (adapted from G. Pascual Berlanga, A. Ribera, and I. Lacomba, *Anforas púnicas de Pompeya. Materiales de recientes excavaciones en la regio VII*, in *RCRFacta* 40, 2008: 407-416, fig. 1).

the S, dominating the coastal plain 32 m below¹. The strategic location reflects the important role played by the cult of Venus for the Roman colony of Pompeii, whose official designation included the theonym *Ven(eria)*². As a result of the Roman conquest and the foundation of the Sullan colony, Venus acquired an accentuated political connotation, becoming the protector goddess of the city, probably also to openly acknowledge the special connection between Sulla and Venus/Aphrodite³. Accordingly, the generally accepted idea is that the earliest sanctuary dates to the Roman period⁴.

The existence of the cult of Venus at Pompeii has been known since the discovery of an inscription mentioning *Venus Fisica Pompeiana* in 1592⁵, but the identification of the actual sanctuary site came only in 1898, when Antonio Sogliano launched the first systematic investigations of the area⁶. The exploration of the site continued at a very intermittent pace until 1953. Most notable are the large-scale excavations directed by Amedeo Maiuri in 1935-1936 and 1939-1940, which allowed him to obtain a complete plan and clarify the phasing of the architectural remains (fig. 2; in red are the walls of the original sanctuary). Maiuri's work concentrated on the sequence of construction of the E wing of the complex. A pair of vaulted cisterns below the E and W porticoes as well as the substructures supporting the *lavapesta* forecourt were emptied.

During the installation of new electrical wiring across the site in 1980-1981, limited sondages were conducted by Paul Arthur along the N side of the precinct. His deeper test-trenches exposed some layers that pre-date the construction of the triporticus⁷. Archaeological fieldwork resumed in the 1990s, when Luciana Jacobelli and Patrizio Pensabene catalogued the surviving architectural members⁸, while Maureen Carroll (Newcastle University) excavated in the open court of the sanctuary in 1998, and then again in 2004 and 2006⁹. This pro-

¹ For a similar case, see the Doric Temple in the Triangular Forum. D'ALESSIO 2009: 35 points out that the temple would have been visible from afar to sailors approaching the coast of Pompeii.

² *CIL* X, 787.

³ PLUTARCH (*Sulla*, 34.2) and APPIAN (*Civ.*, 1.97) inform us about the origins of the nickname *Epaphroditus* ('favored by Venus'), with which the Roman general was addressed in both an official decree of the Senate and in a votive dedicatory inscription at the site of Aphrodisias in Caria. On this, see: BARNABEI 2007: 45; GIARDINA 2008: 74-76. On the connection between Venus and Rome, see LEPONE 2017: 90. On the popularity of Venus at Pompeii during the Roman period, see D'ALESSIO 2017: 161-162 (with earlier bibliography); GREGORI, NONNIS 2017: 251-253.

⁴ MAU 1900: 304-305; MAIURI 1949: 197; ARTHUR 1986: 31; RICHARDSON 1988: 279; ADAMO MUSCETTOLA 1992: 75-76; ZEVI 1996: 129.

⁵ *CIL* X 928; on the find, see LEPONE 2017: 91.

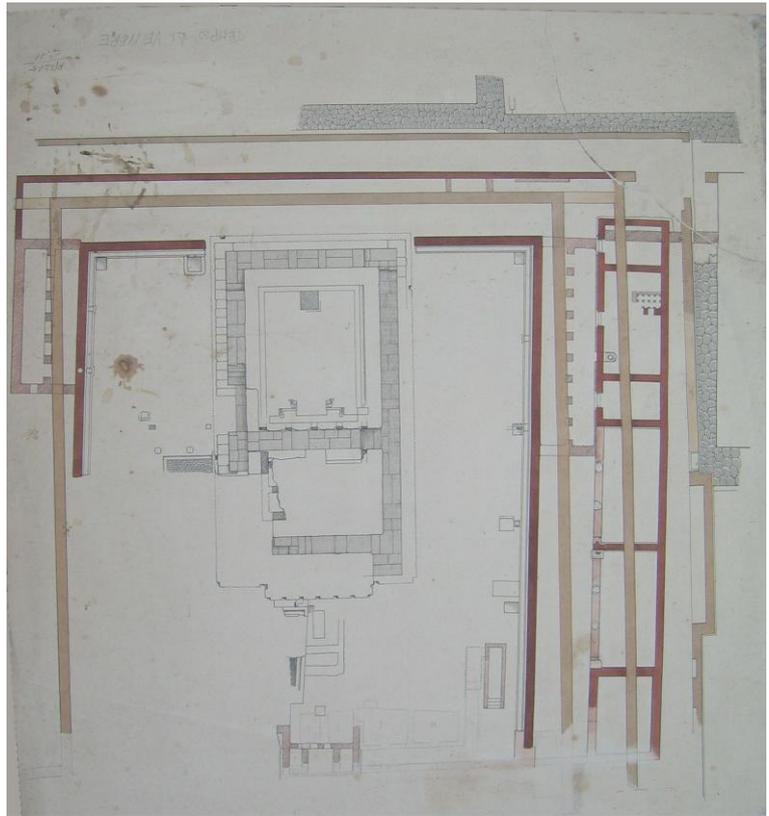
⁶ SOGLIANO 1932. The first comprehensive study of the monument was conducted by August Mau (MAU 1900), based on Sogliano's results. For a detailed account of earlier excavations in the area of the sanctuary of Venus, see D'ALESSIO 2009: 36-39; LEPONE 2017: 91-100.

⁷ ARTHUR 1986: 31-35, and 30, fig. 1 (Trenches 11, 12, and 13).

⁸ JACOBELLI, PENSABENE 1995-96; PENSABENE 1998.

⁹ CARROLL 2008; 2010.

Fig. 2. Plan of the Sanctuary of Venus by A. Maiuri (1936, Archivio della Soprintendenza Pompei). Original building in red; Flavian reconstruction in yellow.



ject overlapped partly with another initiative, much larger in scope, carried out by Emanuele Curti (Scuola di Specializzazione in Archeologia, Matera) between 2004 and 2007 (fig. 3).

Carroll and Curti have offered radically different interpretations of the site. Carroll identified planting pits along the N and E colonnades, which she interpreted as evidence of a sacred grove associated with the original triporticus. Although her trenches did not extend beyond the foundations of the colonnade or much below the layers in which the pits were cut, Carroll supported the traditional chronology of the sanctuary, dating the first construction of the temple, triporticus and open court to the middle of the 1st c. BCE¹⁰. Based on his stratigraphic analysis of the temple podium and of the ancillary structures, only partially published¹¹, Curti proposed to raise the dating of the first temple and sanctuary of Venus to the late 2nd c. BCE¹². He also argued that these remains represented the monumentalization of an earlier pre-Roman (Samnite) sacred area, originally dedicated to the Oscan goddess Mefitis¹³.

On the impetus of new controlled excavations conducted in 2015-2016 in the N sector of the sanctuary as part of the *Pompei per tutti* project, the Archaeological Park of Pompeii has forged a new international collaboration with Mount Allison University and the University of Missouri, also known as the *Venus Pompeiana Project*, to resume study of the monument. The overall purpose of the new endeavor, which began in 2017, is to bring the existing excavation archives to publication by integrating the reanalysis of legacy data with targeted excavations. The aim is to reach firmer conclusions on the chronology and nature of the occupation at the site, focusing particularly on the horizon that predates the first monumental sanctuary. This report presents the results of the first season of work, contextualizing the finds within the broader debate about the urban development of Pompeii and the Samnite-to-Roman transition at the site.

[I.B.-M.M.]

¹⁰ See especially CARROLL 2010: 65-74.

¹¹ The most recent synthesis is in COLETTI *et al.* 2010; CURTI 2009.

¹² Curti (2008) suggests a 130-120 BCE date. In his view, the construction of the sanctuary should be interpreted as part of the building program affecting the area of the Forum, the Sanctuary of Apollo, and the nearby Basilica, for which he accepts the high chronology (second half of the 2nd c. BCE). The precise dating of these monuments, however, is still a matter of debate: see BALL, DOBBINS 2013 and 2017 (especially 478-487) for a post-80 BCE date of the Forum and Basilica complex. Curti (2003; 2005: 51-65; 2008: 48-49) hypothesizes the presence of a lagoon harbor in front of the sanctuary terrace.

¹³ On the cults and sanctuaries in pre-Roman Pompeii, see OSANNA 2016a; OSANNA 2016b (with earlier bibliography). In Curti's perspective, the cult of Mefitis would have been transformed into a cult of Venus. The assimilation of the two deities was common in the Oscan areas of S Italy under Roman rule: CURTI 2008: 52-53; GREGORI, NONNIS 2017: 251. This continuity seems corroborated by an Oscan *dipinti* from the House of the Great Fountain in via Mercurius (Vetter 32), which mentions a *Mefitaia* festival celebrated by the *gens Mamia*. This family was connected to the cult of Venus during the age of Sulla (as well as to the cults of Venus and Ceres at Sulmo), therefore keeping the same role it had in the Samnite period: COARELLI 1998: 185-186; FALASCA 2002: 34; BARNABEI 2007: 45-46; LEPONE 2004; 2017: 102-104; POCSETTI 2017: 236-237. On the cult of Mefitis at Pompeii, see COARELLI 2008.

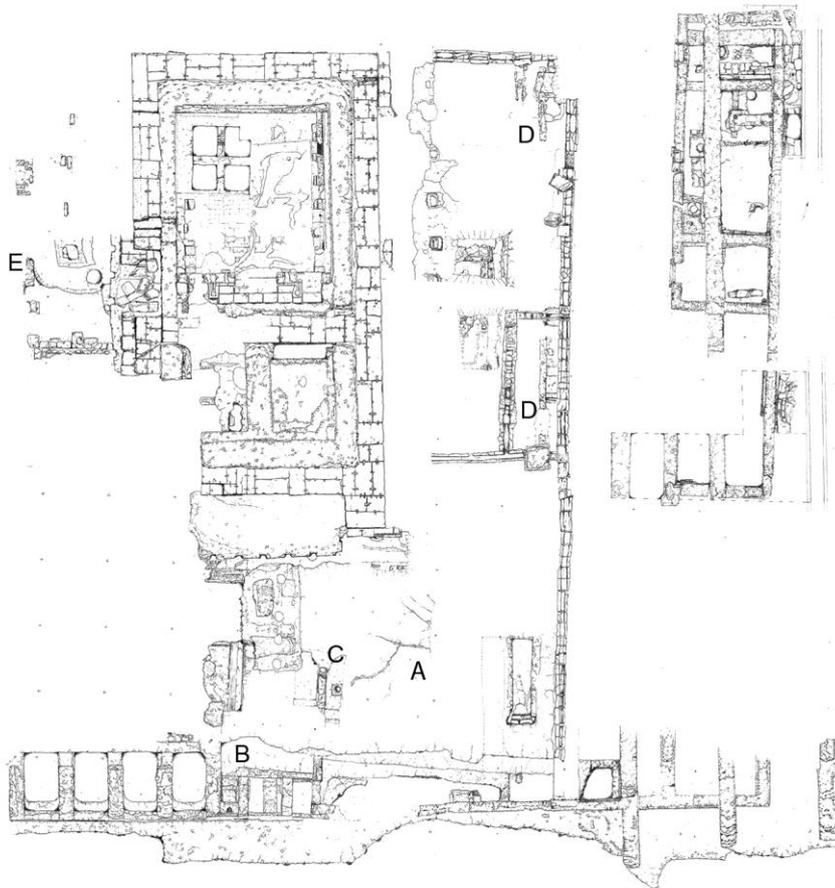


Fig. 3. State plan of the Sanctuary of Venus after Curti's 2004-2007 excavations (authors: G. Sterpa and C. Prascina; Archivio della Soprintendenza Pompei). A= Augustan/Julio-Claudian drainage; B= L-shaped platform under the temple altar; C= room with First Style decorations; D= Sarno limestone *opus incertum* boundary wall; E= possible peristyle (late 3rd-2nd c. BCE?).

The Architectural Setting of the Sanctuary: Previous Fieldwork

In its final configuration (structures in yellow in fig. 2), the sanctuary is enclosed on the N, W and E sides by a tall precinct wall in *opus reticulatum* of Yellow Neapolitan tuff *tesserae*. A massive temple podium built in *opus caementicium* faced with trachyte blocks, oriented roughly N-S, is on axis with the precinct wall, abutting its N wing. The temple is surrounded by a terraced court that is open to the S. This terrace is supported by a complex system of vaulted substructures (the so-called *fornici*), which create a monumental façade towards the coast.

As first determined by Mau, the sanctuary was under reconstruction by the time of the 79 CE eruption, most likely because of the extensive damage caused by the 62 CE earthquake¹⁴. In addition to the *fornici*, the late Julio-Claudian or early Flavian modifications affected both the temple podium and the side porticoes. The ring of trachyte blocks visible on the exterior of the temple is part of a complex structure encasing an earlier podium that consisted of a smaller concrete grid of Sarno limestone rubble faced with Nocera tuff orthostats¹⁵. In the same phase, the original porticoes (indicated in red in fig. 2) were razed down to the ground level in order to enlarge the open court on its E and W sides. Their concrete foundations, built with lava rubble within formworks, were intended to be completely obliterated. However, construction of the new cella walls and of the superstructures of the enlarged porticoes never began. Evidence of ancient spoliation and modern disturbance is documented on the SW corner of the temple podium and terrace.

¹⁴ MAU 1900: 302; see also MAIURI 1942: 67; 1960: 173; RICHARDSON 1988: 279 and 281; ZANKER 1993: 93.

¹⁵ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 193-196.

Traces of the Flavian building site are preserved on the floor of the N half of the court, which consisted of a thin layer of mortar¹⁶. Carroll dates this level to the early 1st c. CE, which is when the side porticoes received their new architectural decoration¹⁷. She found that the cement pavement sealed a series of leveling layers, which in turn covered an earlier occupation surface at a depth of 0.5 m, into which are documented a series of planting pits. She assigns the latter to the mid-1st c. BCE¹⁸. The S sector of the court, on the other hand, is paved with a thick *lavapesta* floor. Carroll considers this to be contemporary with the first triporticus, while Curti's excavations in the E sector of the court would seem to demonstrate its connection with a drainage channel that was certainly built at a later stage (fig. 3, A), cutting through those leveling layers.

Deeper excavations by Curti below the *lavapesta* pavement in the S terrace exposed further remains of an L-shaped platform of lava *opus incertum*, located directly underneath the temple's altar (fig. 3, B)¹⁹. These structures were partly known from the early excavations (see fig. 2), but had previously been interpreted as the remains of houses pre-dating the supposed Sullan temple²⁰. To the W was a lower terrace, paved with a pebble mosaic bordered by a shallow channel abutting the platform. To the E, at a higher elevation, was a room of undetermined size (fig. 3, C), decorated in the First Style²¹. These features are built on top of a row of four concrete vaulted substructures whose walls feature different building techniques (the two smaller rooms to the W are in lava *opus incertum* on top of concrete foundations using Sarno limestone rubble; the two larger rooms to the W are of Sarno limestone *opus incertum*). The Italian excavators date these to the same phase as the triporticus (i.e. the late 2nd c. BCE). These vaulted rooms open onto an E-W covered passageway whose foundations abut a Nocera tuff ashlar wall, which has been interpreted as a stretch of the 3rd c. BCE fortifications²². At the E end of the corridor is a ramp that leads up to the level of the *lavapesta* terrace. Given that the *lavapesta* seals the destruction of the room to the E of the L-shaped platform, the exact configuration of the ramp in the original phase remains unclear in the proposed reconstruction. In Curti's reconstruction, the L-shaped platform and the room on its E side would be part of a sequence of terraces leading up from a hypothetical main access, located in the SW corner of the site. The covered passageway in front of the platform would connect the lower sector of the complex with the upper court and the triporticus, from which the altar platform could be reached. The creation of a uniform terrace has been assigned by Curti's team to a sub-phase in the 1st c. BCE²³.

Remains of Sarno limestone *opus incertum* architecture have been brought to light in various sectors of the open court below a sequence of dumps of building debris from the demolition of pre-existing structures. Most notable are to the E a continuous N-S wall on the same alignment as the ramp on the S front (fig. 3, D), and to the W another stretch of walls associated with a possible peristyle (fig. 3, E). These features have been tentatively dated to the 3rd-2nd c. BCE²⁴. Other structures built with mudbrick were found under the E portico, in association with beaten earth floors and cisterns, whose fills suggest they went out of use in the late 2nd c. BCE²⁵.

The earliest archaeological evidence thus far identified in the area of the sanctuary is represented by *pappamonte* structures dating back to the 6th c. BCE²⁶. These walls, whose layout and function are poorly known, are in any case associated with layers that yielded unusually precious objects (e.g., a miniature worked

¹⁶ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 202, fig. 10.

¹⁷ CARROLL 2010: 83-84. On the redecoration of the porticoes: JACOBELLI, PENSABENE 1995-96: 53, cat. no. 1-12, 18-44. A series of votive inscriptions discovered in the SW sector of the sanctuary can be attributed to the Julio-Claudian occupation phase: CURTI 2007; GREGORI, NONNIS 2017: 252-253.

¹⁸ CARROLL 2010: 69, fig. 4; 75, figs. 9 and 10.

¹⁹ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 208, figs. 20-22.

²⁰ MAU 1900: 272-273.

²¹ VARRIALE 2010.

²² COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 206, fig. 18. On the phasing of the fortifications, see DE CARO 1985; a summary of the recent debate is in CHIARAMONTE 2007 and especially FABBRI 2015.

²³ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 209-211.

²⁴ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 192-193.

²⁵ Because of the structured nature of the deposits, the cistern fills were interpreted by the excavators as relating to expiatory rituals performed to repurpose the area prior to the monumentalization: CURTI 2008: 50-51 and 53; MARTUCCI 2012; MARCHETTI 2017: 178-179.

²⁶ CURTI 2008: 50. For a reassessment of the archaeology of Pompeii in the late Archaic period see now AVAGLIANO 2018. The lack of evidence for the 5th and 4th c. BCE is a common phenomenon at Pompeii, and has been interpreted in light of the broader settlement patterns affecting the territory of Nola and the Sarno valley in the period in which the Samnites emerged: CERCHIAI 2014: 80-81.

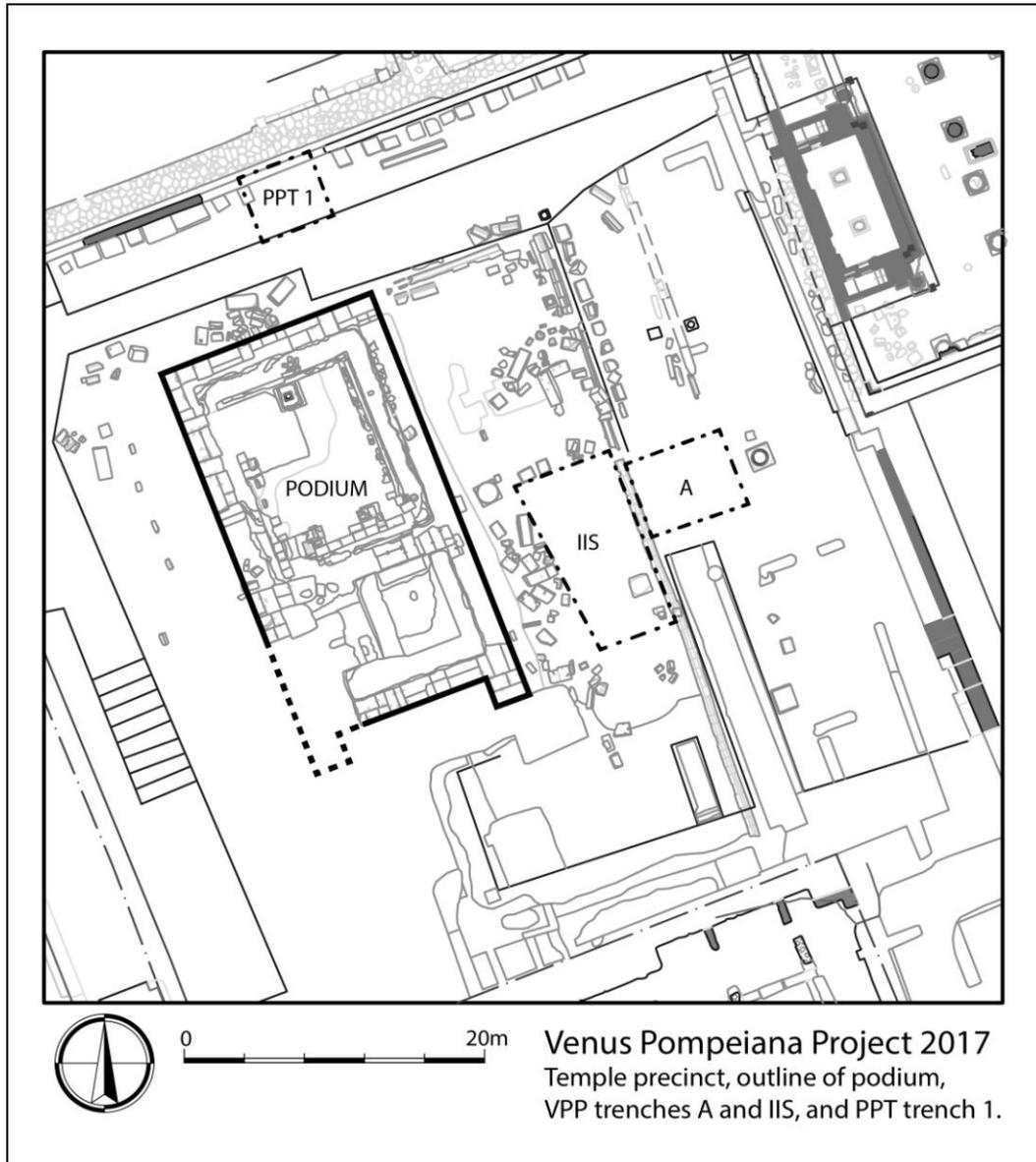


Fig. 4. General plan of the Sanctuary of Venus site showing the location of Trench II South and A of the VPP 2017 excavations, and of Trench 1 of the Pompei per tutti (PPT) project (author: D. Diffendale).

bone head decorated with golden leaf), which would seem to speak in favor of a special status of the area already in the Archaic period.

[I.B.-M.M.]

The Venus Pompeiana Project: Research Design and Methodology

Armed with this background information, the VPP team went back to the sanctuary of Venus in the Summer of 2017 (fig. 4)²⁷. Our research design for the pilot season called for reopening one of the trenches

²⁷ The *Venus Pompeiana Project* is co-directed by Ilaria Battiloro (Mount Allison University) and Marcello Mogetta (University of Missouri) in collaboration with Laura D'Esposito (Parco Archeologico di Pompei). The staff for the 2017 season included: Ivan Varriale, Mariangela Pignataro (Trench Supervisors); Dan Diffendale (Architect), assisted by Matt Harder (Photogrammetry); Massimo Barretta (Finds Lab Supervisor); Giacomo Pardini (Coins); Carlo Monda (Safety Engineer). Alessia Antonia Vittorioso was responsible for cleaning and restoration of the coins. Mattia De Luca, Mario Langella, and Vincenzo Sabini are gratefully acknowledged for their help with the logistics. Funding was generously provided by Mount Allison University (President's Research and

previously excavated by both Carroll and Curti in the temple court. Trench II S was chosen because it had already revealed architectural evidence predating the construction of the E portico. It had also provided a sample of the complete sequence of occupation of the open area, including direct stratigraphic relationship between its various floors and the foundations of the E colonnade, for which part of the original archival data was also available²⁸. The initial objective was, first, to resurvey both the standing features and the exposed stratigraphic sections, reanalyzing the existing descriptive record; and second, to eventually continue the investigations below the levels reached in 2007. The ceramic materials from the Stratigraphic Units (SUs) excavated in 2006-2007 were retrieved from the Soprintendenza storage in order to be restudied, thus integrating the old and new data. In addition, a new trench, Trench A, was opened to the E of Trench II S so as to better define the layout and clarify the function of the previous finds.

[I.B.-M.M.]

Topographic and architectural documentation and archiving

Topographic survey was undertaken using a Leica total station with Carlson datalogger. The location of the total station was established on the basis of the archaeological park's series of fixed points²⁹. Curti's excavations used a series of fixed points within the precinct of Venus to establish a local grid. The majority of these points could be relocated and resurveyed in order to georeference the available CAD data from those earlier excavations³⁰. Similar data was measured and created for each new SU. We used a FileMaker Pro database³¹. In parallel to the traditional total station survey, we employed rich data capture in the form of photogrammetric (image based) modeling of each SU³².

In addition to the photomodeling of each excavated SU, we began a project to document all of the visible architecture of the precinct of Venus using photogrammetry³³. The two principal targets of our first campaign were the temple podium itself (fig. 5) and the block field surrounding it, the latter composed primarily of trachyte blocks, some evidently being worked for the reconstruction of the temple in 79 CE, others dismantled as a result of spoliation post-eruption. One of the goals of this work is to establish the total volume of trachyte blocks present on the site³⁴, both to establish labor requirements as well as to ascertain what percentage of the podium the blocks represent. This study is ongoing; it has not yet been possible to document the W flank of the podium. Architectural members of the porticoes previously cataloged by Jacobelli and Pensabene were also documented digitally for future study, including Corinthian column capitals (fig. 6), column bases, and fragments of a cornice.

[D.D.-M.H.]

Creative Activities Fund, Crake Foundation, the Department of Classics Archaeology Funds) and the MU Arts & Science Dean's Office. Thirteen students from Mount Allison University, Simon Fraser University, Brock University, and University of New Brunswick took part to the excavation: Janan Assaly, Celine Manon Brun, Brydie Cavanagh, Alexander Julien Joseph Drisdelle, Evangeline Kevesten, Krista Nix, Francesca Gabriella Ayer Patten, Runa Nishiyama, Mackenzie Reeves, Michael Ripley, Alexandrea Joyce Stockford, Hailey VanElslander, and Kaoru Yui. All of them deserve our thanks for their tireless work.

²⁸ Excavation of Trench II S was originally carried out in 2006-2007 under the supervision of M. Mogetta with the assistance of I. Varriale.

²⁹ Principally ST **054** and **059**; neither **026** nor **058** could be relocated.

³⁰ This data, while useful, is incomplete. Not all identified SUs known from other sources (SU sheets, notebooks) are represented in the legacy CAD data. Some of the CAD data from 2006-7 consists only of points, without vectors to precisely define the limits of SUs.

³¹ This was chosen for ease of deployment in the field and ease of compatibility with the Curti archive. Relational databases included those for SUs, photos, drawings, small finds, and spot dates (TMA forms). The database was hosted locally on a laptop and shared via a mobile router, allowing it to be accessed and populated using a variety of tablet computers.

³² Most photos for photogrammetry were taken using a Nikon D750 dSLR camera with a fixed 50 mm lens. The 50 mm lens sometimes hampered photography in the narrow confines of the trenches, particularly in Sector IIS; in future the use of a fixed 25 mm lens, as recommended by SAPIRSTEIN, MURRAY 2017: 341, is to be preferred. Agisoft PhotoScan Professional was used to process the photos into 3-D point clouds.

³³ Although the Archaeological Park of Pompeii possesses point-cloud data for the precinct, this is not of sufficient resolution for use in detailed architectural analysis.

³⁴ A total of 97 sporadic trachyte blocks were measured for volume and subject to photogrammetric documentation. Their approximate volume is 45.96 cubic meters, corresponding to less than 10% of the volume of blocks retaining the concrete fill that was poured in the gap between the exterior ring and the grid of the original podium (the estimate of at least 486 cubic m is based on the measurements provided by COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 199, fig. 7 and 200, fig. 9.

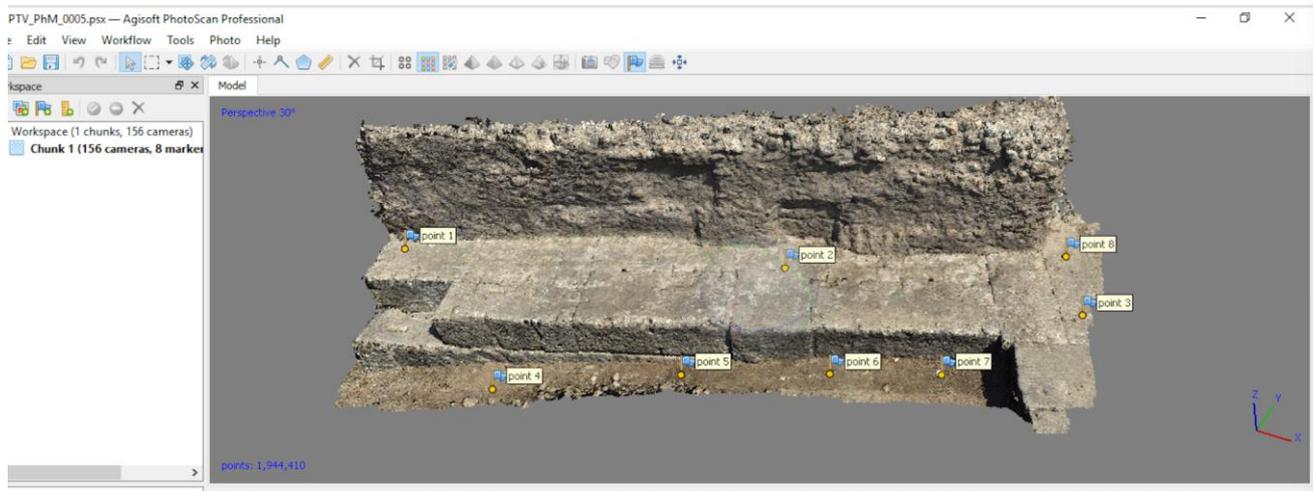


Fig. 5. Photomodel of the SE face of the temple of Venus at Pompeii (author: Matt Harder).



Fig. 6. Photomodel of a Corinthian capital from the sanctuary of Venus (author: Matt Harder).

Preliminary Results of the 2017 Season: Stratigraphy and Finds

Based on the available evidence, the structural remains identified thus far (fig. 7) can be assigned to three main phases dating between the 2nd c. BCE and 79 CE (for the finds, see also table 1).

TRENCH II S

Excavations resumed in the E sector of the old trench to collect new data from the layers predating the construction of the portico and explore the nature of the early occupation of the area (fig. 8).

Phase 1a

The earliest structures brought to light below the court of the Temple of Venus refer to a building whose W limit was identified (fig. 9). This boundary wall, built in *opus incertum* of Sarno limestone (2677; fig. 3, D), has

Trench	SU	Class/shape	Condition	Chronology	Plate	Notes and Comparanda
II South	2835	Overpainted, cup	1 fragment of foot and body Ø foot 2.6; h 3.0.	Second and third quarter of 2 nd c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 1.	Morel, type 3131c (Pompeii)
II South	2695	Glass, <i>unguentarium</i>	1 fragment of rim, neck, and shoulder Ø rim 2.3; h 5.3.	Mid-1st c. CE		Ramanazzi 1986d: tav. XXXV, n. 12 (Pompeii).
II South	2831= 2669	Ionic-type B2, cup	3 joining fragments of rim and body Ø rim 16.8; h 4.0.	First quarter of 5th c. BCE		Swift 2018: 603, n. 17 (Pantanello, Metaponto).
II South	2831= 2669	Bucchero, cup.	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 10.0; h 2.5.			
II South	2831= 2669	Black Gloss, bowl (Campana B).	2 fragments of rim and body Ø rim 24.2; h 5.2.	1 st c. BCE		Morel, series 2942.
II South	2831= 2669	Black Gloss, bowl (Campana B).	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 20.4; h 3.6.	End of 2 nd -1 st c. BCE		Morel, series 2943.
II South	2831= 2669	Black Gloss, dish (Campana C).	1 fragment of foot and body Ø foot 5.4; h 1.4.	End of 2 nd -1 st c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 5	Morel, series 2283
II South	2831= 2669	Hellenistic Red-Slip, <i>lagynos</i> .	1 fragment of rim, neck, and shoulder, preserving the attach- ment of the handle H 6.9.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 3	For the shape: Yntema 2005: 88, n. 48 (Pantanello, Metaponto). The same context has yielded Red-Slip specimens
II South	2831= 2669	Cooking Ware, pot	1 fragment of rim and shoulder Ø rim 17.4; h 4.6.	2 nd c. BCE-1 st c. CE		
II South	2831= 2669	Internal Red-Slip, bak- ing tray	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 37.2; h 5.6.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE-beginning of 1 st c. CE		Volonté 1986a: tav. XXII, n. 2 (Pompeii)
II South	2831= 2669	<i>Mortarium</i> .	2 joining fragments of rim, body, and nozzle Ø rim 29.5; h 3.3.			
II South	2831= 2669	<i>Amphora</i> , Dressel 1A.	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 17.4; h 6.2.	End of 2 nd -beginning of 1 st c. BCE		Lapadula 2003: 255, tav. LXVI, n. 1.1 (Chiusi)
II South	2831= 2669	<i>Amphora</i> , Dressel 1B.	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 16.8; h 7.8.	First half of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. II, n. 6	De Stefano 2008: 118, tav. XXII, n. 7 (Ortona); Costantini 2011: 397, n. 1 (Pisa)
II South	2831= 2669	<i>Amphora</i> , Maña C2 (Iberian).	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 19.6; h 4.1.	End of 2 nd -first half of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. II, n. 3	De Francesco <i>et al.</i> 2012: 15, n. 378; Bernal <i>et al.</i> 2013: 266, n. 378 (Pompeii)
II South	2832	Black Gloss, bowl.	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 15.4; h 3.2.	Second half of 2 nd c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 4	Morel, series 2566; Giardino 1990: 124, tav. XXVIII, Umbria 128 (Heraclea)
II South	2832	Black Gloss, cup.	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 10.6; h 3.7.	Mid-3 rd c. BCE		Morel, series 2764; Ramanazzi 1986b: tav. XVI, n. 10 (Pompeii)
II South	2832	Thin Wall, goblet.	1 fragment of rim and shoulder Ø rim 8.4; h 3.2.	2 nd -1 st c. BCE	Pl. II, n. 1	Volonté 1986b: tav. XXXVIII, n. 4 (Pompeii); Giardino 1990: 119, tav. XXIII, Umbria 57 (Heraclea)
II South	2832	Lamp (Red Slip), biconical with raised- dots decoration.	1 fragment of oil reservoir Ø oil reservoir 4.8; h 3.5.	Beginning of 1 st c. BCE- first half of 1 st c. CE	Pl. II, n. 2	Granchelli <i>et al.</i> 2002: 42, n. 12, 17 e 18 (private collection)
II South	2832	<i>Amphora</i> , Greco-Italic.	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 17.4; h 6.2.	From first half of 2 nd c. BCE		De Stefano 2008: 118, tav. XXII, n. 2 (Ortona); Panella 1998: 535, fig. 2 (Marseilles)
II South	2832	<i>Amphora</i> , Maña C2 (Iberian).	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 18.8; h 3.0.	End of 2 nd -first half of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. II, n. 4	De Francesco <i>et al.</i> 2012: 15, n. 379; Bernal <i>et al.</i> 2013: 266, n. 379 (Pompeii); De Stefano 2008: 118, tav. XXII, n. 1 (Ortona); Costantini 2011: 397, n. 4 (Pisa)
II South	2833	<i>Amphora</i> , Dressel 1B	1 fragment of rim and neck, pre- serving the attachment of the handle Ø rim 17.2; h 7.4.	End of 2 nd -first half of 1 st c. BCE		Costantini 2011: 394, n. 8 (Pisa); Lapadula 2003: 257, tav. LXVII, n. 3.11 (Chiusi); Panella 1998: 536, fig. 5 (Var)
II South	2834	Thin Wall, goblet	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 7.0; h 4.6.	End of 2 nd -beginning 1 st c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 2	
II South	2834	<i>Amphora</i> , Dressel 1A.	1 fragment of rim and neck, pre- serving the attachment of the handle Ø rim 15.4; h 8.2.	End of 2 nd c. BCE	Pl. II, n. 5	Lapadula 2003: 255, tav. LXVI, n. 1.2 (Chiusi); De Stefano 2008: 118, tav. XXII, n. 4 (Ortona); Panella 1998: 536, fig. 4 (Var)
II South	2812	Bucchero, cup.	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 14.0; h 2.2.	Second half of 6 th c. BCE		Russo 2015b: 174, n. 4 (Pom- peii); Ramanazzi 1986a: tav. XVI, n. 1 (Pompeii)
II South	2812	Black Gloss, dish	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 20.0; h 2.1.	End of 3 rd -2 nd c. BCE		Morel, series 1521a (Aleria)
II South	2812	<i>Amphora</i> , Brinidisi type.	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 16.2; h 4.8.	Second half 2 nd -mid-1 st c. BCE	Pl. I, n. 6	Panella 1998: 549, fig. 17 (Rome)
A	10028	Black Gloss, hemi- spherical bowl	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 10.0; h 2.2.	First half of 2 nd c. BCE		Morel, series 2121
A	10028	Grey Ware, bowl.	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 14.0; h 3.2.	Second quarter of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. IV, n. 4	Giardino 1990: 121, tav. XXV, Mazzocchi 3 (Heraclea); Yntema 2005: 49, n. 18b (Copia); Hempel 2001: 244, n. 6 (Taranto). At Pompeii it is also attested as

						Black Gloss: Russo 2015a: 201, n. 71
A	10028	Grey Ware, <i>pelike</i> .	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 12.0; h 2.6.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. IV, n. 1	Yntema 2005: 89, n. 49 (Pantanello, c/sò Metaponto); Hempel 2001: 238, n. 2 (Taranto)
A	10028	Thin Wall, goblet.	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 8.5; h 2.1.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. IV, n. 3	Forma Atlante I/1
A	10028	Thin Wall, goblet	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 8.0; h 1.8.	End of 2 nd –beginning of 1 st c. BCE		
A	10028	Lamp (Gray Ware) with biconical profile (anchor nozzle)	1 fragment of nozzle and oil reservoir Ø oil reservoir 4.8; h 3.5.	Second half of 2 nd –beginning of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. IV, n. 2	Yntema 2005: 92, n. 61a (Valesio); Hempel 2001: 144, Type 700/1 (Taranto)
A	10028	Cooking Ware, pot	1 fragment of rim and shoulder Ø rim 17.0; h 3.6.	1 st c. BCE–1 st c. CE		Ramanazzi 1986c: tav. XXIX, n. 3 (Pompeii)
A	10028	Cooking Ware, baking tray	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 30.0; h 3.7.	1 st c. BCE–beginning of 1 st c. CE		Ramanazzi 1986c: tav. XXIV, n. 5 (Pompeii)
A	10030	Overpainted, bowl	1 fragment of rim and body Ø rim 14.0; h 3.1.	First quarter of 2 nd c. BCE		Russo 2015a: 201, n. 50 (Pompeii)
A	10030	Common Ware, <i>lagynos</i> .	1 fragment of rim, neck, and shoulder, preserving the attachment of the handle Ø rim 4.6; h 8.3.	2 nd –1 st c. BCE		Di Giovanni-Gaspiretti 1993: 273, type 1262 (Pompeii); Giardino 1990: 117, tav. XXI, Umbria 119 (Heraclea)
A	10030	Internal Red-Slip, baking tray	3 joining fragments of rim, body, and bottom Ø rim 37.0; h 3.6.	End of 2 nd –beginning of 1 st c. BCE		Goudineau 1970: 172, tav. IV, strato 6, n. 2 (Pompeii)
A	10030 + 10032	Lamp (Grey Ware) with biconical profile (“Esquiline” type)	2 joining fragments of oil reservoir, preserving the attachment of the handle, and nozzle Ø oil reservoir 7.8; h 3.8.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. III, n. 3	Di Domenico-Picillo 2015: 265, n. 4 (Pompeii); Granchelli <i>et al.</i> 2002: 33, n. 2 & 4 (private collection)
A	10030 + 10032	Internal Red-Slip, baking tray	4 joining fragments of rim and body Ø rim 33.0; h 5.3.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE–beginning of 1 st c. CE		Volonté 1986a: tav. XXII, n. 1 (Pompeii); Goudineau 1970: 166, tav. I, n. 1
A	10032	Black Gloss, small dish	1 fragment of rim, body, and foot Ø rim 8.8; Ø foot 4.8; h 4.0.	Second half 2 nd –beginning of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. III, n. 4	Morel, series 1415
A	10032	Grey Ware, juglet or ‘baby feeder’	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 8.0; h 1.6.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. III, n. 1	Hempel 2001: 237, n. 1 (Taranto); the same shape is attested at Pantanello (Metaponto) (unpublished)
A	10032	Thin Wall, goblet	1 fragment of rim and neck Ø rim 9.6; h 1.7.	Mid-2 nd century BCE	Pl. III, n. 2	Forma Atlante I/1

Table 1. VPP 2017, Trenches II S and A. Distribution of diagnostic finds (author M. Barretta).

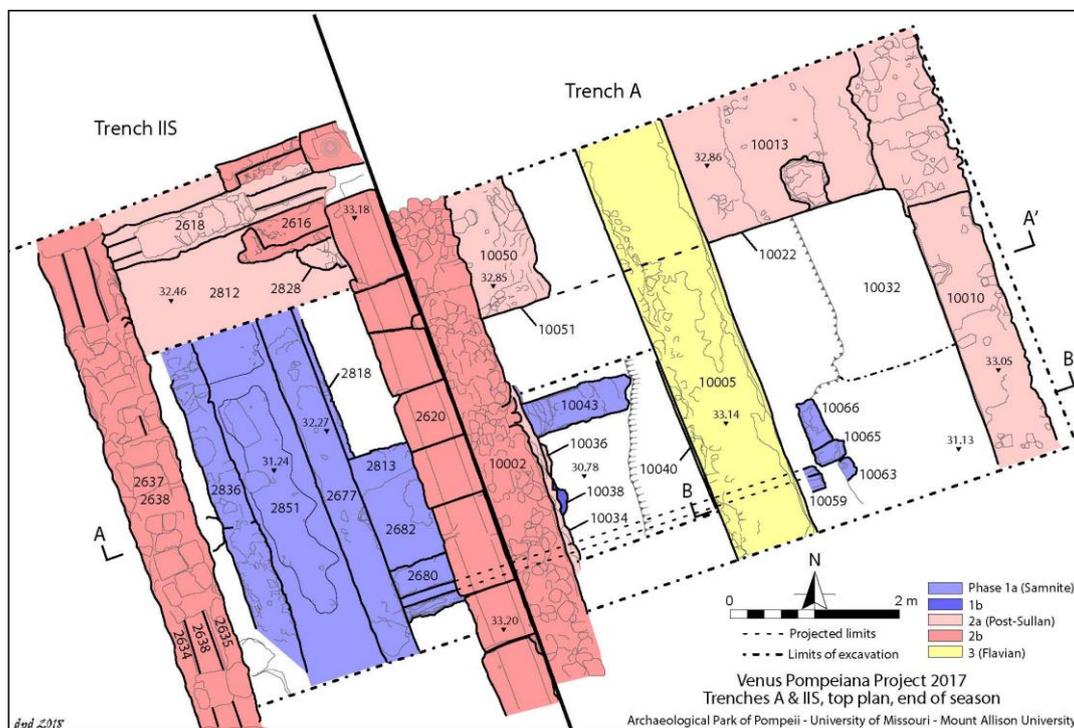


Fig. 7. Final top plan of Trench II South and A of the VPP 2017 excavations (author: D. Diffendale). Structural remains are indicated with grey shading.

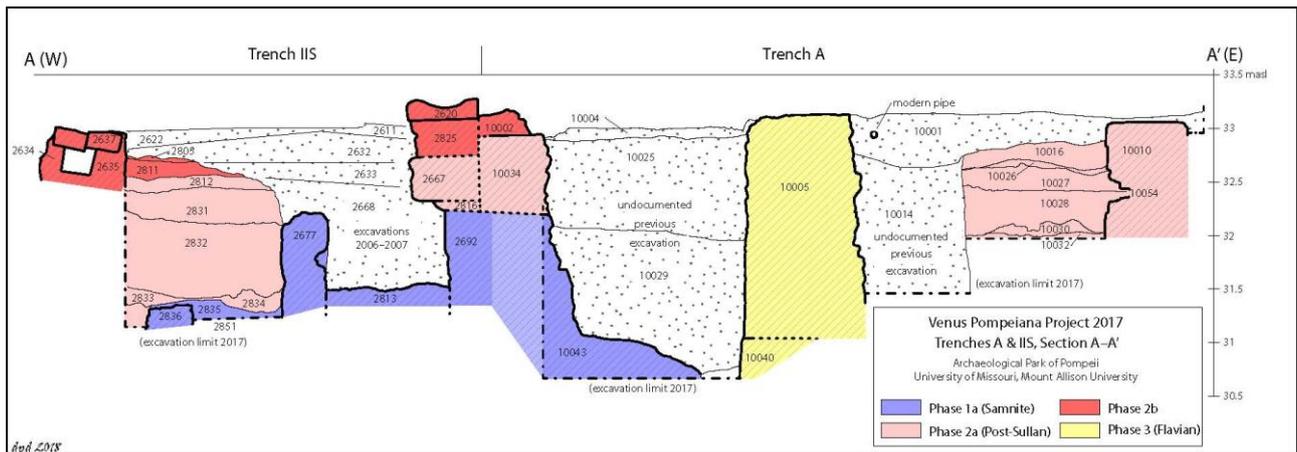


Fig. 8. VPP 2017. E-W stratigraphic cross-section (A-A') of the deposits excavated in Trench II S and Trench A (author D. Diffendale).

Fig. 9. VPP 2017, Trench II S. Composite photomodel showing the remains of Phase 1 (author D. Diffendale).



a N-S orientation, and runs parallel to a street or alley³⁵. An extremely compact beaten-earth surface (**2835**), 1.2 m wide and delimited to the W by a shallow masonry curb (**2836**), may be interpreted as sidewalk. The latest diagnostic find from this surface can be dated to the second or third quarter of the 2nd c. BCE (foot of a Black Gloss cup with overpainted decoration, plate I, no. 1), providing a *terminus ad quem* for the use of the associated features³⁶.

An opening into the structure was documented in 2006 near the S edge of the trench, which possibly resulted from the spoliation of a threshold. The passage would have given access to a structure (**2682**) that most likely functioned as a landing (fig. 10). This is bordered to the N by the remains of a foundation (**2813**), and to the S by an E-W open drainage channel (**2679**, **2680**, **2681**), which discharged water onto the alley through a circular passing hole (**2667**) in the *opus incertum* wall. Another stretch of the channel has been identified at the same level 6 m farther to the E (Trench A, **10059**). Directly to the E of **2682** are two steps (**2687**) and a plastered ashlar upright (**2692**), which should be interpreted as the masonry bench for a wooden staircase³⁷. On the same alignment as the block is a wall that continues with an E-W orientation for at least 2.4 m (Trench A, **10043**), whose S face was probably abutted by the supposed staircase. To the N of **2692** and **10043** was another room provided with a *cocciopesto* floor, of which only a small portion is visible (**2804**).

³⁵ Traces of a structure aligned with **2677** (the other limit of the alley?) were identified in the W sector of Trench II S in 2006, but are yet to be re-exposed.

³⁶ This is consistent with the mid-2nd c. BCE date of the earliest *opus incertum* superstructures featuring Sarno limestone rubble at Pompeii. See MOGETTA 2016.

³⁷ Of the kind documented at Herculaneum (e.g., Casa della Stoffa, IV.19-20).

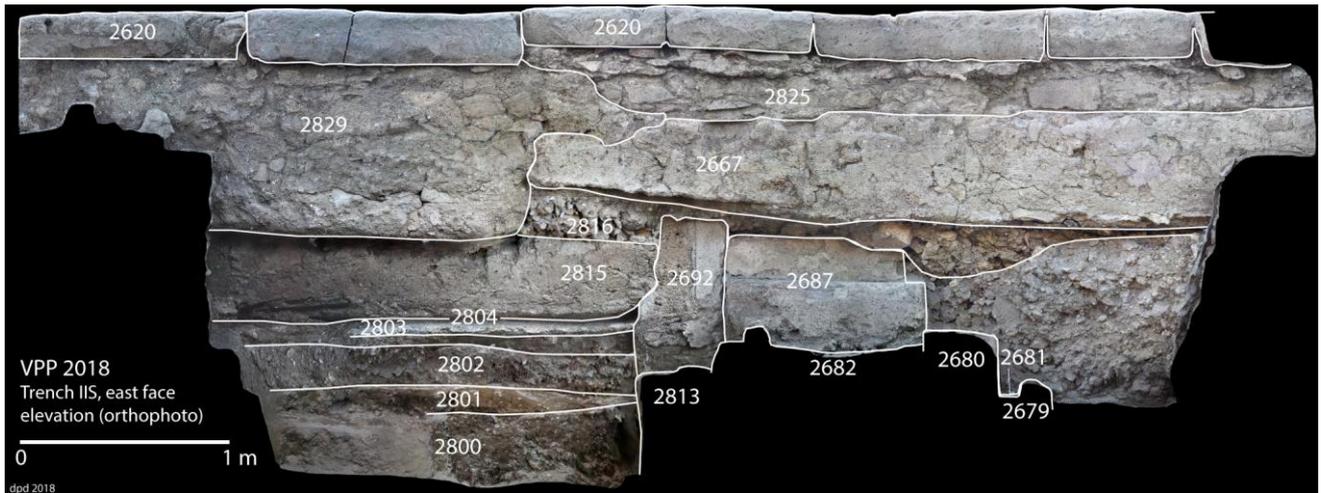


Fig. 10. VPP 2017, Trench II S. Orthophotomodel of W face of the colonnade foundation of the E portico, showing the remains of the entrance to the courtyard building that originally occupied the E sector of the sanctuary area (2682, 2687, 2692; author D. Diffendale).



Fig. 11. VPP 2017, Trench II S. View of the beaten surface of the open court in Phase 2a (2812).

existing features. The cut-stone elements (thresholds, portals, and other architectural ornaments or recyclable features) were spoliated systematically. Debris from the destruction of wall 2677 (2834) obliterated the surface of the alley, while layers of rubble and plaster fragments were dumped to regularize the ground level. The latest associated materials date to the late 2nd c. or early 1st c. BCE (e.g., a Thin Wall goblet with thick rim; plate I, no. 2).

E of the wall, the lower course of the concrete foundation of the side portico (2815, fig. 10) was built directly on top of the remains of the *cocciopesto* floor 2804. A sequence of layers (2831, 2832, 2833) was then deposited to raise the floor level, creating a new beaten surface (2812, fig. 11). These deposits contained a wide range of ceramic inclusions, some of which are clearly residual (e.g., a Hellenistic Red Ware *lagynos* dating to the middle of the 2nd c. BCE; a Black Gloss bowl with grooved rim and a foot of a Black Gloss dish, both dating between the end of the 2nd c. BCE and the beginning of the 1st c. BCE; an amphora rim of the Brundisium type, not later than the last quarter of the 2nd c. BCE; plate I, nos. 3-6).

The most recent finds include two fragments of a Black Gloss bowl of the series Morel 2942 (1st c. BCE; table 1), a fragment of Thin Wall pottery (goblet with vertical rim; plate II, no. 1), a red-slip biconical lamp (plate

Phase 1b

At a later stage, sections of the *cocciopesto* floor 2804 were removed along wall 2677, perhaps due to foundation problems. The structure originally on top of the foundation 2813 was also eliminated, probably to create a narrow N-S corridor. The floor level was raised (2694) and a tile feature was built abutting the boundary wall to collect water and dispose of it through another hole created in the structure (2845). The lack of any hydraulic revetment or pavement around it makes it difficult to identify the specific function of the new drainage.

Phase 2a

This phase corresponds to the construction of the Temple of Venus and of its colonnaded court. The building activities began with the razing and partial demolition of all pre-

II, no. 2), both dating between the late 2nd c. BCE and the early 1st c. BCE, numerous fragments of amphorae, including Maña C2 (late 2nd–first half of the 1st c. BCE; plate II, nos. 3 and 4), Dressel IA (late 2nd c. BCE; plate II, no. 5) and IB (first half of the 1st c. BCE; plate II, no. 6). A coin from **2831** dating between 130/120 and 80/70 BCE (table 3 and plate VII, no. 4; PA- Pompei, Inv. 90442) provides a *terminus post quem*.

An E-W drainage channel was built into the new beaten surface (**2617**, **2618**, **2623**). This was most likely connected with the large underground cistern located beneath the E portico, N of Trench II S, for which it probably functioned as a run-off³⁸. Traces of a downspout belonging to the original gutter of the side portico are also preserved (**2828**).

Phase 2b

The following activities were probably part of the broader project involving modifications of the E portico and the redecoration of the cella³⁹. The court level was raised by 0.50 m (**2805**, **2811**; cf. the corresponding layers excavated in 2006-2007, **2632** and **2622**, dating to the late 1st c. BCE), and new drainage features were built. The pre-existing E-W channel was modified with the construction of a small concrete basin (**2616**) that collected rainwater running from the roof of the side portico into the gray tuff channel (**2620**) incorporated at the base of the colonnade, directing it into the large underground cistern located beneath the E portico (fig. 12).

The corresponding blocks of the tuff channel were removed and the foundation (**2667**) cut to make room for the new drainage system; the blocks were then repositioned on top of a new foundation (**2825**, **2829**).

Between the side portico to the E and the temple podium to the W, a N-S drainage channel was built, whose construction trench cuts the court leveling layers. The channel is covered with recycled Nocera Tuff slabs, and slopes in the direction of Via Marina⁴⁰. To the S, this joins an E-W branch whose alignment corresponds with the front of the temple podium. To the W, the latter drain is connected to a small concrete base, which can be interpreted as a fountain. S of these water features, a thick *lavapesta* floor is preserved across a large extent of the front terrace (**2614**).

Phase 3

The final building phase of the sanctuary refers to the substantial reorganization of the site following the 62 CE earthquake. The original structures suffered extensive damages, as demonstrated by the numerous cracks on the foundations of the E portico, as well as by the shifting of some of the tuff blocks of the colonnade



Fig. 12. VPP 2017, Trench II S. Drainage features as modified in Phase 2b (**2616**; **2620**). Note how the corresponding blocks of the tuff channel were removed and the foundation (**2667**) cut to make room for the new drainage system (cf. Fig. 10); the blocks were then repositioned on top of a new foundation (**2825**, **2829**).

³⁸ Similar run-off features are documented in association with underground cisterns at the Sanctuary of Apollo. See RESCIGNO 2017: 43-47.

³⁹ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 192.

⁴⁰ A sewer on the W stretch of Via Marina was reported by ESCHEBACH, ESCHEBACH 1995; see discussion in POEHLER 2012: 113, fig. 11 (Marina Basin).

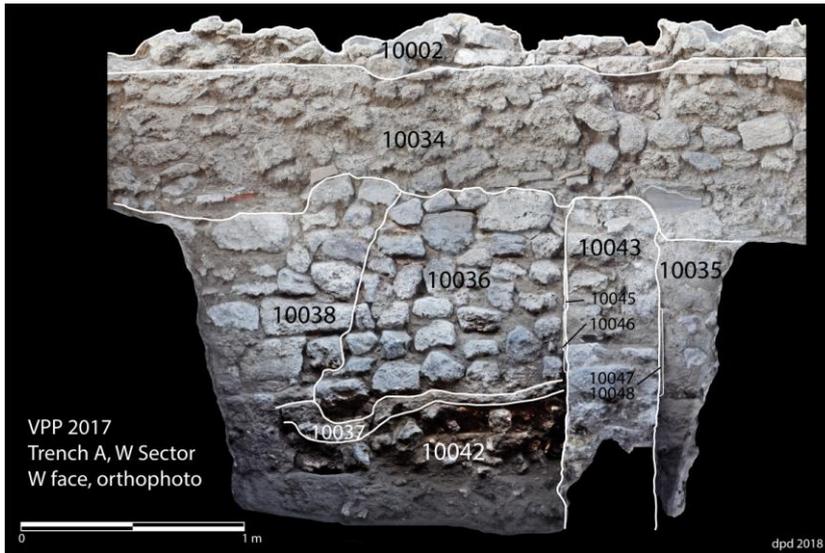


Fig. 13. VPP 2017, Trench A. Orthophoto-model of the E face of the E colonnade foundation, incorporating pre-existing structures (author: D. Diffendale).

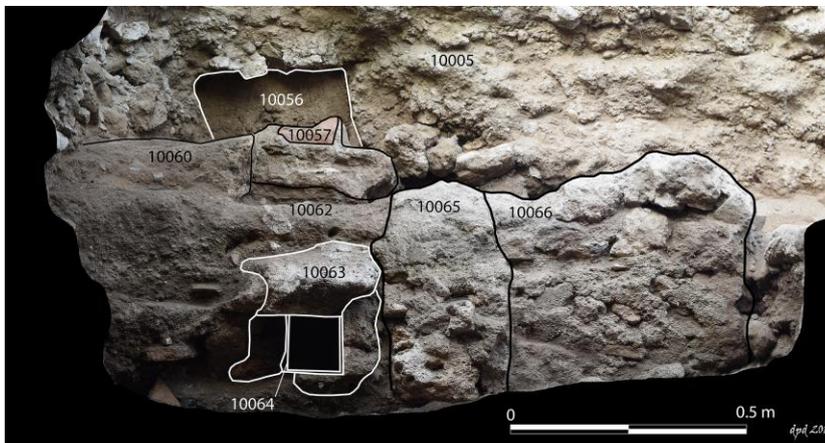


Fig. 14. VPP 2017, Trench A. Orthophoto-model of the water features incorporated by the foundation of the Flavian portico (SUs 10057-10059/10062-10064), viewed from E (author: D. Diffendale).

drainage channel. The rebuilding operations were still in progress at the time of the 79 CE eruption, and were never completed. A thin layer of lime (2612), clearly representing the exposed working surface, was spread across wide portions of the court. Other evidence of the same nature, already documented during the 2006 campaign, includes several concentrations of stone chips resulting from the finishing of the new podium blocks, anchoring devices for lifting machines on either side of the podium, and cavities left by the formworks used to pour the podium concrete foundations⁴¹.

[I.V.]

TRENCH A

A new excavation area was opened within the E portico adjacent

to Trench II S. The trench is delimited to the W by the N-S foundation of the original colonnade (10034 and its later modification 10002), to the E by the N-S foundation of the internal partition of the portico (10010), and to the N by the S wall of the large cistern (10022, 10051). The trench is further subdivided into two sectors by another structure with a slightly odd orientation (10005), which was meant to support the E colonnade of the complex as restored post-62 CE. The stratigraphy has been partly disturbed by modern infrastructural work and early archaeological exploration of the site (see fig. 8)⁴², nevertheless it has been possible to correlate the evidence with the sequence from Trench II S.

Phase 1a

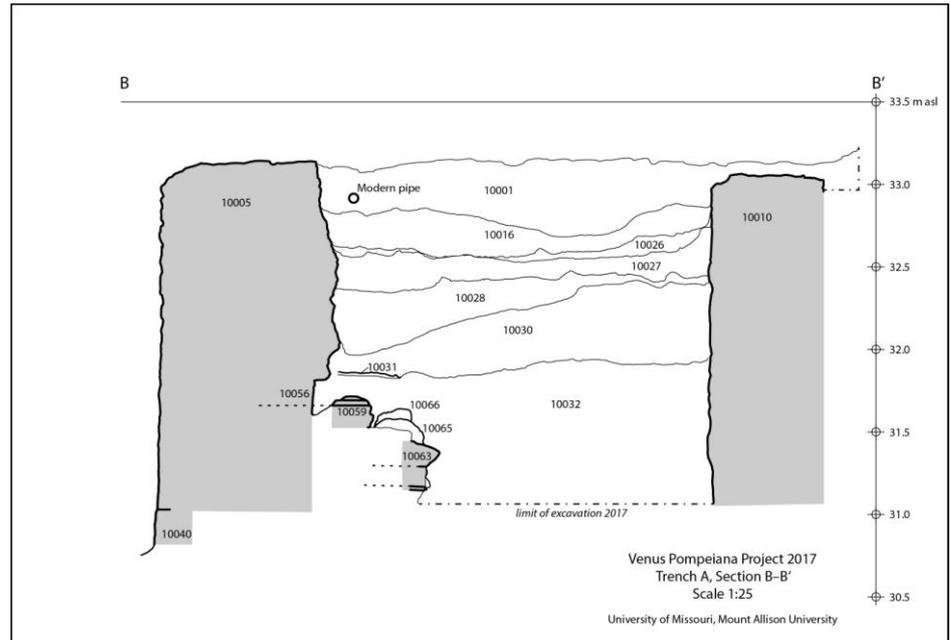
Fragmentary structures pertaining to the building that occupied the area before the creation of the portico were discovered in both sectors. In the W part of the trench, the truncated stretch of an E-W *opus incertum* wall (10043) was found on the same alignment as 2692 in Trench II S (fig. 13). The feature presents a thick plaster revetment on both its N and S faces (10045-10048). It probably belongs to the S wall delimiting the room paved with the *cocciopesto* floor 2804 found in Trench II S. In the E sector are the scanty remains of two superimposed water-related features (fig. 14). Of the top feature is preserved a section of its S ledge, built with a mortared tile fragment, which has a plaster coating on the bottom (10057-10059). The face of a Sarno limestone block (10056) is visible directly to the W of the ledge, but it is impossible to determine its orientation. The fea-

⁴¹ COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 201-204, fig. 10.

⁴² The E side of the cistern beneath the E portico is only indicated as conjectural on the 1936 plan of the sanctuary, so these activities almost certainly postdated it. The Soprintendenza archives record excavations of the interior of the cistern on its SW corner in 1939 (*Diari di Scavo* 1939, Novembre, 445-447).

Fig. 15. VPP 2017, Trench A. E-W stratigraphic cross-section (B-B') of the E sector (author D. Diffendale).

ture is on the same alignment and at the same level as the E-W channel found in Trench II S, of which it probably represented the continuation. The lower feature is better preserved. It consisted of an underground channel (**10062-10064**, abutting **10065**). On its N side, the lower drain is abutted by a N-S mortared rubble foundation (**10066**), whose stratigraphic relationship to the upper feature is unclear (they might have been part of the same structure).



On its N side, the lower drain is abutted by a N-S mortared rubble foundation (**10066**), whose stratigraphic relationship to the upper feature is unclear (they might have been part of the same structure).

Phase 1b

A patch featuring cut-stone masonry (**10038**) sitting on top of a compact layer of mortared rubble (**10042**, **10037**), which is visible in the foundation of the E colonnade at the S-W corner of the excavation sector, might represent a pre-existing feature incorporated in the later structure (see fig. 13). Only a short stretch of it has been exposed thus far, making it difficult to interpret it. The wall is separated from wall **10043** by a narrow gap, which seems to correspond with the location of the supposed wooden staircase. The most likely possibility would be to reconstruct the structure as having a N-S orientation, and continuing beyond the S excavation limit. Such structure might have been part of the modifications affecting the E side of the building in the previous sub-phase, and thus represent the other limit of the N-S corridor created along wall **2677** in Trench II S.

Phase 2a

In order to build the foundation of the E colonnade (**10034**), wall **10043** was razed at the same level as wall **2677** in Trench II S, and the gap between it and SU **10038** was filled with mortared rubble (**10036**). N of **10043** a lower concrete foundation course is built within formwork (**10035**). The leveling layers associated with this building phase are not preserved in the W sector due to later destructions.

In the E sector (fig. 15), a thick deposit of debris and painted plaster fragments (**10032**) obliterates the old drainage channel, filling an as-yet not fully documented spoliation trench that reached far below the foundation levels of the previous phase. This deposit contains mostly residual material (e.g. a Grey Ware juglet, a Thin Walled goblet with molded everted rim, and a biconical lamp of the Esquiline type, all dating from the mid-2nd c. BCE; plate III, nos. 1-3). The bulk dates to the second half of the 2nd century BCE (e.g., the small Black Gloss stemmed dish dating from the second half of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st c. BCE, plate III, no. 4). Importantly, patches of a thin but compact surface (**10031**) are preserved on top of it, at the same levels as the earlier floors from which construction of the portico foundations started in Trench II S. This seems to suggest that the surface represents what remains of a uniform working prep for the building site.

A sequence of irregular dumps with a steeper slope was found on top of **10031**, whose only function was to raise the floor level (**10030**, **10028**, **10027**, **10026** from bottom to top). Ceramic fragments from **10030** match up with fragments from **10032**. While this would seem to suggest that **10032** and **10030** were simultaneous, it should be noted, however, that **10031** was not preserved towards the E, and that **10030** for the most part overlapped directly with **10032**. The deposits above **10031** contain slightly later materials, dating to between the late 2nd and the mid-1st century BCE. The latest ceramic finds include a Grey Ware *pelike* (mid-2nd c. BCE), a Grey



Fig. 16. VPP 2017, Trench A. View of the construction trench for the Phase 3 foundation (10005), photomodel (scale bar 1 m) (author: D. Diffendale).

Ware lamp (second half of 2nd or early 1st c. BCE), a Thin Wall goblet (end of 2nd-beginning of 1st c. BCE), and a Grey Ware shallow bowl with grooved rim (second quarter of 1st c. BCE), all from **10028** (plate IV, nos. 1-4). An unidentified fragment of *terra sigillata* comes from **10032**, but it could be an intrusion. **10028** also contained a concentration of metal objects, including lead *glandes missiles* (a class of objects usually linked with the 89 BCE siege)⁴³ and a possible spearhead. From **10030** comes a 2nd-early 1st c. BCE Roman Republican as (table 3 and plate VII, no. 7; PA- Pompei, Inv. 90445), intentionally fractioned to one half (a practice known for Pompeii during the early 1st c. BCE). A layer that regularized the surface (**10016**, featuring the same range of diagnostic materials) sealed the sequence.

Retaining these layers to the E was the foundation of the central partition of the portico (**10010**), which separated the colonnade from the row of rooms on the back⁴⁴. This concrete structure was built within formwork (a plug-hole for which seems to have been preserved: **10054-10055**), presumably starting from the level at which the old drain had been razed (traces of the shuttering have been exposed throughout the excavation of **10032**). Its precise relationship with the S wall of the large cistern has not been ascertained, though it seems that they were bonded⁴⁵.

Phase 2b

A layer of concrete (**10002**) was laid on top of the crest of the colonnade foundation to support the gray tuff channel after its repositioning, in the context of the works for the raising of the court floor and installation of new water features documented in Trench II S.

Phase 3

In the Flavian reconstruction of the sanctuary, the open court was expanded and the new wing of the portico was built farther to the E, demolishing the pre-existing superstructures. The deep construction trench (**10041**) for the new foundation of the colonnade (**10005**) (fig. 16) was cut through the leveling layers of the Phase 2 structures, putting the large cistern out of use. The wall was built without formwork directly against the E side of the trench, while its W face was raised up in *opus reticulatum*, leaving a wide enough margin for the masons to work (which explains why the earlier wall **10043** and related features were truncated).

[M.P.]

⁴³ For a discussion of similar lead projectiles retrieved from the construction levels of the courtyard, see CARROLL 2008: 38-39; 2010: 69-70, 74 (fig. 8).

⁴⁴ SOGLIANO 1900: 28, fig. 1; MAU 1900: pl. VIII; 1902: 125.

⁴⁵ On the cistern, see also: SPANO 1910: 270-271; CARROLL 2008: 38; 2010: 66 (fig. 2), 87 and 89.

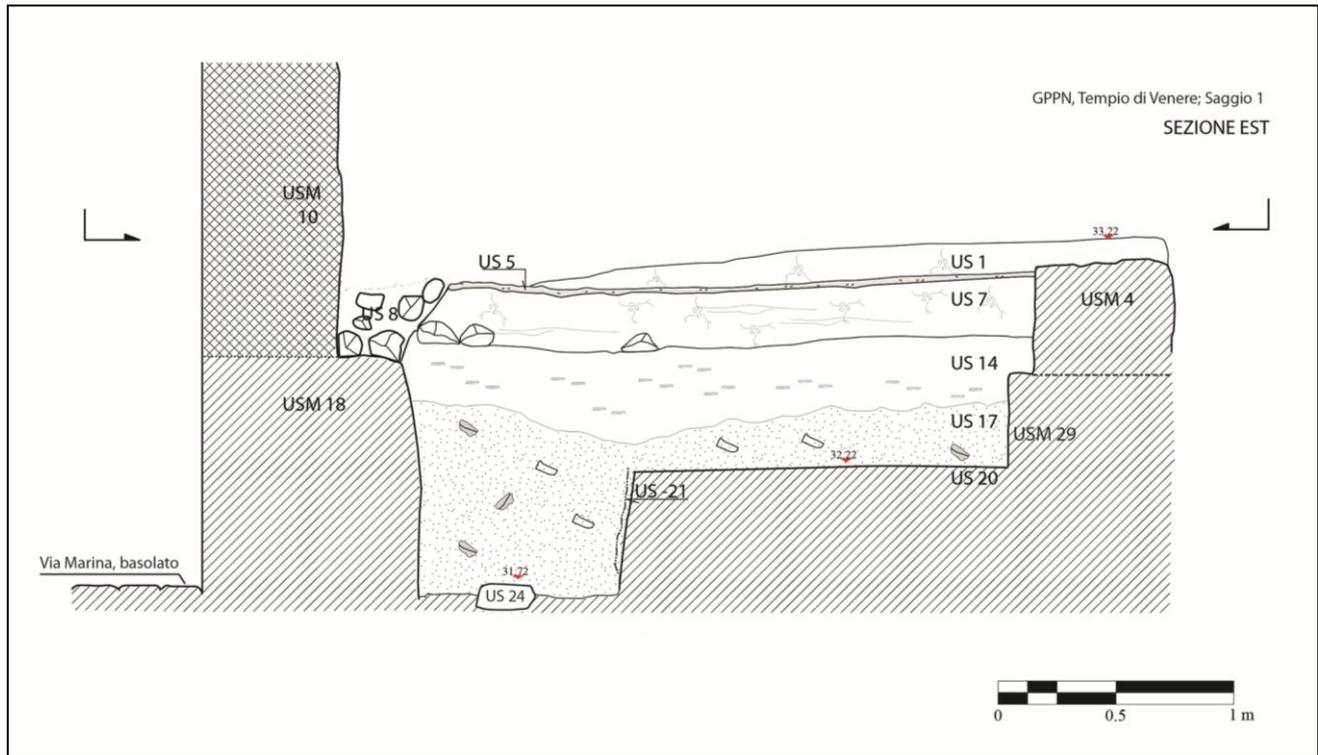


Fig. 17. PPT 2015-16 project, Trench 1. N-S stratigraphic cross-section (view from W).

The 2015-2016 investigations on the N side of the sanctuary (Pompei per tutti Project, GPP N): stratigraphy

Archaeological testing was carried out by the Soprintendenza Pompei as part of the *Pompei per tutti* (PPT) Project, an initiative aimed at improving accessibility of the archaeological park for visitors with disabilities, including the construction of a wheelchair accessible path across the entire site⁴⁶. The projected course of the path constructed in the area of the Sanctuary of Venus ran parallel to the *opus reticulatum* wall that delimited the cult place from Via Marina in the final phase⁴⁷. Thus, a narrow and shallow E-W trench was opened in 2015-2016, 2.60 m to the S of the wall⁴⁸. A larger and deeper sondage (Trench 1, measuring 5.50 x 4.35 m) was excavated in the middle of the trench to document the sequence of occupation in the area of the N portico (figs. 4 and 17). The results correlate with the VPP periodization as follows.

Phase 1

The earliest architectural feature brought to light in this sector of the site would seem to be represented by a mortared rubble wall (29), which runs parallel to Via Marina, about 3 m S of the later precinct wall. The extent of the structure is unknown, but its function could have been to delimit the city-block on its N side, being perfectly aligned with the N wall of the Basilica. The structure was abutted to the N by what could be interpreted as the sidewalk (20) of Via Marina, whose basalt pavement (24) was found to be originally wider than its current aspect (the combined width of pavement and curbside is 2.45 m). No curbstones were found, but there is trace of a spoliation trench running along the S side of 24 (21). The level of the sidewalk corresponds with that of the

⁴⁶ The 3km-long path starts from the Amphitheater, crosses Via dell'Abbondanza and the Forum porticoes up to the Sanctuary of Venus, and then leads to Via di Mercurio and Via Consolare. Francesco Sirano and Gianluca Vitagliano coordinated the overall project. Laura D'Esposito, Marialaura Iadanza, and Alberta Martellone directed the archaeological activities, which were supervised in the field by Concetta Costa, Dora D'Auria, Alessandro Russo, Serenella Scala, and Teresa Virtuoso.

⁴⁷ This section of the trail leads to the Antiquarium and two of the main accesses to the archaeological park, Via Marina and Piazza Esedra.

⁴⁸ The top levels in this sector of the sanctuary had already been explored by Paul Arthur in 1980-1981 (*supra*, footnote 7), and were partly damaged by modern activities (electrical wiring; tree planting pits; stacking of blocks originally belonging to the temple podium).



Fig. 18. PPT 2015-16 project, view of via Marina from E. To the left is visible the Yellow Neapolitan tuff opus reticulatum precinct wall of the Sanctuary of Venus (10) on top of the pre-existing lava opus incertum terracing structure (18).

Fig. 19. PPT 2015-16 project, Trench 1. View of the N face of the Sarno limestone opus quasi reticulatum wall (4 with plaster 16) on top of a repurposed foundation (29). On the bottom is visible the surface of 20, which has been interpreted as the original S sidewalk of Via Marina.

crest of the *opus incertum* features found in the E sector of the open court. No associated layers were excavated, so the precise dating is uncertain.

Phase 2a

The spatial arrangement of the city-block was modified in the years following the foundation of the colony. In particular, to expand the area on top of which sits the triporticus of the Sanctuary of Venus, a terracing structure was built, partly encroaching upon the pavement of Via Marina. This retaining wall consists of an *opus incertum* structure made with lava rubble (18; fig. 18). After the removal of the curbstones of Via Marina, the space between 18 to the N and 29 to the S was filled with dumps of soil and building debris (17 and 14), thus obliterating part of the pavement and the sidewalk and raising the floor level.

The new terrace represents the N limit of the sanctuary in the Sullan phase. The top surface of 14 is hard and compact, and perhaps served as an open corridor, facing from above onto Via Marina. A drainage shaft with square wellhead built into 14 can also be assigned to this phase (this is visible below a later reconstruction). The beaten surface abuts to the S an *opus quasi reticulatum* wall made of *tesserae* of Sarno limestone and cruma rubble (4), whose N face is revetted with plaster (16; fig. 19). Wall 4 is built directly on top of 29, which would have been repurposed to function as a foundation, and likely corresponds to the back wall of the N wing of the triporticus (as reconstructed in Maiuri's plan)⁴⁹. The finds from the leveling layers are consistent with the relative dating. The latest diagnostic finds from these strata can be dated within the first half of the 1st c. BCE (see table 2).

⁴⁹ This feature was exposed by Paul Arthur in the 1980s excavations (ARTHUR 1986: 37, trenches 11 and 12). Curti 2008: 50, fig. 4; see also COTTICA, CURTI 2008: 25-36, figs. 1, 4, trenches 11 and 12.

Fig. 20. PPT 2015-16 project, Trench 1. Pre-existing floor (5) associated with SU 4 in Phase 2b. View from S.

Fig. 21. PPT 2015-16 project, Trench 1. Large accumulations of crushed limestone and fragments of trachyte (2) on top of a thin layer of mortar (1), evidence of the Flavian building site. View from S.

Phase 2b

To the N of 4, a *lavapesta* floor (5; fig. 20) was laid out on top of a thick preparation mortar and stone chips (7). The surface originally abutted 18, extending across the entire N terrace (the stratigraphic relationship between 5 and 18 is truncated by a construction cut in the following phase). The square well-head built on top of the pre-existing drainage shaft can also be attributed to this building phase. The new floor is probably associated with a corridor leading to the area occupied by the so-called Villa Imperiale, W of the sanctuary⁵⁰. A similar rearrangement is attested on the opposite side of Via Marina (at VII.7.10; *insula Occidentalis*), which now features a series of terraces connected with the walkway along the fortification wall (cf. fig. 17).

Phase 3

In the final building phase of the sanctuary the N portico was extended further to the N. Both walls 18 and 4 were razed down to the floor level and a new boundary wall, an *opus reticulatum* structure with *tesserae* of Yellow Neapolitan tuff (10), was built directly above 18. The wall probably was meant to function as the back wall for the new N wing of the triporticus, which, however, was never completed. While no finished floor can be associated with the wall, various traces suggest that construction activities were still undergoing at the time of the eruption. A thin layer of mortar (1), of the same kind that is documented in the open court, is spread across the area. Large accumulations of crushed limestone and fragments of trachyte (2) were found on top of it (fig. 21)⁵¹, and may be interpreted as pertaining to the Flavian building site⁵².

[L.D.]

The 2015-2016 investigations on the N side of the sanctuary ("Pompei per tutti" Project): finds from Trench 1 (14 and 17) (table 2)

The leveling layers 14 and 17 are contained between the back wall of the sanctuary portico (4 and 29) and the *opus incertum* terracing wall (18) that delimited Via Marina in its post-Sullan narrower configuration. Although they contain a different range of inclusions, 14 and 17 clearly belong to the same activity. Their function was to raise the floor level in the area of the N terrace, creating a new passageway. 14 is a brown compact

⁵⁰ On the chronology and spatial organization of the so-called Villa Imperiale, see: PAPPALARDO, GRIMALDI 2005; PAPPALARDO *et al.* 2008. For its relationship to the Sanctuary of Venus, see: CURTI 2008: 55.

⁵¹ Samples from 2 were analyzed to determine their mineralogical, geochemical, and petrographic characterization by the Department of Biology, Ecology, and Earth Science of the University of Calabria under the direction of Domenico Miriello, with the collaboration of Gino Mirocle Crisci, Raffaella De Luca, Rossella Pace, Alessandra Pecci, and Nicola Ruggeri.

⁵² COLETTI *et al.* 2010: 197.



deposit with a hard beaten surface; it produced a small sample of contextual materials, among which a fragment of Dressel 1A amphora (plate V, no. 1), a few common ware sherds, a Black Gloss *patera* featuring a lead restoration clamp on the bottom (plate V, no. 2), and a fragment of a Black Gloss cup on high foot with overpainted concentric bands on the bottom (plate V, no. 3). **17** contained mostly waste materials: in addition to rubble and several fragments of painted plaster and mouldings decorated in the First Pompeian Style, there was a bronze Republican *quadrans* and a few potsherds, among which the neck of a Dressel 1B amphora (plate VI, no. 1), a Black Gloss rim of a bowl (plate VI, no. 2), a sherd of internal red-slip pan (plate VI, no. 3), a piece of a *louterion* (plate VI, no. 4), and a fragment of Dressel 2 lamp (plate VI, no. 5).

The diagnostic materials from these strata allow us to date the creation of the retaining wall **18** and the subsequent occupation of Via Marina within the first half of the 1st c. BCE, thus providing an important *terminus ante quem* for the dating of the first pavement of Via Marina (which is covered by **18**)⁵³.

[A.R.]

Trench	SU	Class/shape	Condition	Chronology	Plate	Notes and Comparanda
I GPPN	14	Amphora, Dressel 1A.	1 fragment of rim and neck, preserving the attachment of the handle Ø rim 14; h 13	End of 2 nd -beginning of 1 st c. BCE	Pl. V, n. 1	Bonghi Jovino 1984: tav. 149, n. 1-3; D'Ambrosio-De Caro 1989: n. 2636, fig. 50; n. 1938, fig. 48; n. 74, fig. 38; Gallo 2001: n. 63-65-66-70, fig. 48, 49
I GPPN	14	Black Gloss, bowl (Campana B).	1 fragment of foot and body Ø foot 7.2; h 2.3.	2 nd c. BCE	Pl. V, n. 2	Morel, series 2283; Bonghi Jovino 1984: 102, tav. 73 8-9; Chiaramonte Trerè 1986: tav. XX, 5; Berg 2007: 202-203; 205 fig.2; 209, Russo 2015a: 200-202, VN 15,76,64,66
I GPPN	14	Black Gloss, bowl	1 fragment of foot and body h 3.6.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE	Pl. V, n. 3	Morel, series 3131; Morel 1965: 87-88
I GPPN	17	Amphora, Dressel 1B.	1 fragment of rim and body h 10.2.	Beginning of 1 st c. BCE—first half of 1 st c. CE	Pl. VI, n. 1	Bonghi Jovino 1984: 275 s., tav. 149, 1-3; D'Ambrosio-De Caro 1989: n. 2636, fig. 50; n. 1938, fig. 48; n. 74, fig. 38; Gallo 2001: n. 63-65-66-70, fig. 48, 49
I GPPN	17	Black Gloss, bowl (Campana B).	1 fragment of rim and body h 2.5.	End of 2 nd -1 st c. BCE	Pl. VI, n. 2	Morel, series 2286; Bonghi Jovino 1984: 102, tav. 73 8-9; Chiaramonte Trerè 1986: tav. XX, 5; Berg 2007: 202-203; 205 fig.2; 209, Russo 2015a: 200-202, VN 15,76,64,66
I GPPN	17	Internal Red-Slip, baking tray	1 fragment of rim and body h 5.5.	Mid-2 nd c. BCE—beginning of 1 st c. CE	Pl. VI, n. 3	Scatozza Horicht 1988: 81-86
I GPPN	17	Louterion	fragment of rim and body h 9.5.	2 nd c. BCE	Pl. VI, n. 4	Fergola-Scatozza Horicht 2001-2002; Russo 2015c: LO8, fig. 12
I GPPN	17	Lamp with granular decoration (Warzenlampen)	1 fragment of oil reservoir h 2.2.	Beginning of 1 st c. BCE—first half of 1 st c. CE	Pl. VI, n. 5	Dressel 2; Ricci 1973: 182-187, fig. 7
I GPPN	17	Coin; <i>quadrans</i>	Obv. Head of Hercules r. wearing lion's skin; behind, three pellets. Rev. Prow r., in front, three pellets; above: L-MINUCI; below ROMA. Ø 2	133 BCE		Crawford 1974: 279, n. 248/4, pl. XXXVII.5
I GPPN	17	Plaster	Moulding fragment decorated in First Pompeian Style. L. 10; h. 6; t. 4	End of 2 nd c. BCE		Riemenschneider 1986; Gallo 2001: 113, fig. 51-52
I GPPN	17	Plaster	Moulding pertaining to a coffered decoration in First Pompeian Style. L. 5,5; w. 6; t. 4	End of 2 nd c. BCE		Riemenschneider 1986
I GPPN	17	Plaster	2 fragments of moulding decorated in First Pompeian Style. L. 6; h. 4; t. 3; L. 5; h. 3; t. 4	End of 2 nd c. BCE		Riemenschneider 1986
I GPPN	17	Painted plaster	Three-layer- <i>tectorium</i> . Imitation marble decoration, brown and ochre: alabastro fiorito. W. 8; h. 6; t. 3	End of 2 nd c. BCE		Grimaldi-Buondonno- Tabacchini 2015: 95, fig.7; Varriale 2010
I GPPN	17	Painted plaster	Three-layer- <i>tectorium</i> . Imitation marble decoration, brown and ochre: alabaster. W. 4; h. 3; t. 2,5; W. 6; h. 6; t. 2.5	End of 2 nd c. BCE		Grimaldi-Buondonno- Tabacchini 2015: 95, fig.7; Varriale 2010

Table 2. PPT 2015-16 project, Trench 1. Distribution of diagnostic finds from SUs 14 and 17 (author A. Russo).

⁵³ A pre-Sullan date for the Via Marina pavement was proposed by ARTHUR 1986: 38.

Discussion and Future Directions

The preliminary evidence collected by the *Venus Pompeiana Project* in 2017 prompts the reassessment of the spatial organization, periodization and absolute dating of the Sanctuary of Venus, allowing us to suggest some important modifications to the reconstructions previously proposed by Carroll and Curti. By integrating the new data with both the results of the 2015-2016 *Pompeii per tutti* project and the reanalysis of the topographical data from the 2004-2007 campaigns, we can propose a different interpretation of sanctuary's layout in its first monumental phase, thus re-evaluating the impact that the creation of the triporticus and temple complex had on the pre-existing topography (fig. 22).

The sidewalk feature discovered below the level of the sanctuary's open courtyard in Trench II S points to the existence of a side street or alley branching off from Via Marina with a N-S orientation, running alongside the continuous Sarno Limestone *opus incertum* wall later destroyed by the construction of the E colonnade.

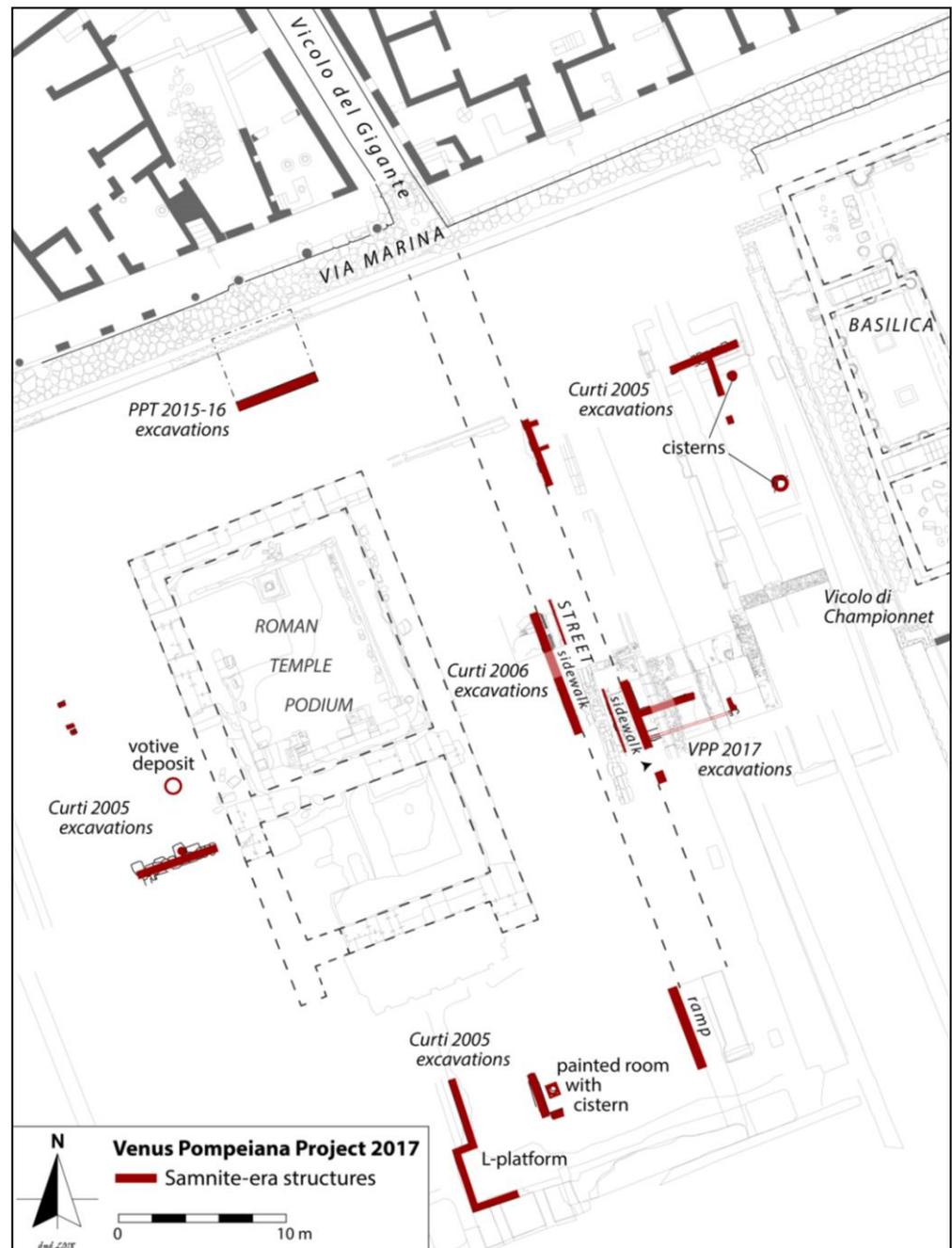


Fig. 22. Composite phase plan showing the main Samnite-era structures documented in the area of the Sanctuary of Venus below the Sullan triporticus and temple (author D. Diffendale).

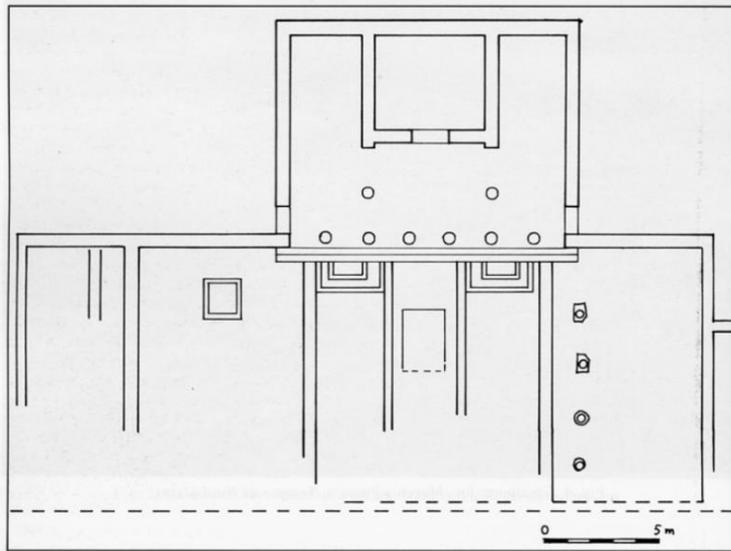


Fig. 23. Schematic plan of the Italic temple and sanctuary at Casalbore (Hirpinia). Note the two fountains at the sides of an axial platform altar in front of the hexastyle temple (after Johannowsky 2001).

The other limit of the street is probably to be identified with a parallel structure excavated in 2006 further to the W, in a sector of Trench II S not yet reopened. This structure is perfectly aligned with another Sarno Limestone *opus incertum* wall, later incorporated as the W side of the double ramp connecting the underground vaulted rooms on the front of the triporticus with the level of the *lavapesta* courtyard floor. The street, then, continued in a southerly direction reaching the fortification circuit and its narrow walk-

way. It evidently demarcated two separate city-blocks, which were in use during the 2nd c. BCE.

The area to the E of the street was occupied by what Curti has described as a courtyard building⁵⁴, a complex that most likely continued under the Vicolo di Championnet and the Basilica, and of which the N and E sides were already known with some detail. To this building belong the features found under the E portico in Trench A, which we have assigned to our Phase 1. While not much can be said about the internal organization of the complex in the portion of the city-block S of Trench A, it can be in any case demonstrated that the W wing of the supposed building extended further E than previously posited. The lack of occupation deposits, however, makes it difficult to speculate on the function of the rooms, and only a re-examination of the finds from Curti's excavations in the area of the courtyard will allow us to reach safer conclusions on the nature of the complex.

The sector to the W of the street, on the other hand, features the most remarkable – and intriguing – architecture: the L-shaped platform with the painted room(s) to the E; the terrace in the SW corner, with channels and pebble floors; the vaulted rooms abutting the 3rd c. BCE fortifications (a practice for which other late 2nd c. BCE examples are known, e.g. from the *Insula Occidentalis*)⁵⁵; the peristyle under the court W of the temple podium (cf. fig. 3, E)⁵⁶. We tentatively assign these structures to the same phase based on their alignment, building technique, decoration, elevation, and destruction sequence. The N limit of this sector along Via Marina seems to correspond with the earliest feature uncovered in Trench 1 of the “*Pompei per tutti*” project. If taken individually, each of these elements could very well find parallels in the domestic context, but their overall spatial arrangement would in fact recall the indigenous architectural tradition exemplified by sacred sites like Casalbore (fig. 23), whose role as a possible model for the L-shaped platform had already been noted by Curti⁵⁷. If a local predecessor of the monumental temple complex were to be found, then, we would have to look for it in this area. A deposit of possible votive nature dating to the late 3rd or early 2nd c. BCE, unfortunately still unpublished, was recovered from a pit located just W of the temple podium⁵⁸. Future work in other sectors of the open court will hopefully clarify this issue.

While still based on the main alignment generated by Via Marina, the construction of the triporticus, i.e., our Phase 2a, brought with it a major reorganization of the neighborhood. The area of the sanctuary expanded beyond the previous limits: Via Marina was narrowed to accommodate the N wing of the portico, while the previous N-S street was completely obliterated to make room for the E wing. The latter was replaced in its function

⁵⁴ CURTI 2008: 50-51.

⁵⁵ CASSETTA, COSTANTINO 2008.

⁵⁶ COLETTI, STERPA 2008: 132 (“Gruppo G” and associated features); 138, fig. 2, A; 140, fig. 5.

⁵⁷ On the sanctuary at Casalbore, see BONIFACIO 2000; JOHANNOWSKI 2001. The complex features an axial altar platform surrounded by basins on a lower terrace.

⁵⁸ For a preliminary presentation: LEPONE, MOGETTA 2006. *Venere e il porto di Pompei: una giornata di studi, Day conference (May 4th, 2006)*, *DAI-Rome*, Rome, Italy (with A. Lepone): “Le fasi più antiche del santuario: edifici, riti di fondazione e di abbandono. L’area occidentale.”

by the newly constructed Vicolo di Championnet, which separated the E portico from the Basilica⁵⁹. To the S, the front terrace put out of use both the L-shaped platform and the decorated rooms to its E, though it incorporated the vaulted substructures creating a *via tecta* up against the fortifications. As discussed, the pottery from the destruction levels of the Phase 1 building in Trench A has a late 2nd to early 1st c. BCE chronological range, but metal finds from the upper fills include a coin that provides an early 1st c. BCE *terminus post quem*, as well as frequent lead slingshots (i.e. objects that are usually linked with the 89 BCE siege of Pompeii; *supra*) in secondary deposition. A post-Sullan date for the completion of the triporticus seems therefore the most likely, although it cannot be ruled out that the demolition of the pre-existing structures had begun in the first decade of the 1st c. BCE⁶⁰. In any case, both the earlier chronology (ca. 130-120 BCE, on analogy with the now challenged early date of the Basilica) and hybrid configuration of the triporticus (i.e. coexisting with the L-shaped platform) as proposed by Curti will have to be revised, affecting the overall interpretation of this important monument.

Thus, the rich archaeological data from the Temple of Venus can provide crucial evidence for assessing and interpreting the degree of cultural change brought about by the Roman conquest of the town. By continuing activities on site in 2018-2019, we hope to considerably improve our knowledge of the earliest phases of occupation. The main issue at stake is to define the character of the original cult. If the post-Sullan triporticus and temple represents the earliest implantation of a sacred site in the area, the idea that the religious landscape of Pompeii was radically manipulated as a result of the formal incorporation of the town into the Roman socio-political system will be confirmed. The scattered nature of the remains predating the Roman monumental sanctuary does not allow us at the moment to propose a conclusive interpretation of the Phase 1 occupation, let alone its possible relationship with the Archaic finds. If proven, however, the presence of an earlier, smaller Samnite-era shrine, whether dedicated to Venus or Mefitis⁶¹, would challenge current ideas about the scale of Roman impact on religion at colonial contexts,⁶² presenting a more gradual picture for the integration of the local community within the Roman order, specifically through the reconfiguration and updating of a pre-existing cult.

[I.B.-M.M.]

Appendix I. The ceramic finds from VPP 2017 Trenches II S and A. A preliminary analysis of selected specimens (Plates I-IV)

Lo scavo del 2017 ha restituito una notevole varietà di reperti ceramici riconducibili a diverse produzioni materiali. Nel seguente studio preliminare si è deciso di presentare una selezione di manufatti utili per la lettura delle principali azioni antropiche che hanno interessato l'area indagata. L'eterogeneità cronologica e l'alto grado di frammentarietà che caratterizzano il materiale raccolto sono esemplificativi della natura di alcuni strati, interpretati come livellamenti del cantiere edilizio operativo durante la fase di costruzione del tempio in età post-sillana (Fase 2a).

In questa prospettiva, sono di fondamentale importanza, per il loro potere datante, le anfore da trasporto rinvenute in entrambi i saggi, ma in maniera più consistente in Trench IIS. Afferenti a tipologie ben note, le forme individuate risultano essere tra i prodotti più recenti tra quelli ceramici portati alla luce nell'area del Santuario di Venere. Si tratta in alcuni casi di prodotti importati che, sulla base di un'analisi autoptica, sembrano aver solcato diverse rotte commerciali. D'altro canto, come già dimostrato dalle analisi archeometriche condotte su alcuni campioni di anfore rinvenute nell'area del foro, sono documentati per il periodo tardorepubblicano scambi tra Pompei — o in generale la Campania — e la zona meridionale della penisola iberica⁶³. Gli stessi esem-

⁵⁹ BALL, DOBBINS 2017: 478-485, demonstrate that the Basilica and the paving of the Vicolo di Championnet were part of the same project, which they date to after 75 BCE.

⁶⁰ Cf. the case of the Stabian Baths, now shown to have been built with their currently visible extension and layout ca. 100 BCE: TRÜMPER 2018.

⁶¹ A representation of Venus/Aphrodite on the pediment of S. Abbondio temple suggests that a manifestation of the goddess could have received a joint cult with Dionysos in the the 3rd c. BCE in the suburbium of Pompeii. See ELIA, PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1979. For a recent reassessment: WYLER 2013.

⁶² The state of the debate is in STEK 2016.

⁶³ BERNAL *et al.* 2013: 268-273.

plari presentati in catalogo (da **2831** e **2832**; plate II, no. 3 e 4), datati grazie ai confronti pompeiani tra la fine del II e l'inizio del I secolo a.C., potrebbero essere ricondotti per le loro caratteristiche morfologiche e tecniche a prodotti gaditani⁶⁴. Con ampio margine di certezza, sulla base della composizione dell'impasto e del rivestimento esterno, si può parlare invece di provenienza medio-tirrenica (tra Lazio e Campania) per due anfore vinarie afferenti al tipo Dressel 1. Di queste, la più antica, datata alla fine del II secolo a.C., ha un labbro a fascia con sezione triangolare e rientra nella prima produzione del tipo 1A (da **2834**; plate II, no. 5). L'esemplare con labbro a fascia leggermente ingrossato (da **2831**; plate II, no. 6) rientra invece nel tipo 1B, di cronologia compresa tra l'inizio e la metà del I secolo a.C. Entrambi i tipi testimoniano rotte commerciali che interessano non solo tutte le regioni dell'Italia centro-meridionale, ma anche il resto del bacino mediterraneo⁶⁵.

Se una buona parte dei rinvenimenti documenta importazioni extraregionali, la presenza di inclusi di matrice vulcanica nell'impasto di anforacei consente di affermare che alcune anfore da trasporto rinvenute in Trench II S sono prodotte in area vesuviana. Esempio è il caso dell'anfora Dressel 1B (da **2833**), il cui labbro a fascia con profilo piuttosto concavo riporta ad una datazione compresa tra la fine del II e la prima metà del I secolo a.C. Anche l'unico esemplare di anfora riconducibile alla forma cosiddetta "greco-italica" (da **2832**) sembra appartenere al gruppo prodotto in area pompeiana. D'altro canto, come dimostrato dai rinvenimenti in fornaci localizzate in area medio-tirrenica, gli stessi *ateliers* hanno prodotto quasi contemporaneamente sia il tipo greco-italico che quello Dressel 1A⁶⁶. Completiamo la rassegna delle anfore da trasporto segnalando, infine, la presenza di un esemplare del tipo "Brindisi" (da **2812**; plate I, no. 6), che, in base alla morfologia, sembra rientrare in una cronologia circoscritta tra l'inizio e la metà del I secolo a.C. Anche in questo caso l'analisi autotopica dell'impasto e il confronto con un esemplare di produzione campano-laziale inducono a credere che l'anfora possa essere di produzione medio-tirrenica⁶⁷.

La modesta presenza di anfore da trasporto in Trench A è compensata dal rinvenimento di alcuni frammenti di ceramica a pasta grigia. I manufatti in questione sono caratterizzati da un corpo ceramico grigio chiaro e da un rivestimento piuttosto diluito e disomogeneo. La produzione di ceramica a pasta grigia sembra essere un fenomeno regionale circoscritto alla zona dell'arco ionico, come testimonia il rinvenimento di fornaci a Metaponto e Oria e la massiccia concentrazione di prodotti nella zona compresa tra Sibari e Lecce⁶⁸. In particolare, da Trench A provengono il labbro di una *pelike* (da **10028**; plate IV, no. 1) e quello di un boccaletto (da **10032**; plate III, no. 1), che possono inquadrarsi nel primo periodo di produzione della classe, compreso entro la metà del II secolo a.C. La *pelike* trova forti similitudini con individui rinvenuti a Pantanello presso Metaponto, Taranto, Valesio e Nardò, ma tutti gli esemplari citati presentano un labbro maggiormente svasato⁶⁹. Il boccaletto trova invece puntuali confronti con un individuo recuperato ancora una volta a Pantanello e con un altro integro rinvenuto in una tomba della necropoli ellenistica di Taranto⁷⁰. Ad una fase di produzione avanzata appartiene invece un frammento di coppa con vasca bassa e labbro percorso da due riseghe (da **10028**; plate IV, no. 4). Sulla base dei confronti stabiliti con prodotti provenienti da Sibari, Heraclea e Taranto, il frammento può essere datato al secondo quarto del I secolo a.C.⁷¹. La medesima cronologia è proposta anche per la variante a vernice nera della forma, già conosciuta a Pompei⁷².

Analogie tecniche con la produzione a pasta grigia mostrano infine due lucerne con profilo biconico provenienti sempre da Trench A. Di queste, la più antica rientra nel tipo conosciuto come "dell'Esquilino" (da

⁶⁴ DE FRANCESCO *et al.* 2012: 10.

⁶⁵ LAPADULA 2003: 252.

⁶⁶ Si parla di una discendenza della forma Dressel 1A dalle anfore greco-italiche, basata sull'analogia morfologica del labbro e confermata dagli scavi che hanno consentito di individuare centri di produzione da cui fuoriescono entrambi i modelli. COSTANTINI 2011: 393; LAPADULA 2003: 252.

⁶⁷ Sull'ipotesi di una produzione campano-laziale e i bolli sugli esemplari rinvenuti sul relitto Planier 3 (Marsiglia), si veda PANELLA 1998: 548-549.

⁶⁸ YNTEMA 2005: 12.

⁶⁹ Per Taranto, cfr. HEMPEL 2001: 238, no. 2; per Metaponto, Valesio e Nardò, cfr. YNTEMA 2005: 89 con bibliografia precedente. Altri esemplari provenienti da Pantanello presso Metaponto, studiati da chi scrive, sono in corso di stampa.

⁷⁰ Per l'esemplare di Taranto, cfr. HEMPEL 2001: 237, no. 1. L'esemplare di Pantanello, come la *pelike* già menzionata, è in corso di stampa.

⁷¹ Per Sibari, cfr. YNTEMA 2005: 49, no. 18b; per Heraclea, cfr. GIARDINO 1990: 121, tav. XXV, Mazzocchi 3; per Taranto, cfr. HEMPEL 2001: 244, no. 6.

⁷² RUSSO 2015a: 201, no. 71.

Plate I.

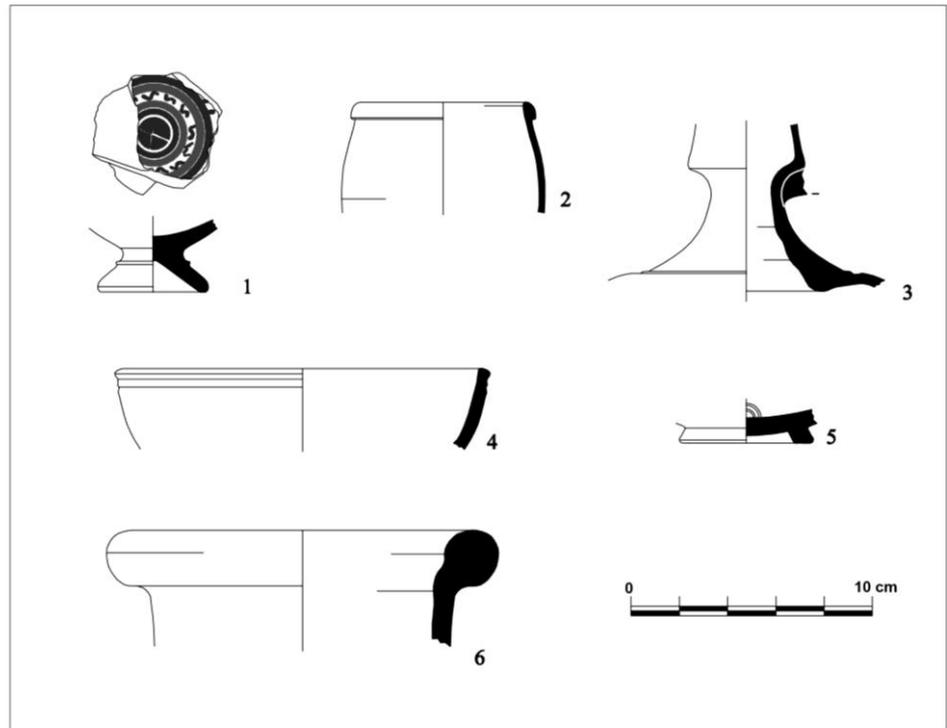
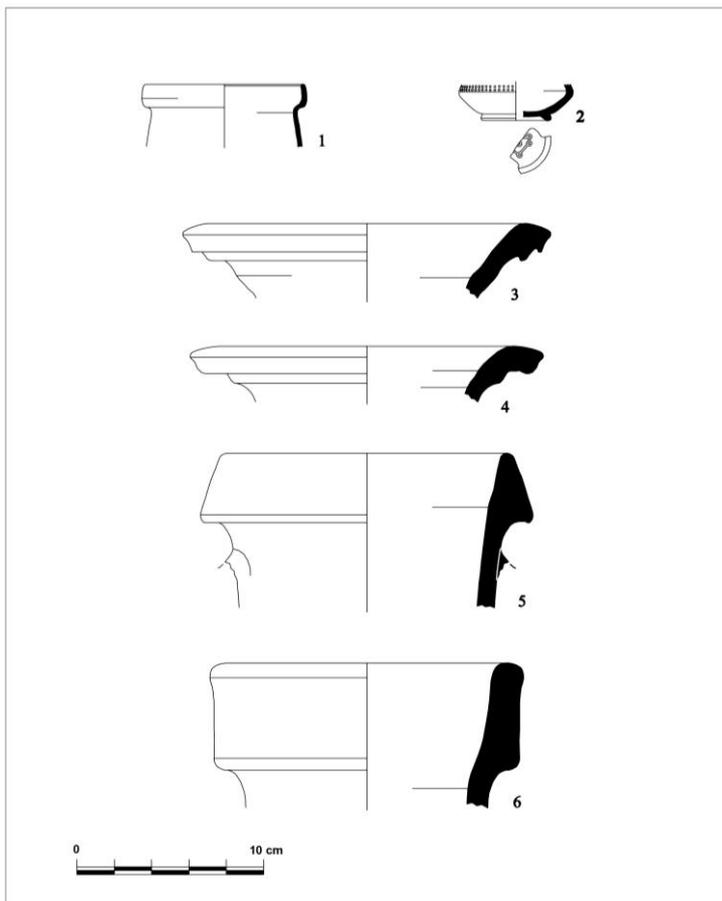


Plate II



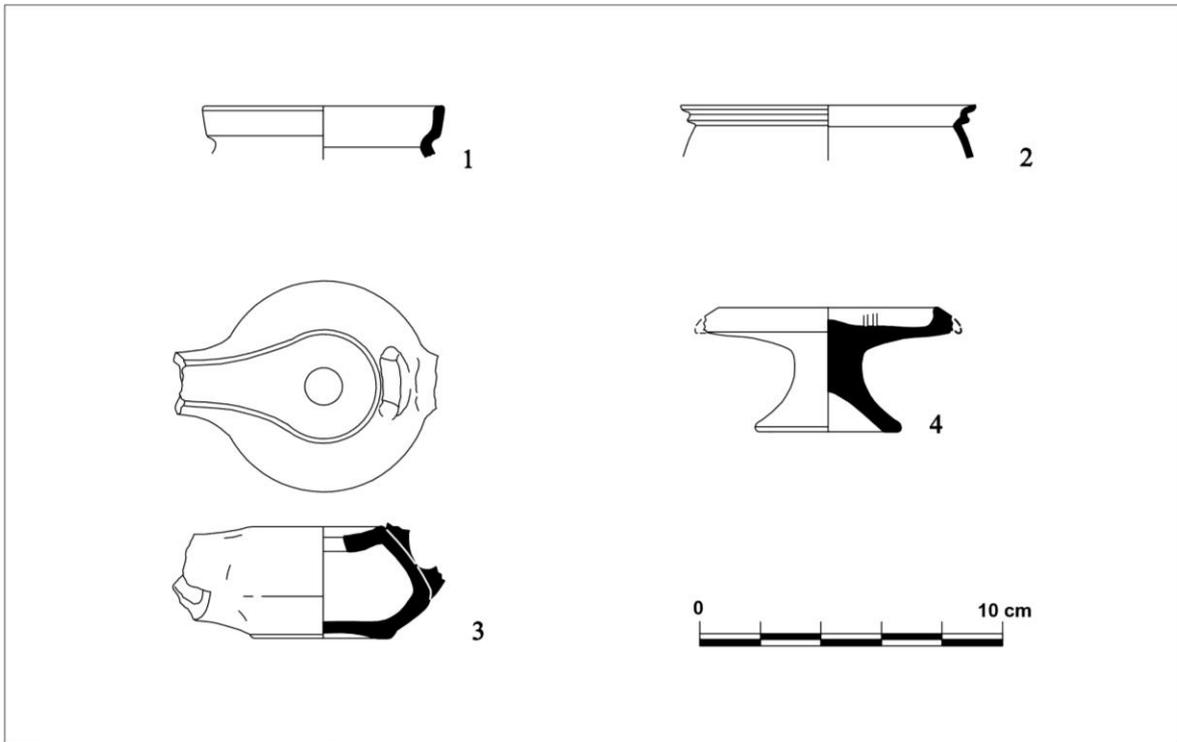


Plate III.

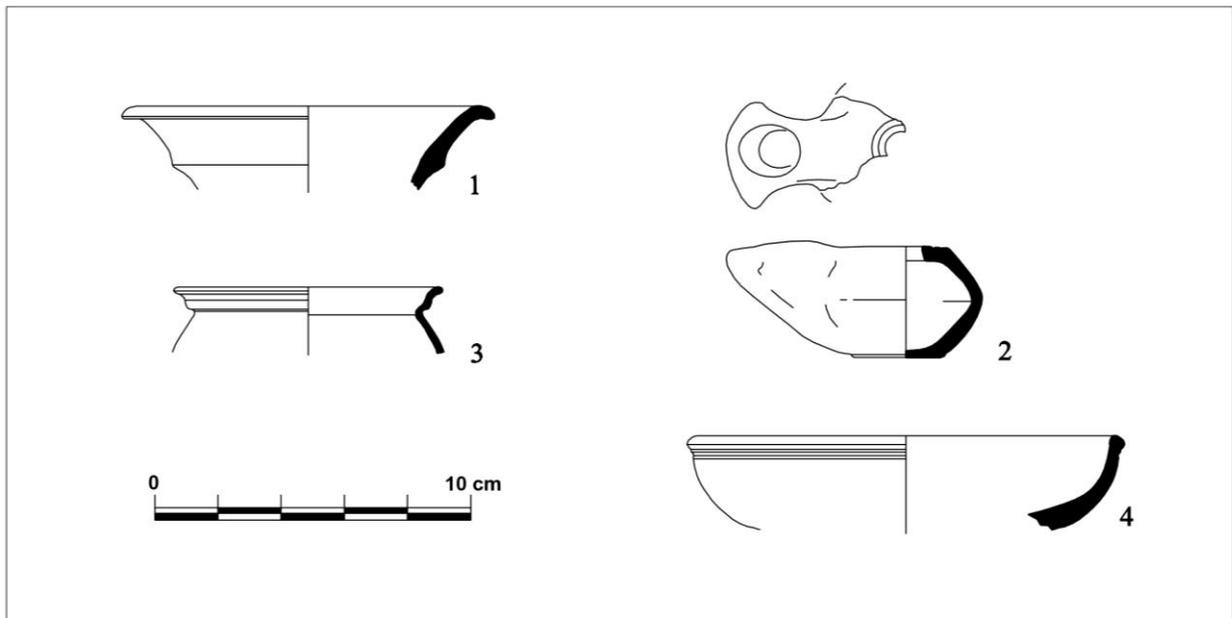


Plate IV.

10030+10032; plate III, no. 3) e, grazie al confronto con un altro esemplare pompeiano, può essere datata intorno alla metà del II secolo a.C.⁷³. La seconda, caratterizzata da un serbatoio più alto e un becco conformato ad àncora (da **10028**; plate IV, no. 2), è tipica della produzione a pasta grigia di seconda metà II e inizi I secolo

⁷³ DI DOMENICO, PICILLO 2015: 265, n. 4.

a.C. e trova precisi confronti a Taranto e Valesio⁷⁴. Le caratteristiche dell'impasto e della vernice dei tre frammenti di ceramica a pasta grigia e della lucerna con becco ad àncora sembrano essere analoghe a quelle dei prodotti diffusi nel bacino ionico. Il rinvenimento di questi frammenti in Trench A apre quindi un nuovo capitolo sull'area di diffusione di questi prodotti, il cui limite geografico sembrava spingersi finora non oltre i confini della Basilicata e della Puglia settentrionale.

[M.B.]

Plate V.

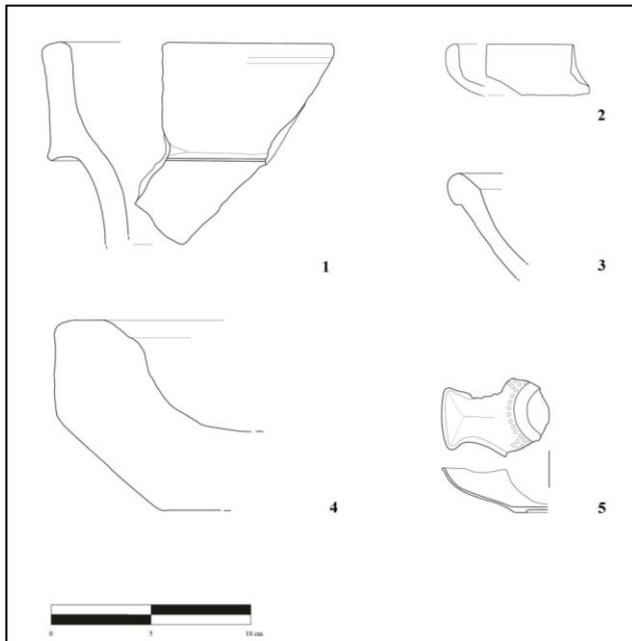
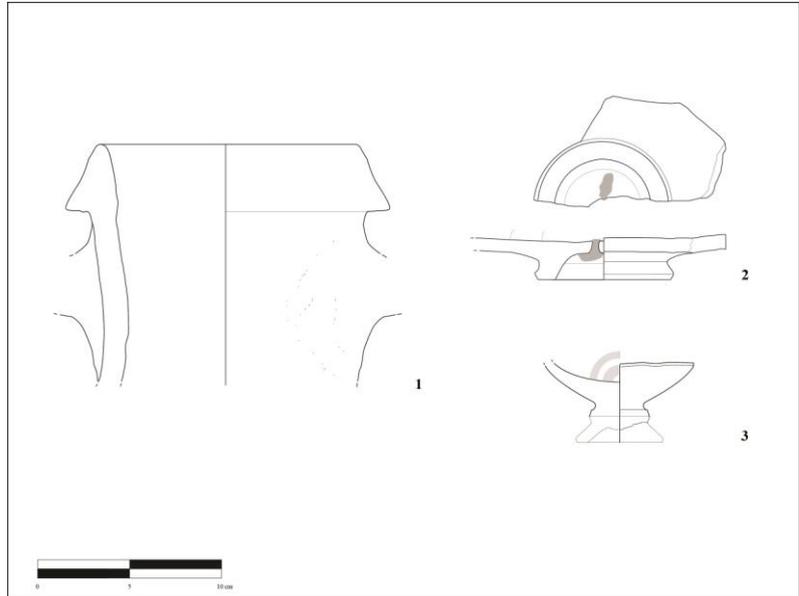


Plate VI.

Appendix II. The Coins from VPP 2017 Trenches II S and A (table 3; plate VII)

The 2017 excavations yielded a small number of coins, seven in total, all of copper alloy. Table 3 presents them in chronological order (i.e. by phase). The coins range in date from late 4th c. BCE or first quarter of

⁷⁴ Per l'esemplare di Taranto, cfr. HEMPEL 2001: 144, Type 700/1; per l'esemplare di Valesio, cfr. YNTEMA 2005: 92, no. 61a.

the 3rd c. BCE to the early 1st c. BCE, and correspond well with what is already known about coinage in Pompeii over that period. The limited sample does not allow us to draw any meaningful conclusions about the circulation of money. The finds, however, contribute to better define the chronology of their stratigraphic contexts.

Phase	Trench	SU	Issuing and nominal authority	Dating	Comparisons	No. Cat.	No. SF	No. Inv.
2a	II South	2831	<i>Neapolis</i> - Æ Unit	ca. 317/310–270 BCE	Taliercio Mensitieri 1986: Group IIb, nos. 1-15, pll. XI-XII; Rutter <i>et al.</i> 2001: 71, no. 583, pl. 10	3	#24	90441
			<i>Ager vesuvianus</i> - Æ Unit (Unidentified Campanian workshop/local imitation, see Pardini 2017: 172-183)	ca. 130/120–80/70 BCE	Stannard 2013: 151, TC-3 and p. 154, fig. 10; cfr. Hobbs 2013: 135-140, pll. 5-7	4	#25	90442
	A	10026	<i>Neapolis</i> - Æ Unit	ca. 317/310–270 BCE	Taliercio Mensitieri 1986: Group IIb, nos. 1-15, pls XI-XII; Rutter <i>et al.</i> 2001: 71, no. 583, pl. 10	2	#19	90443
			Roma, Republican - Æ As	151 BCE	Crawford 1974: 249, no. 205/2, pl. XXXIII.5	5	#49	90444
			Roma, Republican - Æ As, halved	2nd c. BCE	/	7	#52	90445
			<i>Massalia</i> - Æ Unit	150–100 BCE	Feugère-Py 2011: 124, PBM-40-3/4	1	#55	90446
2b	II South	2805	Roma, Republican - Æ Quadrans	late 3rd c.–mid-2nd c. BCE	/	6	#11	90440

Table 3. VPP 2017, Trenches II S and A. Coins. The inventory numbers in the last column have been attributed by the Parco Archeologico di Pompei (photographs by G. Pardini).

Almost all of the specimens, six in total, were retrieved from SUs pertaining to Phase 2a. Two specimens come from the *Neapolis* mint, and can be assigned to Taliercio Mensitieri's Group IIb (male head/tripod and legend **ΝΕΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ**)⁷⁵. They are datable between 317/310 and 270 BCE (Plate VII, nos. 2 and 3). Another coin can be identified as locally produced (*Ager vesuvianus*? Pompeii?) by the so-called Campanian Atelier, which was active between 130/120 and 80/70 BCE (plate VII, no. 3). The coin corresponds to Type TC-3 (head of Apollo/butting bull and the legend **ΜΑΣΣΑ**) of C. Stannard's classification⁷⁶. The remaining finds from the Phase 2a levels include a small bronze from *Massalia* (head of Apollo/butting bull and the legend **ΜΑΣΣΑΛΙΗΤΩΝ**) dated to 150-100 BCE (plate VII, no. 1), and two asses from Republican Rome (head of the two-faced Janus/ship's prow): one (plate VII, no. 5) can probably be assigned to the 151 BCE emissions by the *gens Cornelia*; the other (plate VII, no. 7), which was intentionally split in half (see below), can be generally dated to the 2nd c. BCE.

⁷⁵ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1986.

⁷⁶ STANNARD 2013: 151.

The contexts of Phase 2b have yielded a single coin, an anonymous *quadrans* (head of Hercules/ship's prow) from Republican Rome, to be dated between the late 3rd and the first half of the 2nd c. BCE. (plate VII, no. 6).

Most of the items in our sample were commonly used as small change in Pompeii between the 2nd and the 1st c. BCE. They continued to circulate to some extent even into the early Imperial period, as confirmed by finds from other sectors of the town⁷⁷. As is well known, Pompeii never minted its own coins, so with the growth of its urban economy and trade activity there came the need for the Pompeians to import bronze coins issued elsewhere⁷⁸. The phenomenon began sometime between the late 4th and the early 3rd c. BCE, and reached its peak by the 2nd c. BCE, matching Pompeii's urban, political, and economic evolution. In the late Samnite period, money came to play a major role in the town's craft and commerce economy, and was fully dependent on the agricultural exploitation of the Pompeian suburb.

The specimens from *Neapolis* and the small bronze from *Massalia* can be categorized as Greek money, which seems to have been used quite regularly in Pompeii. Local emissions from other Campanian towns (*Neapolis*, *Nuceria Alfaterna*, etc.) are often found, but a great number of small bronze coins was imported especially from *Ybshm/Ebusus* and *Massalia*. These provided the prototypes that were imitated widely by the Campanian Atelier (whose place of production remains unknown), so the one specimen attested in our sample should be included in the same category. Many of the "foreign" emissions used in Pompeii owed their value to their dimensional features — size and weight — which facilitated their use as small change in everyday transactions. The frequent discovery of foreign currency in houses and shops demonstrates that this was a regular component of the urban money exchange circuit, and not just a sign of the circulation of people and commodities.

The occurrence of fractional Roman Republican asses is ubiquitous in Pompeii⁷⁹, but their chronology has long been debated. The early studies by L. Cesano⁸⁰ and Th. Buttrey⁸¹ still provide the best overviews of the problem, though they reached different conclusions. Cesano relates the diffusion of the intentionally halved coins to the scarcity of small change in the mid-1st c. BCE, during the Sullan age, when the Roman mint stopped producing bronze issues. He interprets their wide geographical spread as the result of direct Roman involvement⁸². Buttrey, on the other hand, argues for a much later date, identifying two distinct phases, respectively, from 20 BCE onward and in the thirties of the 1st c. CE⁸³. In Pompeii, however, the phenomenon seems to begin in the Pre-Roman period. Based on the recent evidence from the Anglo-American Project in Pompeii, halved asses are found occasionally in contexts immediately predating the Sullan age; their circulation peaked in the second half of the 1st c. BCE and continued throughout the early Imperial period until 79 CE⁸⁴. The find from the Sanctuary of Venus seems consistent with this higher dating, since it is associated with materials not later than the early 1st c. BCE.

⁷⁷ See, for example, HOBBS 2013: *passim* and PARDINI 2017: *passim*.

⁷⁸ These imports include local, regional and extra-regional emissions from the Italian peninsula, as well as emissions defined as "foreign" or "city coins" (BREGLIA 1950: 45; STAZIO 1955: 35; POZZI PAOLINI 1975: 300; GIOVE 2001: 81) from a range of Mediterranean sites (see PARDINI 2017: 136, fig. 3).

⁷⁹ 33 fractional specimens come from *Regio VIII,7,1-15* (Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia (PARPPS): PARDINI 2017: 165-166), and other 108 are from *Insula 1 of Regio VI* (Anglo-American Project in Pompeii (AAPP): HOBBS 2013: 57); fractional coins have also been found in sondages made by the University of Perugia (see RANUCCI 2008: 159-160); most recently, see VITALE 2012: 139-140. The phenomenon is known more broadly in the Mediterranean: see PARDINI 2017: 165, note 200, with earlier bibliography.

⁸⁰ CESANO 1915.

⁸¹ BUTTREY 1972.

⁸² CESANO 1915: 36.

⁸³ BUTTREY 1972: 38; SAUER 1999: 155 accepts the later date, but he argues for a single phase from the late 1st c. BCE to the early 1st c. CE, on the basis of finds from Bourbonne-les-Bains.

⁸⁴ HOBBS 2013: 57-58 and 92. Halved coins apparently were still in circulation at the time of the eruption, as confirmed by the discovery of a halved *sestertius* of the Imperial period (issued by an undetermined authority) found on the counter of the *thermopolium* of Asellina (IX,11,2,2): TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 2005: 108-110 and 300-302; STEFANI, VITALE 2005: 126. See also the finds from the *thermopolium* of Vetutius Placidus (I,8,8): CASTIELLO, OLIVIERO 1997: 200 and 203. On fractional coinage in the Republican period, see MARTIN 2017, with updated bibliography.

CATALOGUE

Greek coins

Massalia, Æ unit, 150-100 BCE

obv. Head of Apollo, laureate, r.

rev. Bull butting r., above [ΜΑΣ]ΣΑ, below exergue line [ΛΙΗ]ΤΩΝ

FEUGÈRE, PY 2011: 124, PBM-40-3/4

1. Æ, 1,71 g, 13 mm, 105°⁸⁵
VPP 2017, SU 10032, s.f. no. 55, inv. no. 90446

Neapolis, Æ unit, ca. 317/310-270 BCE

obv. Male head l.

rev. Tripod, ΝΕΟΠΟ-ΛΙΤΩΝ

TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1986: Group IIb, nos. 1-15, pls. XI-XII; RUTTER *et al.* 2001: 71, no. 583, pl. 10

2. Æ, 2,44 g, 15 mm, 190°
VPP 2017, SU 10026, s.f. no. 19, inv. no. 90443
3. Æ, 1,87 g, 14,6 mm, 200°
VPP 2017, SU 2831, s.f. no. 24, inv. no. 90441

'*Campanian Atelier*', Æ unit, ca. 130/120-80/70 BCE

obv. Head of Apollo, laureate, r.

rev. Bull butting r., above [..]ΑΣ

STANNARD 2013: 151, TC-3 and 154, fig. 10; cfr. HOBBS 2013: 135-140, pls. 5-7

4. Æ; 1,41 g, 12,2 mm, 95°
VPP 2017, SU 2831, s.f. no. 25, inv. no. 90442

Roman Republican coins

Roma, *gens Cornelia*, Æ as, 151 BCE

obv. Janus head, above I

rev. Ship prow r., above [P•SVL]A, below ROMA

CRAWFORD 1974: 249, no. 205/2, pl. XXXIII.5

5. Æ; 25,65 g, 31,2 mm, 170°
VPP 2017, SU 10030, s.f. no. 49, inv. no. 90444

Roma, Æ quadrans, late 3rd ca.–mid-2nd ca. BCE

obv. Head of Hercules r., behind •[•]

rev. Ship prow r., above [R]OMA, below •••

6. Æ; 11,26 g, 25,1 mm, 110°
VPP 2017, SU 2805, s.f. no. 11, inv. no. 90440

Roma, Æ as, halved (1/2)

obv. Janus head

⁸⁵ Weight, diameter and die axis (grades).

rev. Ship prow r.

7. Æ; 10,01 g, 29,6 mm, --
VPP 2017, SU 10030, s.f. no. 52, inv. no. 90445

[G.P.]



Plate VII.

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