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Three Generations of Goethes at Herculaneum and Pompeii

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“The früh drei Uhr stahl ich mich aus Karlsbad, weil man mich sonst nicht fortgelassen hätte”.
Johann Wolfgang (von) Goethe, *Italienische Reise* ¹

Among the many travel books of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we possess the documents of three subsequent generations of one family, the Goethes: father, son and grandson. In these books one can observe the development of the genre, from dry descriptive recordings towards personal and varied approaches towards the towns and countries visited. In this essay I concentrate on the archaeological discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii, important goals for tourists going to Naples.

Although several members of subsequent generations of one and the same family went to the south of Italy, we rarely possess documents from one family encompassing the developments of travel and the travelogue over as long a period as the hundred years covered by three generations of the Goethe family. Johann Caspar Goethe (1710-1782), Johann Wolfgang (von) Goethe (1749-1832) and August von Goethe (1789-1830) are fascinating exceptions.² Apart from the paramount influence of Johann Wolfgang’s travel book in the nineteenth century, the three Goethes are interesting in their own right. Although they have a lot in common, they also differ considerably. All three wrote letters and diaries during their trips and did not aim to publish these texts. Only Johann Wolfgang would be read – and was read – during his own lifetime, albeit after 1817 and 1829 only. The travel notes by his father Johann Caspar and his son August were not published until the twentieth century. The Goethes admired Italy in their own way and belong, in that sense, to the mainstream of travelers. In contrast to the many young British and German travelers of the eighteenth century, the three Goethes were no longer young students or recent university graduates, but already more or less involved in society. Johann Caspar was thirty, Johann Wolfgang was thirty-eight, and August was forty years old, when they made their Tours of Italy. Johann Caspar still traveled in the tradition of the German ‘Kavalierstour’ (see note 7), after the completion of his studies of law, and tried to learn from his visit as much as possible about Italy, both ancient and modern. He looked at Italy’s society with the mentality of a well-bred Lutheran from the north. For his son and grandson the trips were also escapes in the psychological sense.

The itinerary chosen by the three Goethes was traditional and covered many identical stretches and towns. In 1740 Johann Caspar crossed the Alps through Austria, visited Venice, then traveled to Bologna and Rome, the most important destinations of his trip. After a detour through Rimini, Ancona and Loreto, he continued through Latium down to Naples. From Rome, the way back went over Florence, Venice, and Milan; Johann

² Cf. Andreas Beyer & Gabriele Radecke in Goethe, *Reise nach Süden*, 278-283. I am indebted to prof. John R. Clarke (University of Texas at Austin) for reading and improving this text.
Caspar finished his tour in Turin and Genoa. The first part of Johann Wolfgang’s voyage in 1787-1788 was identical. After Bologna he passed through Florence and Assisi before reaching Rome, where he stayed several months. In Naples, Johann Wolfgang – and that was rather exceptional in his days – decided to make a tour to Sicily. Since he crossed the Tyrrenian Sea by ship to reach Palermo, he did not go through Calabria. Back in Rome, he had a second long stay, before returning to Weimar via Siena, Florence, Bologna, Milan, Como, Switzerland, up to Constance. After crossing the Alps in Austria, August started his 1830 travel in Milan, went to Venice, and then visited Genoa, La Spezia, and Florence. From Leghorn he took a ship to Naples, and arrived in Rome by coach through the Pontine Marshes. Here his death abruptly ended his Italian experience.

All three Goethes were continuously accompanied during their trips. Whereas Johann Caspar never alludes to his company or his servant, Johann Wolfgang often speaks about his (temporary) companions, mostly German artists living in Italy or making a trip like him. August could rely on a network of acquaintances of his father in most of the towns he visited, from bankers to diplomats and artists. Strikingly, all three Goethes barely came into direct contact with local people, unless these men and women were providing services as hosts of hotels and restaurants, coach drivers, and guides. As in other travelogues, the observations on the local way of living must be taken with a grain of salt, since they were made from a distance, and hardly ever based on personal experiences.3

I: Johann Caspar
Johann Caspar’s trip to Italy took eight months, but formed part of an extended tour of two years, with stays in Regensburg, Vienna, Paris and Strasbourg.4 Italy was his favorite country, with Naples as the most beloved town. Johann Caspar purposefully wrote his text in Italian, in order to master this language as a proof of ‘Bildung’. In this way he could also demonstrate the utility of the long tour that should not be considered as a pleasure trip. He worked until 1764 on the manuscript, but had no intentions to publish it.5 His son, Johann Wolfgang, received the text in 1794, after the death of his mother. Apparently he never had the intention to work out these notes. Johann Caspar paid exceedingly much attention to inscriptions of all ages and sorts; texts were copied meticulously and compared with previous collections (such as new text and errors emended).6 The collection of numerous facts showed a learned form of curiosity, the wish to discover novelties, especially a new country and its characteristics.7 As a consequence of his Lutheran point of view, Italy and the Italian Catholics were often described negatively, and these remarks belong to the most personal parts of his book. The church, according to Johann Caspar, had hardly developed

3 See, e.g., the long letter of 28 May 1787 in Goethe, Italienische Reise, 332-338 on the Neapolitan mob.
4 See Albert Meier in Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 487-499.
5 The official title was Viaggio per l’Italia fatto nel anno MDCCXL. ed in XLII. Lettere descritto da J. C. G. (Goethe, Viaggio; see also Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 5, facsimile of frontispice). In the following I quote from the German edition.
6 Goethe, Viaggio: inscriptions collected in volume II; Goethe, Reise durch Italien: most inscriptions omitted.
7 Meier, in Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 490, quotes the definition of ‘Reisen’ in Zedler’s Universallexikon (1742): ‘Das gemeine Absehen bey Reisen soll gemeiniglich darinnen bestehen, daß man die Welt kennen lerne, das ist, die Völcker in ihren Sitten, Gewohnheiten, Aufführung betrachtet, und alles gehöriger massen zu seinen Nutzen anwendet’.
after paganism and even surpassed it in stupidity. The country had its value for the education Johann Caspar wanted to complete, thinking along the lines of the Enlightenment Encyclopedia. In a way, the things to be known in Italy had to be catalogued, but only when inspected with one’s own eyes. Art was esteemed for the skill of the makers and the proper composition and realism, not for artistic value. He was less interested in Ancient Italy than in the modern country, and for that reason antiquities are only briefly described, which is also true for the ‘barbarous’ Middle Ages. Among his topics of interest were theatre, landscape and nature. He was fascinated, like his son would be later, by the problem of the genesis of the earth and reflected upon the theories of Newton. Therefore, the Vesuvius mattered and was described at length in his letter from Naples, where he sojourned in April 1740. This letter includes reports of visits to Resina and Portici. The Vesuvius was characterized both as an object of study for scientists and as the scourge of the Neapolitans. He remembered the difficult ascent, and drank the local mediocre ‘Lacryma Christi’ wine, but took time to observe phenomena of former eruptions. The view of the volcano was impressive and compensated the efforts to arrive at that height. Johann Caspar descended into the crater, saw a lot of sulfur, and reflected on volcanism, according to him the pushing up of volcanic material from cavities under the mountain. He felt sad about the dangers hidden in this mountain that were menacing this happy fertile country.

As to Herculaneum itself, visited for the sake of novelty, Johann Caspar’s observations are very brief. After a short description of historical eruptions, he concluded that the actual excavations at Resina were revealing Herculaneum. Here, new explorations were being carried out on the spot where finds had emerged before. Goethe had to show his travel permit before he went down. Among the first objects he saw were carbonized pieces of wood and walls of buildings. Some walls were covered with strange paintings in red and green, of ‘ethnic’ gusto, showing gods and monsters. Contemplating these remains, a visitor could dismiss the doubts, bandied about among people far from Naples, about the real existence of Herculaneum. Finds were collected in one room in the palace at Portici, where one could see them, but it was not allowed to make notes. In his travelogue no finds at all are singled out. Goethe optimistically suggested that the King would publish these

8 E.g. letter of 2 March 1740 on inquisition, 4 March on reliquaries, 9 March on citizens in the Papal state, 18 March on the Madonna of Loreto, and all Rome letters. See on the Lutheran background Ingrid Felber in Goethe in Italien 1986, 22-23.
9 See in this paragraph his remarks on the real existence of Herculaneum.
11 Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 202 (in letter XXVII): ‘Es ist wirklich schade, daß dieses so fruchtbare Land mitsamt seiner ganzen Umgebung auf immer diesem Berg ausgeliefert ist ; vielleicht muß man dies aber auch als Segen für dieses Volk ansehen, das in einem irdischen Paradies lebt und gar zu leicht das himmlische vergessen würde, wenn es nicht so nahe bei diesem Höllenschlund lebte’.
12 Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 204-205: ‘[…] man kann jetzt auch schon die Mauern erkennen, die im heidnischen und phantastischen Geschmack in den beiden Farben Aschgrau und Rot auf ungeschickte Weise bemalt sind. Diese Figuren stellen Götzten und scheußliche, abstößende Gestalten dar, wie sie uns gewöhnlich auch jene Bücher im Druck zeigen, die sich mit derlei Dingen aus dem Altertum befassen’.
13 Goethe, Reise durch Italien, 204-205: ‘[…] man kann jetzt auch schon die Mauern erkennen, die im heidnischen und phantastischen Geschmack in den beiden Farben Aschgrau und Rot auf ungeschickte Weise bemalt sind. Diese Figuren stellen Götzten und scheußliche, abstößende Gestalten dar, wie sie uns gewöhnlich auch jene Bücher im Druck zeigen, die sich mit derlei Dingen aus dem Altertum befassen’.
He confessed to his imaginary correspondent in Germany that he had even taken away pieces of painted plaster, burnt wood and stones from the volcano, which would prove his descriptions. Even if one might raise doubts concerning the “impresa chimerica” carried out by the Neapolitans, the world could expect much greater results in the near future. Johann Caspar finished this letter with a description of a dinner with the King and Queen of Naples in Portici, and did not continue on the subject of Herculaneum. The observation of its existence apparently satisfied him.

II: Johann Wolfgang

Johann Wolfgang saw his Italian voyage as an escape from Weimar and the official duties he had to fulfill. This was stated by him in the first sentence of his book: “Early, at three o’clock, I edged away from Carlsbad, since otherwise no one would have let me go”. But he also expressed that he had no problem in returning, if only after this therapeutic tour. Therefore, his journey – and the book on it – was sentimental rather than rational, as his father’s tour and book had been. Being already famous, he traveled incognito as ‘Filippo Miller, Tedesco, Pittore’, but he would shed this alias on various occasions. In the Neapolitan diaries he mentions that he was recognized as the author of Die Leiden des jungen Werthers. His trip lasted eighteen months and included two long stays in Rome, the main goal of his travel. Therefore it is not written in the manner of a travelogue. A couple of letters were published shortly after his return to Weimar, but it was only in 1816-1817 that the first half of the Italienische Reise, including the first sojourn in Rome and the excursions to southern Italy and Sicily, was published as part 2 of his Aus meinem Leben, hence as a sequel to Dichtung und Wahrheit. An edition of the second stay in Rome followed in 1829. The trip back from Rome to Weimar was completely left out, since the author wanted to finish with a farewell to the eternal city like Ovid’s, when this poet had to leave Rome to live in exile in Tomi. The whole work shows an eagerness to absorb all sorts of experiences, knowledge, skills (drawing!), and Johann Wolfgang’s texts demonstrate the intention to analyze and understand the objects he describes, whether natural phenomena, works of art, people or cityscapes. In this way the Italienische Reise strongly differs from all previous eighteenth-century travelogues that mostly recorded the experiences as a matter of learning and reflection with one’s own eyes, as we saw before. It is an important part of Goethe’s autobiographical works as it marked his ‘emancipation’ and his spiritual development concerning the arts and natural history.

Although Johann Wolfgang probably did not read his father’s book before his departure,
Figure 9.1: J.H.W. Tischbein. *Anna Amalia among the ruins of Pompeii* (1788/90). Oil on canvas, Tiefurt Palace, Weimar.
he had been inspired by his father’s stories and by the presence at home in Frankfurt of engravings bought at Rome in 1740, showing vedute of the eternal city.19 Much can be said about this remarkable travelogue, but in this paper I concentrate on Campania. Naples was visited twice: from 25 February through 29 March and, after Sicily, from 17 May through 4 June 1787. His main company was the painter Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751-1829), who lived in Rome since 1783. The area was considered entirely different from other Italian regions seen so far.20 When Johann Wolfgang ascended the Vesuvius for the first time on the 2nd of March, he saw lava of an eruption of two months earlier. Other visits followed to the black, rough, and impressive landscape, about which Goethe tried to note the most important geological observations (6 March). On 20 March, he climbed the volcano for a second time to see the beginning of a new eruption. Again the hell-like landscape (“Höllengipfel”) fascinated him, and he collected samples of volcanic material for his geological collection at home.21

During his first visit to Pompeii, on 11 March, Johann Wolfgang observed how remarkable the town was with its modest dimensions and narrow streets.22 Public buildings and houses were small; the excavations showed traces of plunder by the modern excavators. He compared the disappearance under the ashes with the covering of a mountain village by snow. On his way back to Naples, Goethe considered the modern houses along the road as similar to these antique dwellings. Even the Villa of Diomedes was more of a scale model or dollhouse than a real building: “mehr Modell und Puppenschrank als Gebäude”.23 In general, he had a slightly disappointing impression of ‘mummified’ Pompeii.24 Probably he also reflected while taking a rest on the schola of Mammia, the “Bank am Tor”, where his patron Duchess Anna-Amalia of Saxe-Weimar would sit in 1789 and be portrayed by Tischbein.25

A couple of days later, Goethe recalled his visit and defined Pompeii as a gift to mankind, although much misery had occurred there.26 The town pleased him, despite of his

19 He mentions his father’s influence in book I of Dichtung und Wahrheit. Cf. in Goethe in Italien, 174, cat. 13-14 ; 218, cat. 91 ; Goethe Reise nach Süden, 279.
20 I.a. entries of 25 February (Goethe, Italienische Reise, 184: ‘und nun fanden wir uns wirklich in einem andern Lande’. and 27 February 1787. Cf. the ecstatic description of the last view of the Bay of Naples and Vesuvius, before departure to Sicily on 2 July (Goethe, Italienische Reise, 345-347). Some German readers found Goethe’s enthusiasm regarding the Italian landscape too great: he would prefer it above their German land (see Beebel, ‘Ways of Seeing Italy’).
21 Goethe, Italienische Reise, 645 (comment): Goethe wrote notes to Charlotte von Stein and made a water color of these volcanic activities. Specimens of Goethe’s collection stemming von Vesuvius in Scheurmann and Bongaerts-Schomer, in dieser Hauptstadt, II, 95. On Goethe and Vesuvius, see Von der Thüsen, Schönheit und Schrecken, 96-110. The volcanic activities were not very big in Goethe’s days (cf. Scarth, Vesuvius, 237-238, and his list of eighteenth-century eruptions at p. 231).
22 Goethe, Italienische Reise, 198: ‘Pompeji setzt jedermann wegen seiner Enge und Kleinheit in Verwunderung’. Boyle, Goethe I, 461 mentions Venuti and his wife as Goethe’s hosts, whereas of course Tischbein was with them, as well as Georg Hackert, a brother of the famous painter Philipp Hackert.
23 Goethe, Italienische Reise, 198.
26 Goethe, Italienische Reise, 204: ‘Es ist viel Unheil in der Welt geschehen, aber wenig, das den Nachkommen so viel Freude gemacht hätte. Ich weiß nicht leicht etwas Interessanteres’.
earlier remarks, and together with his friend and companion Tischbein he made sketches. At Herculaneum on 18 March 1787, he lamented about the method of excavating at this site. He wished that German miners would have done it. As late as 1827, when Wilhelm Zahn (1800-1871) pointedly observed that only one eighth had been excavated, Goethe would reply to him that excavations should be done very slowly.

Johann Wolfgang was well received in the museum at Portici, related the numerous finds to the supposedly small houses, and concluded that these objects attested to a merry life of the ancient inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum. He highlighted some bronze objects (a bucket and lampstands), but did not describe the museum.

He tells a curious story about Sir William Hamilton, the English ambassador in Naples. When he visited their residence, Hamilton’s second wife, Emma, made music and the host showed his collection. Goethe saw two candelabra similar to those in Portici and Tischbein urged him not to show any sign of recognition: did Hamilton indeed steal these objects, or were they gifts of the King, as is more plausible? Or were they nothing but modern copies?

All in all, Johann Wolfgang’s writings differ from most travel books in their sections on Pompeii and Herculaneum as he barely describes monuments and objects, but records his feelings at seeing them. This might explain why Goethe barely spoke about mural paintings and omitted mentioning any figural scene. Another reason for his silence would be the transport of the paintings to *Palazzo Caramarico* in 1787-1788, as was suggested by Thorsten Fitzon. In his 1789 essay, *Von Arabesken*, Goethe described wall systems: monochrome panels, adorned with figural scenes and adorned with ‘arabesques’, mostly systems we would call Fourth-Style paintings. As late as the 1820s he would occupy himself intensively with paintings, especially thanks to his contacts with Zahn, a conscientious artist who was copying newly excavated wall paintings for his lavish publication *Die schönsten Oramente und merkwürdigsten Gemälde aus Pompeji, Herculanum und Stabiä*. Goethe reviewed the first part of the *Oramente* and in this review he withdrew his previous negative ideas about the Pompeian paintings. His account is a mix of classicism and romanticism. Another occasion to take the Pompeii theme up again was the preparation of Goethe’s essay on Winckelmann, *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert*.

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29 Goethe, *Italienische Reise*, 331 (27 May 1787): ‘... zwei ganz herrliche Kandelaber von Bronze. Mit einem Wink machte ich Hackerten aufmerksam und lispelte ihm die Frage zu, ob diese nicht ganz denen in Portici ähnlich seien. Er winkte mir dagegen Stillschweigen; sie mochten sich freilich aus den pompejischen Grüften seitwärts hierher verloren haben. Wegen solcher und ähnlicher glücklicher Erwerbnisse mag der Ritter diese verborgenen Schätze nur wohl seinen vertrautesten Freunden sehen lassen’. I was not able to find these candelabra, but there is a bronze tripod from Hamilton’s collection in the British Museum (Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases & Volcanoes*, 111 cat. 3). Goethe had also been at Hamilton’s during his first stay (note on 22 March). Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, 59, pl. XLV: fragment of painting from Herculaneum with volcanic material still sticking on it in Hamilton’s collection. This and specimens of volcanic stone were sent to the British Museum.

30 See quotation in Grumach, *Goethe und die Antike*, 674-675.


As was observed previously, Goethe’s travelogue as a whole is the result of a reworking as late as 1816-1817 and 1829. At the very day of Parilia, the mythical foundation of Rome, viz. 21 April, in 1817, Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen (1780-1856) received the first volume and could not do otherwise than immediately read it in its entirety. For many later authors like Hans Christian Andersen, the *Italienische Reise* was a source of inspiration, which also features in his *Improvisatoren* of 1835. Many considered the work as the best introduction into the evocation and experience of the most beautiful country of the world. Goethe’s quest for spiritual freedom also had a great impact.

III: August
This was even true for Goethe’s son, August, whose life took place more or less in the shadow of his father. He was the only son of Johann Wolfgang and Christiane Vulpius to reach adulthood. He married Ottilie von Pogwisch (1796-1872), who bore him three children, and lived in Weimar, working at the court as Kammerjunker and Kammerherr. Apparently, he sought a separation from his father to improve his spirit and to learn. His trip was, like his father’s, intended to bring about psychological liberation and personal development (‘Selbstbildung’). In April 1830, he went to Italy in the company of his father’s inseparable assistant Johann Peter Eckermann (1792-1854), who returned to Weimar after their visit to Genoa in July. August’s voyage would finish with his death in Rome on October the 27th, 1830. August Kestner, a son of Johann Wolfgang’s former friend Charlotte Buff, buried him in the Cimitero Acattolico next to the Pyramid of Cestius and placed a stela, with a tondo head by Thorvaldsen, and bearing the inscription *Goethe filius patri antevertent obiit anno XL MDCCCXXX.* In Rome, poor August even lost his own name. His death was caused by his unhealthy way of life, specially his excessive drinking, examples of which abound in his travelogue.

Recently, the materials from his journey – diary, letters, some other documents – have been carefully edited, so that the reader can form a good image of his tour. All papers were


34 Cf. Mozzillo, *Frontiera del Grand Tour*, 159-194 on Andersen and Italy. Later he read works like Corinne by Mme de Staël. See also Doris Maurer in *Goethe in Italien* 1986, 154-167.

35 See Beyer and Radecke in *Goethe Reise nach Süden*, 283-284, who quote a poem of August illustrating his wish to escape from the leash, the ‘Gängelbande.’

36 Preceding his father, Goethe the son died in 1830, forty years old’.
collected in special files in Johann Wolfgang’s archive, and the editors suggest that he might have had the plan to publish them.\(^{37}\) After a long stay at La Spezia, handicapped by a broken arm, August sailed from Leghorn to Naples, where he arrived in the evening of September 11, 1830. Zahn took care of him, organising a place to lodge and trips within and outside Naples. The description of this stay, which lasted until October 15, 1830, is rather lengthy in comparison to those of other famous places like Milan, Venice, and Genoa. Within this section, Pompeii takes pride of place. August was happy in Naples, and felt himself relaxed.\(^{38}\) He was lucky to see an active Vesuvius, so that he could climb the mountain and experience a (modest) eruption, an event his father and grandfather had not been able to witness.

One of his first excursions in Naples brought him to the museum, where he recognised many paintings from reproductions at his father’s house, made by Zahn and Ternite, and collected in the previous years by Johann Wolfgang.\(^{39}\) He liked the Herakles and Telephos from the ‘Basilica’ at Herculaneum as well as various still lifes. The next day, August hastened to reach Pompeii, where he was happy to stand on ‘classical’ ground and to see buildings and other objects recognisable from prints at home.\(^{40}\) The Street of Tombs made a noble impression; it was worthy of attentive contemplation. He also saw the Villa of Diomedes, the forum, the theaters, and some houses (Tragic Poet, Sallustius, Meleager, just excavated). To his surprise all these empty monuments did not fill him with sadness: past and present shake hands in this town.\(^{41}\) After a hearty lunch, Zahn and August went to Resina, to see the theater of Herculaneum, and the small part of this town now open to the light of day. The remainder of the day was dedicated to a visit to the Vesuvius, from where they returned to Naples at 0.30. During a second visit to the museum, sculptures, vases, and utensils were studied. Moreover he saw the secret cabinet, about which he intended to report orally upon his return home…\(^{42}\)

August came back to Pompeii in the late afternoon of 24 September 1830. With a permit of the director, Carlo Bonucci, he could see the progress made in the excavation of the House of Meleager, where a painting of the Judgment of Paris had just been uncovered completely. He observed how everything could be done with money, and nothing without it. He slept in a small inn next to the excavation, often used by Zahn, and went again to Pompeii the following morning, but only to ‘rescue’ a small terracotta and to have breakfast in the Building of Eumachia. October 7-10 were entirely dedicated to Pompeii. Bonucci personally welcomed the son of the great Goethe, and showed him new excavations, as if he were a royal guest. On the eighth of October he experienced his moment of fame, when the House of the Faun was dedicated to his father under the name Casa di Goethe,

\(^{37}\) See Beyer & Radecke in Goethe *Reise nach Süden*, 278-289.
\(^{38}\) Goethe *Reise nach Süden*, 170, 176.
\(^{40}\) Goethe *Reise nach Süden*, 164: they pass Portici and Herculaneum, ‘wir aber eilten vor der Hand…’ to reach Pompeii.
\(^{41}\) Goethe *Reise nach Süden*, 165: ‘Es ist wunderbar, bei mir machte alles dieses keinen traurigen Eindruck, es war mir als wenn Vergangenheit und Gegenwart sich freundlich die Hand reichten’.
\(^{42}\) Goethe *Reise nach Süden*, 169: ‘Das Cabinet der Obscönen Gegenstände wurde ebenfalls gesehen, mündl. mehr darüber’.
with the idea of celebrating his visit of 1786. The reminiscence of the ceremony had a longer life than August’s and was even remembered by later travelers such as the Dutch J.H. Beucker Andreae, who was there in 1840-1841. The famous mosaic of Alexander and Darius, however, would not be unearthed in August’s presence, being found on 24 October 1831. Even the statuette of the faun, which gives the house its name, was not yet discovered, and August probably only saw the section of the entrance, with the stucco constructions behind the door, and the beginning of the atrium. After the mosaic was uncovered, Johann Wolfgang was given a drawing and a letter by Zahn; Johann Wolfgang acutely suggested the interpretation of a Battle of Alexander and Darius in which Darius was forced to flee and to leave his soldiers without their general.

August does not describe, he only interprets the monuments he sees. He roams the streets and feels happiness, increased by the pure beauty of the ruins, especially of the paintings and mosaic. He frequently mentions that he felt at home, as though he were in the house of his father, while seeing things familiar to him. The sensation recalls Johann Wolfgang’s confrontation with Rome after seeing it in his father’s engraving at Frankfurt as a young boy. August’s Ruinenfaszination was a common form of loving antiquity in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Conclusions
The three travel accounts succinctly discussed in this article are excellent examples of the different ways Grand Tourists made records of their voyages to Italy, the main goal of their educational excursions. The fact that they correspond to three generations of one family is, as far as I know, unique. Johann Caspar Goethe meticulously writes down every building and object he sees, while comparing it with previous descriptions in travel books. Since Herculaneum was new and not yet included in such guides and travelogues, his impression is more personal than in other instances. Johann Wolfgang is not interested in a recollection of the things he saw, but in a record of his own reactions and feelings after seeing and experiencing Italy and its beauties. He does not refrain from emotional outbursts, even when he is in Pompeii. He first feels deception because of its limited dimensions and then argues that the discovery is lucky for mankind. August, finally, travels for his personal pleasure on a sort of sabbatical leave, but demonstrates his debt to his extraordinary father from whom he has received a cultural education that includes the antiquities of Herculaneum

44 Beucker Andreae, Herinneringen, 210. So also Dumas, Coricola, 420-438 (see infra note #).
45 See Grumach, Goethe und die Antike, 670-672. Interpretation in a letter from 10 March 1832 to Zahn (Grumach, Goethe und die Antike, 671): ‘Nun ist mein Wünsch erfüllt, und es möchte wohl keine Frage seyn, daß jenes Mosaik den Alexander als Überwinder, den Darius in dem Seinigsten überwunden und persönlich zur Flucht hingerissen vorstellt’. See also Andreae, Alexandermosaik, 29-36 and B. Andreae in Scheurmann & Bongaerts-Schomer, In dieser Hauptstadt, I, 135-138, on Goethe and this mosaic. Dumas, Coricola, 420-438 (Chapters XXXIX and XL) gives a hilarious account of various mostly nonsense interpretations.
and Pompeii. He does not copy his father’s travel book, but puts down personal notes that reflect a way of looking and thinking typical of the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

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