

*POMPEI À LA GRECQUE:*  
A ROMAN CITY WITH A GREEK MASK

Eric M. Moormann

'Pompeii you know was a Greek city.'<sup>1</sup>

This contribution discusses the Greek image created of the Campanian cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, destroyed by Vesuvius in AD 79 and discovered in 1738 and 1748 respectively. Not only scholarly studies, but also travel accounts and memoirs, novels and short stories and poetry have introduced the idea of Greek communities, mixed in with Roman society.<sup>2</sup> The question is why this Greek notion emerged: for historical reasons, on the basis of archaeological evidence or as pure fiction?

#### HISTORY

Herculaneum was said to have been founded by Heracles and was therefore considered to be a Greek city (fig. 1). When in the course of time it became clear that it has been more luxurious than Pompeii, writers had an extra reason to suggest a Greek origin and character for it. Pompeii, on the other hand, had a temple with Doric columns in a rather old style on its acropolis, which was regarded as a proof of the Greek roots of the inhabitants of this city (fig. 2). As this cult building was unearthed in the 1760's, more or less in the same time Paestum with its three big Greek temples was discovered, it played a certain role in the debate on the Greekness

---

<sup>1</sup> P.B. Shelley in a letter from 23-24 January 1819 to his friend Thomas Peacock: Jones, F.L., ed. 1964. *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, II. *Shelley in Italy*. Oxford, 70-76, no. 491. See also p. 250-51 (whole quotation)

<sup>2</sup> No complete overview of the literary testimonies on Campania exists. See i.a. Sogliano 1881; Seznec 1949; Dahl 1956; Leppmann 1966/1968 [with many bibliographical errors]; Moormann 2000. A good anthology is presented in Aziza 1992. For an extended bibliography on Pompeian studies and other publications García y García 1998.

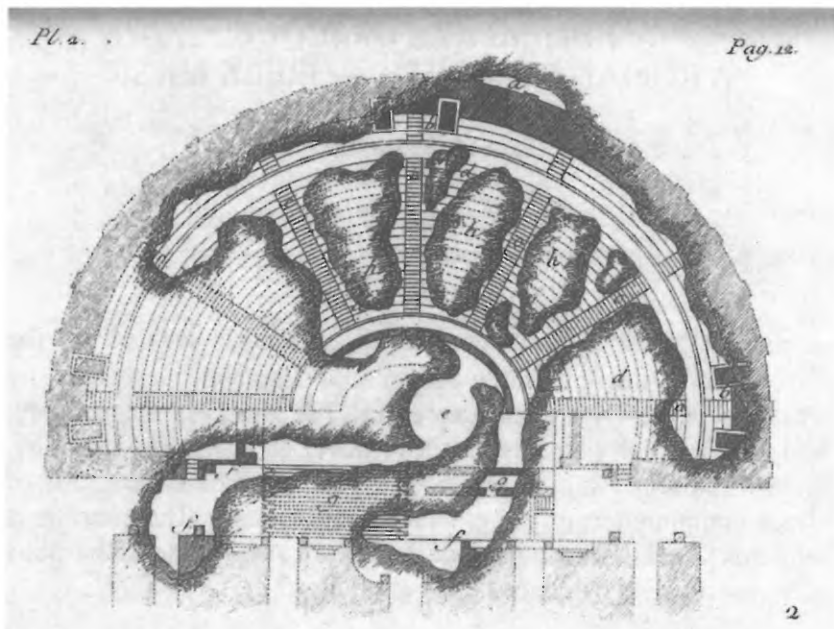


Fig. 1: Plan of the theatre of Herculaneum (after Cochin/Bellicard 1752, pl. 2)

of Pompeii from the first moment.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, serious and quasi-learned etymology tried to interpret the name ‘Pompeii’ as a Greek word – as a matter of fact this remains an obscure topic.<sup>4</sup> Nowadays, we know both Herculaneum and Pompeii as small, average Roman towns in the rather rich and tranquil Italy of the middle of the first century AD. While scholarship in the last decades is more and more focusing on the older periods, the image of the town in AD 79 for many people remains that of a prosperous Greek community.

Especially the oldest writers on Pompeii, in both travel reports and literary evocations, took care of presenting it as Greek.

<sup>3</sup> First illustration in Hamilton, W. 1777. *Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii. Archaeologia, or: Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity* 4: 160-175, esp. 162, pl. VII. See now De Waele, J.A. 2001. *Il tempio dorico a Pompei*. Roma.

<sup>4</sup> The word was often meant to stem from Greek ‘pompe’, interpreted as the cattle of Geryoneus Heracles was wandering with through Italy.

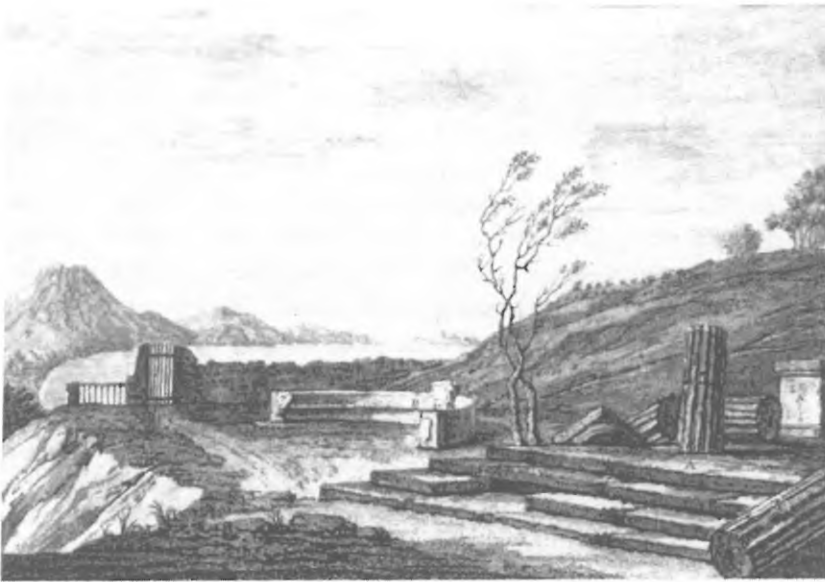


Fig. 2: So-called Doric Temple on the Acropolis of Pompeii (after Hamilton 1777, pl. VII)

#### GUIDE BOOKS AND TRAVEL ACCOUNTS

Marcello De Venuti, in one of the earliest printed accounts of Herculaneum published in 1748 and his colleague Ottavio Antonio Bayardi, in a *Prodromo* to the study of Herculaneum in five volumes, strengthened the point of Greekness.<sup>5</sup> It crossed the debate on the name of the first discovery: was the ruin under Resina Herculaneum or Pompeii? Venuti's ideas were distributed in French, German and English translations and rather frequently quoted in travel accounts. The same is true for a small book by

<sup>5</sup> Venuti, M. De 1748. *Descrizione delle prime scoperte dell'antica città d'Ercolano ritrovata vicino a Portici, villa della Maestà del Re delle Due Sicilie*. Roma, 35: the excavations under Resina are Pompeii, city founded by Herakles. Bayardi, A.O. 1752. *Prodromo delle antichità d'Ercolano*. Napoli, 5 vols.

Charles-Nicolas Cochin and Jean-Charles Bellicard from 1752.<sup>6</sup> This is the first illustrated work on the excavations and it contains a plan of the theatre (fig. 1), not very accurate as they say, because the excavation was not yet completed and it was severely forbidden by the royal authorities to make notes and drawings. The authors make a comparison with the theatre of Marcellus in Rome and the one at Vicenza by Palladio, as was done by Venuti before them (p. 16-18, pls. 3-4). According to the French scholars Heracles founded Herculaneum in 1238 BC – this date stems from the chronology by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I 44, 1) – and Oscans and Greeks lived there together in the earliest times (p. XVIII-XXIV).

The main German author who tried to stress the Greek character of the Vesuvian cities was Johann Joachim Winckelmann with his *Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (Dresden 1762), and *Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (Dresden 1764), both of which were rapidly translated into French and distributed throughout Europe.<sup>7</sup> Winckelmann's student Johann Jacob Volkmann advocated the idea of Greekness of Herculaneum and Pompeii in his highly influential travel guide, translated in various languages, stating that everything in these towns was Greek, notwithstanding the fact that Latin was the spoken language there.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Cochin C.-N. and J.-C. Bellicard 1752. *Observations sur les antiquités d'Herculanum avec Quelques Réflexions sur la Peinture & la Sculpture des Anciens; & une courte description de plusieurs Antiquités des environs de Naples*. Paris. There are two 'séconde[s] édition[s]' from 1755 and 1757, with some differences: number of pages XXXVIII + 104 and XXXVIII + 84 respectively, *cul de lampe* above dedication in 1755 only, other richer ones in 1755; better illustrations in 1755; those in 1757 printed in mirror image. The latter edition, therefore, seems a pirate publication.

<sup>7</sup> See now the modern editions with extensive commentaries by M. Kunze and S.-G. Bruer (Mainz 1997, I-II). Cf. Leppmann 1966, 77-97. The French text of the *Sendschreiben*: *Lettre de M. l'Abbé Winckelmann, Antiquaire de Sa Sainteté, à Monsieur le Comte de Brühl, Chambellain du Roi de Pologne, Electeur de Saxe, sur les Découvertes d'Herculanum*. Dresde/Paris 1764. L' "Avis de l'imprimeur" – Caylus himself? – expresses the hope: "Je crois qu'il [the reader] ne lira pas sans plaisir un Ouvrage, qui contient des détails plus circonstanciés qu'aucuns de ceux dans lesquels on étoit encore entré, & un récit fidele de tout ce qui s'est fait & passé avant que de parvenir à l'importance découverte d'Herculanum, & de plusieurs autres lieux importants des environs. Personne assurément ne les a mieux vûs, ni mieux expliqués que l'Auteur dont je donne l'ouvrage." This text raised much irritation at the Neapolitan court and made Winckelmann *persona non grata* for a couple of years.

<sup>8</sup> Volkmann, J.J. 1777-1778. *Historisch-kritische Nachrichten von Italien, welche eine Beschreibung dieses Landes, der Sitten, Regierungsform, Handlung, des Zustandes der*

Diderot's *Encyclopédie* typifies the cities as places of Venus, the most venerated goddess in the Greek world (Supplément 3, 1777, 349-358 s.v. Herculanium, by C. (quotation on p. 352), after a discussion of bronze phalli found there):<sup>9</sup>

'Au reste, les villes de la Campanie, Capoue & Baies, étoient regardées, plus que tout autre endroit en Italie, comme des lieux de volupté et de license, Vénus étoit spécialement honorée à Herculanium; & l'on trouve les attributs de ce culte obscène sur beaucoup de lampes de bronze, où l'imagination s'est épuisée dans les formes les plus bizarres; mais on ne les a point exposées dans le cabinet de Portici.'

I think that these descriptions form the basis of the image of luxury and debauchery of life at Pompeii and Herculaneum that became popular throughout Europe and was especially cherished in France in the late eighteenth and whole nineteenth century. As late as 1907 Édouard Schuré, for instance, wrote in *La prêtresse d'Isis. Légende de Pompeii* that Pompeii is 'une hétaïre grecque, qui joue de la cithare, qui chante comme les Muses et danse comme les Grâces. Elle sait les voluptés, les lettres et les arts.' In his own words, he still presented the notion of the city of Venus from the *Encyclopédie*.

Henry Swinburne began his Grand Tour<sup>10</sup> in Naples in 1777 and travelled extensively through Calabria and Sicily. In his *Travels in the Two Sicilies in the Years 1778, 1779, and 1780* (London 1783, two vols.; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London 1790, three vols.) he was critical about

---

*Wissenschaften und insonderheit der Werke der Kunst enthalten.* Leipzig 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1770-1771]. On him Richter, W. 1982, Johann Jacob Volkmann – Schüler Winckelmanns und 'Baedeker' der Goethezeit. In: *Pompeji, 79-1979*. Stendal, 126-137; *Goethe in Italien*. Exhibition Catalogue Düsseldorf 1987, passim, cat. no. 26.

<sup>9</sup> *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* 8, 1765, 150-154 s.v. Herculanium (Chevalier de Jaucourt). See furthermore Vol. 13, 1765, 13 s.v. Pompeii (D.J.); Supplément 3, 1777, 349-358 s.v. Herculanium (C.); Supplément 4, 1777, 502 s.v. Pompeii (C.). 'C.' alludes on the exposition of 'obscene' works of art. In the Museo Nazionale at Naples a Gabinetto segreto was installed to contain these items: it was reopened in 2000, see: De Caro, S., ed. 2000. *Il gabinetto segreto del Museo Archeologico Nazionale*. Napoli.

<sup>10</sup> The topic has been studied especially in the United Kingdom. Recent publications: Black, J. 1992. *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century*. London; Chaney, E. 1998. *The Evolution of the Grand Tour*. London/Portland OR; *Grand Tour. The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century - Grand Tour. Il fascino dell'Italia nel XVIII secolo*. Exhibition Catalogue London/Roma 1996-1997. An indispensable work as to tourists from the United Kingdom is Ingamells, J. 1997. *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800*. New Haven/London.

the artistic level of the Herculanean paintings, especially those with architectural elements (1783, II, 102; 1790, III, 151). The following quotation makes clear that Swinburne postulated Pompeii to be a Greek town:

‘It is remarkable that in the representations of porticoes and temples, the style is as barbarous as that of the Gothic ages; the columns are slender to excess, the entablatures heavy and crowded with fantastic ornaments, which I was surprised and shocked to find in a city where the Greek taste in arts ought to have been more religiously adhered to. I saw no landscape in which the artist has discovered any thorough knowledge of perspective.’

The Countess of Blessington gave a vivacious description of her tour in France, Switzerland and Italy from 1822 onwards in *The Idler in Italy* (Paris 1839); she was one of the last English to see Byron during his last stay in Italy, when both were at Milan.<sup>11</sup> She stayed in Naples from 19 July 1823 to January 1826. Her remark on the decorations of the Apollo temple at Pompeii, then called Temple of Venus (p. 277) attests to her Greek taste:

‘For example, in the Temple of Venus, several Grecian entablatures, in tolerable taste, have been barbarously plastered over and painted, transforming them from a pure Grecian to a bad Roman style.’

Heinrich Heine never visited the south of Italy, but, sitting in the amphitheatre at Verona, the poet reflected on the greatness of the past, implicitly alluding to Pompeii:<sup>12</sup>

‘Aber das ist es ja eben; wie der Grieche gross ist durch die Idee der Kunst, der Hebräer durch die Idee eines heiligsten Gottes, so sind die Römer gross durch die Idee ihrer ewigen Roma, gross überall, wo sie in der Begeisterung dieser Idee gefochten, geschrieben und gebaut haben.’

Very negative is the famous ‘headmaster of Rugby’, Dr. Thomas Arnold. In Pompeii, little is worth seeing:<sup>13</sup>

‘... it is a place utterly unpoetical. An Osco-Roman town, with some touches of Greek corruption – a town of the eighth

<sup>11</sup> Nicholson, H. 1923. *Byron. The Last Journey*, Chapter I.

<sup>12</sup> Heine, H. 1828. *Reisebilder. Italien*, here cited after *Werke in einem Band ausgewählt und eingeleitet von Walther Vontin*. Hamburg 1956 (and later prints), 302-303.

<sup>13</sup> Stanley, A.P. 1844. *Life of Thomas Arnold, D.D. Head-Master of Rugby*. London; I quote the edition of London 1904, 743-744.

century of Rome, marked by no single noble recollection, nor having – like the polygonal walls of Cicolano – the marks of a remote antiquity and a pure state of society. There is only the same sort of interest with which one would see the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah, but indeed there is less. One is not authorized to ascribe so solemn a character to the destruction of Pompeii; it is not a peculiar monument of God's judgements, it is the mummy of a man of no worth or dignity – solemn, no doubt, as everything is which brings life and death into such close connexion, but with no proper and peculiar solemnity, like places, rich in their own proper interest, or sharing in the general interest of a remote antiquity, or an uncorrupted state of society.'

Johannes Overbeck wrote an important handbook in the middle of the nineteenth century: *Pompeji in seinen Gebäuden, Alterthümern und Kunstwerken für Kunst- und Alterthumsfreunde dargestellt* (Leipzig 1856; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. in two vols, Leipzig 1866; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Leipzig 1875; 4<sup>th</sup> ed., with August Mau, Leipzig 1884). As to the House of the Tragic Poet – the residence of Glaucus in Bulwer's novel - he says (1856, p. 206) that

'in diesem wenig ausgedehnten Domicil die meisten Spuren reingriechischen Geistes uns entgetreten und bezeugen, dass der Besitzer, tragischer Dichter oder Goldschmidt, Athener oder Pompejaner, ein Mann von Bildung und Geschmack und beiher auch von Wohlhabenheit gewesen ist.'

#### FICTION AND POETRY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce* by Jean Jacques de Barthélemy from 1788 describes the Pausanias-like tour that the young Anacharsis makes through Greece. Anacharsis visits historically important and sacred places, some of which were, at the time of the composition of the book around 1780, still no more than names. The Abbé had to invent a lot of monuments, but could make use of new discoveries in the South of Italy like the Greek temples at Paestum and the Vesuvian cities. When Anacharsis in the fourth

book attends a theatrical performance in Athens,<sup>14</sup> the description of the building is based on that by Cochin and Bellicard (fig. 1) and, therefore, labels a Roman theatre as a Greek one – a mistake no undergraduate student in classics and archaeology of today, I hope, will ever make. Barthélemy had been on the spot in 1755, when he traveled as director of the Royal Coin and tried to collect pieces for his collection. His vivacious letters, directed to the famous antiquarian, the Comte de Caylus, contain many juicy details on the life in the court of Naples, but don not deal extensively with the excavations. He only complains about the slowness of the excavations at Herculaneum.<sup>15</sup>

Saverio Bettinelli (1718-1808) wrote a poetical record of his visit to the area, made in the company of the *abate* Francesco Benaglio, to whom he dedicated the 340 verses, entitled ‘Al Signor Abate Benaglio’. Among the elements is a tour to the area surrounding Naples, literally illuminated by an eruption of Vesuvius (vs. 259-296). He reflects on the destiny of Herculaneum (vs. 297-332):<sup>16</sup>

‘Infelice Ercolan, nido ed albergo  
 de l’arti greche, amica sede un tempo  
 del buon sangue roman, poi lutto acerbo  
 de’ tuoi vicini, e preda iniqua al foco  
 non pur, ma al tempo e a l’oblio forse eterno.  
 Se non che omai fuor de le tue ruine,  
 benché lacera, ancor levi la fronte

<sup>14</sup> Chapter III gives a number of spectators of 30.000, calculated for Herculaneum as well. Cf. his own note on the ‘Théâtre & Bacchus’ at the end of the book. Cf. Seznec 1949; Praz 1979, 39.

<sup>15</sup> Sérieys, A., ed. 1801. *Voyage en Italie de M. l’Abbé Barthelemy de l’Académie Française, de celle des inscriptions et belles-lettres, et auteur du voyage d’Anacharsis, imprimé sur ses lettres originales écrites au comte de Caylus*. Paris, esp. 120 letter XX, 7-4-1756. Barthélemy’s novel received a great fortune. As to our topic I only mention *Voyage d’Antenor en Grèce et en Asie, avec des Notions sur l’Égypte: manuscrit grec trouvé à Herculanium, Traduit par E.F. Lantier*. Paris, 1801, 4 vols. In vol. I, Avant-Propos, p. I, the ‘translator’ describes his visit to Herculaneum, “cette habitation des Gnomes”. He discovers in the museum at Portici among the papyri (p. II) a text of a Voyage, not considered of relevance by the curator, abate Spalatini, who has no time to work on an unknown writer. Lantier ‘copies’ the text and takes it with him to Paris. Of course the discoveries in Egypt were another source of inspiration. Other ‘manuscripts’ found at Pompeii or Herculaneum are the poem by Maizony and the novella by Baudelaire. (resp. p. 254-55 and 252)

<sup>16</sup> Bettinelli, S. 1755. *Versi sciolti*, Milano; now in Bonora, E., ed. 1969. *Illuministi italiani*, II. *Opere di Francesco Algarotti e Saverio Bettinelli*. Milano/Napoli, 616-627, quotation on p. 626-627. Mentioned in Sogliano 1881, 26 only.



a riveder dopo tant'anni il giorno.  
 Sì vedi e senti, che la man regale  
 vincitrice del tempo e de l'obblio  
 stende a sgombrar da lo squallor vetusto  
 tua perdita beltà Tito novello;  
 e già nove per lui sorgon di terra  
 eccelse moli a te, sorgon già novi  
 a te marmorei atri superbi e logge,  
 ove tu possa al rivedere in pompa  
 più vaga posti i simulacri vivi,  
 i tuoi quadri spiranti, ed ogni culto  
 de' sacri templi tuoi, de' tuoi teatri,  
 dimenticar tutti i passati danni.  
 Che se a le mense usate ancor ti piaccia  
 forse seder tra l'urne note e i cibi,  
 se veder ami l'ornamento antico  
 de' fini intagli in bronzo sculti o in marmo,  
 e i sacri vasi, e gli stromenti, e quanti  
 pesi o misure, e quante pietre o gemme  
 in feste, in giochi ed in altri usi mille  
 de l'umane vicende util ti furo;  
 t'allegra pur, che a' tuoi desir converse  
 corron l'arti novelle, e al regio cenno  
 s'affatica ogni man, studia ogn'ingegno,  
 e scritti ed opre Italia tutta aduna,  
 perché più bella al prisco onor renduta  
 tu cresca a lei l'avita fama, e a noi  
 per te ritorni in questa età cadente  
 un nuovo a rifiorire ordin di tempi.'

The poet, well-known in his time but afterwards rapidly forgotten, belongs to the relatively few Italians to write on the Campanian cities, and he is the only one to lay the accent on their Greekness. More famous, of course, are the political allusions to his own time in Leopardi's poem 'La ginestra' and in the long epic work *Paralipomeni della Batracomiomachia* where the desolate state of affairs in the kingdom of Naples is attacked (see Moormann 2000, 16 with bibliography). But these texts and others are beyond the scope of this essay.

A Winckelmann-like vein was expressed by Friedrich Schiller in the poem 'Pompeji und Herkulanum' (1797). He had borrowed Volkmann from Goethe and, between the lines, the reader recognises buildings and objects. I only quote the first lines:<sup>17</sup>

‘Welches Wunder begiebt sich? Wir flehten um trinkbare  
Quellen, Erde! dich an und was sendet dein Schoos uns herauf?  
Lebt es im Abgrund auch? Wohnt unter der Lava verborgen  
Noch ein neues Geschlecht? Kehrt das entflohne zurück?  
Griechen! Römer! O kommet und seht, das alte Pompeji.’

#### ARCHAEOLOGY AND FICTION AS TWINS

Most writers of the nineteenth century strictly followed the archaeological evidence (cf. Moormann 2000, esp. 18). Some of them maintained the young tradition of Greekness.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the French architect François Mazois worked some 12 years in Pompeii and made numerous very good illustrations for a masterwork on the archaeological remains of that town. He considered Pompeii's architecture to be Greek and a large section in his *Les ruines de Pompéi* on the Temple of Isis was dedicated to proving that Orpheus imported the cult of this goddess into Greece and that she thus influenced the Greek world.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> I quote *Schillers Werke. Nationalausgabe, I. Gedichte in der Reihenfolge ihres Erscheinens*. Weimar 1943, 276-277. A comment is to be found in G. Kurscheidt and N. Oellers, eds. 1991. *Schillers Werke. Nationalausgabe, Zweiter Band, Teil IIA*. Weimar 1991, 304-307. On this poem Leppmann 1966, 163 ("mattes Gedicht"); Zintsen 1998, 92, 218-222. It was frequently quoted in German travel accounts of the nineteenth century.

<sup>18</sup> Mazois, F. 1824. *Les ruines de Pompéi*, I. Paris, p. 21; idem, vol. IV. Paris 1838 (text by M. Barré), pp. 24-33, pl. VII-XI. On room N, the sacarium, he observes (p. 28): "Il serait trop long de rappeler ici toutes les pieuses cérémonies et aussi toutes les fraudes pieuses auxquelles cet appartement et la salle voisine devaient servir de théâtre: les épreuves physiques et morales des nouveaux initiés, les prières, les exhortations, les chants et les marches solennelles des initiateurs. Il serait d'ailleurs difficile de décrire exactement ces célèbres mystères d'Isis qui furent apportés par Orphée dans la Grèce, sous le nom de mystères éleusiens, et auxquels Atticus et Auguste furent admis comme adeptes. Aucun écrivain ancien ou moderne n'a pu encore en pénétrer le secret, et Apulée n'en a parlé lui-même que d'une manière énigmatique." Louis Barré would be the author of a eight-volumes enterprise with Henri Roux: *Herculanum et Pompéi*. Paris 1839-1840 (reprints and translations are listed in García y García 1998, nos. 1310-1313). On a popular work by Mazois see *infra*.

Another element of Greekness is constituted by texts, some of them written in Greek: inscriptions, graffiti and, especially, the Greek papyri found in a rich suburban villa. The latter are rather dull treatises by second-rate philosophers, not new Plato's or Aristoteles. The inscriptions, on the other hand, give names of inhabitants and for us here it is worth noticing that one of the first to be found, on a rather lavishly decorated tomb in Pompeii, was that of the freedmen Arrius Diomedes and his wife Arria. The Greek name of the husband let people believe that the couple was Greek. The large and rich suburban villa, opposite the tomb, is hitherto known as Villa of Diomedes. The find of some eighteen skeletons inside it and of two in the garden raised the suspicion that these belonged to victims within the family. One of the two men found in the garden had a large key, the other a jewellery box: weren't they Diomedes and a slave escaping the disaster and abandoning the others? Or were they going out to look for aid? Among the corpses in one of the cellars one touched the imagination: the impression of a female breast and fine linen clothing could be recognised, hence, she must be the matrona or the (of course) beautiful daughter. This interpretation features in literature, for instance in Bulwer's *The Last Days of Pompeii* and Gautier's *Arria Marcella*.<sup>19</sup>

Pompeii is generally presented as a merry community, favoured by the excellent climate. The houses, with their paintings and mosaics and furniture, the temples and public buildings, express a high standard of living. The 'embarrassment of richness' – to quote Simon Schama's title of his book on the Dutch Golden Age – weakens the morality of the inhabitants and lets them fall into decadency. While in the theatres near the Temple of Isis Greek dramas (esp. Aeschylus) and Roman plays by Plautus were performed, the amphitheatre was red of the blood that flowed during cruel plays. Positive aspects are Greek, negative points are ascribed to Rome or, still worse, to foreigners like Egyptians. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether they speak Latin or Greek. We observe a great distance between the sophisticated upper class, having Greek names, and *hoi polloi*, the men in the street who are labelled as Romans. The magistrates,

---

<sup>19</sup> See Zintsen 1998, 248-254; Moormann 2000, 12-15. The texts are reprinted in Aziza 1992, 39-432 (Bulwer: French translation by H. Lucas) and 500-527 (Gautier).

however, again are Roman, but do not play an important part in nineteenth century fiction.

When they did not tend to luxury, the Greeks were apparently willing to admit the importance of the new Christian faith. In a couple of books Greek persons are converted to Christianity, abandoning the old religion of their fathers.

In choosing Greek characters the authors apparently are not aware of the low social status of freedmen and other non-Romans in the hierarchically rigid Roman town. The role of Roman citizens remains either underestimated or is limited to public functions. Madame Bertheroy even uses Greek names for real Romans in her *La danseuse de Pompéi* (Paris 1899 = Aziza 1992, 613-724): the son of Aulus Vettius is called Hyacinthus, which is impossible in Roman circles. The priest of Apollo bears the name Chrestus and appears to be very similar to a Christian clergyman.

In the style of Winckelmann Jean Paul sketches the region's romantic spell in *Titan*.<sup>20</sup>

'Immer dieselbe grosse, durch diess erhabene Land ziehende epische griechische Verschmelzung des Ungeheuern mit dem Heitern, der Natur mit den Menschen, der Ewigkeit mit der Minute. - Landhäuser und eine lachende Ebene gegenüber der ewigen Todesfackel - zwischen alten heiligen Tempelsäulen geht ein lustiger Tanz, der gemeine Monch und der Fischer - die Gluth-Blöcke des Bergs thürmen sich als Schutzwehr und Weingärten, und unter dem lebendigen Portici wohnt das hohle todtte Herkulanum - im Meer sind Lavaklippen gewachsen, und in die Blumen schwarze Sturmbocken geworfen.'

For Percy Bysshe Shelley it was the atmosphere that made Pompeii a Greek city (see note 1, 73-74, 75):

'Every now & then we heard the subterranean thunder of Vesuvius; its dist and deep peals seemed to shake the very air & light of day which interpenetrated our frames with the sullen & tremendous sound. This scene was what the Greeks behold. (Pompeii you know was a Greek city.) They lived in harmony with nature, & the interstices of their incomparable columns

---

<sup>20</sup>Jean Paul [Richter]. *Werke*, 3. Band. München 1961, 645, '114. Zykel' in '29. Jobelperiode'. Cfr. Jean Paul. *Sämtliche Werke*, Erste Abteilung, Band 8-9, *Titan*. Weimar 1933, Band 9, 280-281. Leppmann (1966, 163) mentions Jean Paul shortly but without precise indications.

were portals as it were to admit the spirit of beauty, which animates this glorious universe to visit those whom it inspired. If such is Pompeii, what was Athens? What scene was exhibited from its Acropolis? (...) O, but for that series of wretched wars which terminated in the Roman conquest of the world, but for the Christian religion which put a finishing stroke to the antient system; but for those changes which conducted Athens to its ruin, to what an eminence might not humanity have arrived!

#### THE NOVELISTS

Of course, novelists in general do not say from where their information is taken. As far as I can see, most of those writing on Pompeii and Herculaneum were on the spot and could have collected personal impressions. Edward Bulwer-Lytton stated that he interrupted the work on *Rienzi* in order to write *The last days of Pompeii* (London 1834) after having seen a painting 'The Eruption of Vesuvius' by K. Briullov at Milan (now in S. Petersburg, Hermitage: García y García 1998, 2125) and having visited Pompeii and Herculaneum, all in 1833. He pointed to Sir William Gell as both a personal and written guide and one observes great accuracy in his use of archaeological evidence. New finds of a more or less spectacular nature were more likely to be introduced in the framework of a story. So, the so-called House of the Tragic Poet was the residence of Glaucus and his beloved Ione was living in the House of the Small Fountain nearby. We also find old friends like the Villa of Diomedes and the temple of Isis.<sup>21</sup>

The love story of the Greek Glaucus and Ione – who will survive the catastrophe and retell their adventures in Athens – is hindered by jealous Arbaces, the Egyptian priest, who even kills Ione's brother Apaecides, when this young man wants to abandon him. The blind girl slave Nydia is an excellent invention: as Pompeii was not yet

---

<sup>21</sup> Leppmann (1966, 111) suggests that Bulwer's interest arose after a meeting with the excavator Carlo Bonucci. On Bulwer exists a vast literature. In respect to our topic I mention Leppmann 1966, 171-181; Riikonen 1978, 64-67; Campbell, J.L. 1986, *Edward Bulwer-Lytton*, Boston, esp. 72-76; Ernst, W. 1992. *Historismus im Verzug. Museale Antike(n)rezeption im britischen Neoklassizismus (und jenseits)*. Hagen 1992, 82-90; Zintsen 1998, 203-208, 228-233; Moormann 2000, 7, 9.

extensively excavated – houses here and there, a few streets, the forum, all scattered over the fields – she could guide the protagonists and the reader without seeing and, thus, without having to tell what was passing on the road (Book I, chapter VII): ‘Every street, every turning in the more frequented parts was familiar to her.’ The protagonists in Bulwer’s novel are not Greek, notwithstanding their Greek character: they are upper class English landlords, living in leisure and looking down on hard working Romans like the *aedile* Pansa and the nouveau-riche Diomedes. These gentlemen praise flogging of schoolboys (seen in a Pompeian painting), they like politics as a voluntary duty to the community and sports as an excellent means to train men. The Romans turn out to be more or less ordinary inhabitants of nowadays Naples. Egypt is the symbol of the decadence and the Christians will have the future.

For a long time it was thought that Charles Baudelaire was the author of *Le jeune enchanteur. Histoire tirée d'un palimpseste d'Herculanum*, published in 1846.<sup>22</sup> However, a certain father Croly had already published in 1836 the short story *The Young Enchanter - From a Papyrus of Herculanum*. We read one of those numerous manuscripts found and lost again after having been translated. At the forum of Pompeii the Roman officer Sempronius is speaking with the Greek Epicurean philosopher Callias. Sempronius loves a priestess of Artemis at Ephesos, whereas he has to marry his niece Euphrosyne. After a long and complicated story inspired by the Greek novelist Achilles Tatius, Euphrosyne and the priestess end up being the same person, so there is a happy ending. Interestingly, the author opposes three regions as examples of emotions: Asia Minor and Greece are symbol of vehemence and emotion, Campania is calmness, which is shown in a comparison of the seas (p. 543):

‘Ce n’était pas la mer languissante qui caresse les rives de la Campanie; c’était la mer agitée et clapoteuse de la Grèce.’

---

<sup>22</sup> The ‘discovery’ of the real author was made as late as 1950 by W.T. Bandy (*Mercur de France*, 1 fevrier 1950, but became not noticed everywhere (García y García 1998, no. 1400 ascribes the text to Baudelaire). See Baudelaire, C. 1975. *Oeuvres complètes*, I. Paris (Pléiade series), 1405-1407 (note by Claude Pichois). I didn’t see the original text in *The Forget me not; A Christmas, New Year’s, and Birthday Present for MDCCCXXXVI*, edited by Frederic Shoberl. Because of this attribution the story lacks in Baudelaire, C. 1980. *Oeuvres complètes*. Paris (Bouquins series, edited by M. Jamet, where it is mentioned at p. XIX).

The novella *Gradiva. Ein pompejanisches Phantasiestück* by Wilhelm Jensen (Dresden 1903 = Aziza 1992, 547-611, French translation by R. Olivier) became famous thanks to Freud's analysis.<sup>23</sup> Norbert Hanold travels to the south looking for a phantom lover, called Gradiva. She turns out to be a girl from his neighbourhood, Zoe Bertgang. Not only is the girl's name Zoe, but the evocations of Greek poets and mythological figures – the House of Meleager, where he meets her, could be either that of the Hellenistic poet of that name or the mythological hunter himself – lead to reflections on time and the characters' personal past. The story is full of Greek references and clearly stands in Winckelmann's tradition of seeing in Pompeii and Herculaneum Greek art in a Roman 'remake'.

Entirely different is an erotically loaded novel by Léon Daudet, *Les bacchantes, roman contemporain* (Paris 1931). It deals with the paintings in the then recently excavated so-called Villa of the Mysteries. The protagonists are going to re-enact a Dionysian Orgy in the room with the interesting frieze, dated according to them to the 5th century BC, viz. the *akme* of the Athenian cult for the god of wine and theatre. The praise for modern, fascist Italia that intermingles the love for ancient culture fits with Daudet's own political right wing political tendencies, the author being one of the leaders of Action Française. The ritual is executed under the tones of Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies (p. 69):

'Car toutes les symphonies de Beethoven sont, elles aussi, des sortes de mystères dyonisiaques [sic].'

The affair ends in some warm *symplegmata*, to use one of those prudish terms normal in classical studies. Daudet, a famous writer and son of the illustrious French novelist Alphonse Daudet, displays a profound knowledge of the theories about the paintings, although his dating is entirely out of question. Without saying it, he

---

<sup>23</sup> See for both texts Urban, B. and J. Cremerius, eds. 1973. *S. Freud, Der Wahn und die Träume in W. Jensens "Gradiva"* [after second ed., Leipzig 1912]. Frankfurt am Main. There is another psycho-analytical interpretation of the novella: Bellemin-Noël, J. 1983. *Gradiva au pied de lettre*. Paris.

Freud visited Pompeii in 1902 and experienced "einen bezaubernden Erlebnis". He was "fasziniert von der Analogie zwischen dem historischen Schicksal Pompejis (seiner Verschüttung und späterer Ausgrabung) und den seelischen Erscheinungen, mit denen er [Freud] vertraut war - der Verschüttung durch Verdrängung, und der Ausgrabung durch Analyse" (quoted in Urban/Cremerius after Freud's *Studienausgabe*, X. p. 12). See furthermore Leppmann 1966, 192-206 (big praise); Zintsen 1998, 124, 221.

reconstructs a luxurious Greek atmosphere: among the most frequently used words are 'débauche', 'orphisme', 'phallus', and 'volupté'.

Malcolm Lowry describes in the short story *Present Estate of Pompeii* from 1948 a visit of the Canadian Roderick McGregor Fairhaven and his wife Tansy.<sup>24</sup> The trip becomes a sort of catabasis to hell and Pompeii is a ruin like Rotterdam, Manchester and other bombed cities – indeed, the guide reminds the couple, Pompeii was bombed itself (p. 198)! – but the difference is that this ruin is not 'man-made'. Even in this entirely Italian viz. Roman atmosphere a few Greek elements are hidden. The couple climbs the Vesuvius with a party of Greeks who were, as Tansy says, 'visiting their old stamping ground' (p. 186). The guide, pointing at the bronze bust of a young Apollo in the Temple of Apollo, remarks that he has '...a lady-dace, because the Greeks made everything like this:' – he drew down a growth of savage air from his chin – "with beards." ' Roderick reflects on the Greek Doric order in this temple precinct and the vanity of constructing this city.

#### DESTROYED BY HERACLES

An interesting exception to the rule of precise use of the archaeological sources is an intriguing epos written by J.-S.-F. Maizony Delauréal, in which Heracles takes revenge for the lack of reverence from the side of the Herculaneans by letting erupt the Vesuvius. The disaster took place at the very time that Euripides' *Alcestis* was being performed in the theatre - a clear allusion to the hero. Maizony invoked Kalliope and Hercules Musarum/Musagetes in vain (p. 101).<sup>25</sup>

'Si ta Muse pouvait, de miracles prodigue,  
Défendre Herculanium d'une invisible digue,  
Cette illustre cité, qui d'Athènes autrefois

<sup>24</sup> Lowry, M. 1961. *Present Estate of Pompeii*. In: idem, *Hear us O Lord from heaven thy dwelling place*. London, 175-200. The short story was conceived during a trip to Italy in 1948, and written in British Columbia between 1949 and 1954; posthumously published. For the date: Leppmann 1966, 207, 235-238.

<sup>25</sup> Maizony Delauréal, J.-S.-F. 1837. *L'Héracléade ou Herculanium enseveli sous la lave du Vésuve, poème de L.A. Florus*. Paris. Again, a manuscript 'translated' for the general reader. I quote from Chant V.



Rent la colonie et garde encore les lois,  
 Qui s'enivre, déjà vers la tombe penchée,  
 D'une source de pleurs de ton âme épachée,  
 Tu serais de ses murs le second fondateur.'

As far as I know, Maizony is the only author who gave a mythological interpretation of the disaster. Most authors saw the catastrophe as caused by nature or as a warning against paganism. Christians will survive.

#### OPERA AND BALLET

The oldest music drama on Pompeii I know is the 1995 re-enacted bel canto opera *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* by Giovanni Pacini, premiered at Naples, November 19, 1825, which remained very successful until the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> It is unclear whether Bulwer saw it and 'borrowed' the title of his novel from Pacini; its story, however, is entirely Roman. Bulwer's novel inspired a couple of composers, dramatists and movie makers: the 'Nachleben' of this novel is very vast and may form the topic of another paper (see Mayer 1994 and Wyke 1997). Here, however, the Greek character of the protagonists is not put forward, as the works concentrate on the love story of Glaucus and Ione or the psyche of one of the persons. The final blow is not a chat at Athens, like in the book, but the eruption of Vesuvius and the chaos caused by it in the amphitheatre.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> M. Rose s.v. Pacini, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* 14 (1980) 66-70; S.L. Bathazar and M. Rose, *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* 3 (1992) 808-812. CD release: Dynamic CDS 178/1-2 from 1997.

<sup>27</sup> I mention some operas I never heard (some of them probably were even never performed) and the most textbooks of which I did not yet see: *Die letzten Tage von Pompeji, grosse Oper in vier Akten* by Julius Pabst, Dresden 1851; *Ione o l'ultimo giorno di Pompei* by Errico Petrella, libretto by Petruccini, Milano, Scala 1858 (M. Rose: "the best known of his serious operas" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* 14 (1980) 586-588, cit. p. 587; idem in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* 3 (1992) 984-985); *Les derniers jours de Pompéi* by Félicien David, libretto by Joseph Méry, Paris, Grand'Opéra 1859 (Leppmann 1966, 176); *Die Nazarener in Pompeji, Musikdrama in drei Aufzügen, Textbuch* by Yourij von Arnold, Leipzig no year (1860); *Le dernier jour de Pompéi* by Victorun Joncières, Paris, Théâtre Lyrique 1869 (Dahl 1956); *Die Nazarener in Pompeji, grosse romantische Oper in vier Akten, frei nach Bulwer* by Jos. Muck, libretto by C. Gollmick and L. Bauer, Darmstadt 1887; *Pompeji, Oper in vier Aufzügen, Dichtung frei nach Bulwer* by Marziano Perosi, libretto Karl Schreder and Robert Maria Prosl, Vienna no year (1912 ca.).

The book by Mme Bertheroy inspired the composer Jean Nouguès to an opera of which we have the libretto: Henry Ferrare/Henri Cain, *La Danseuse de Pompéi. Opéra-ballet en cinq actes et huit tableaux d'après le roman de Jean Bertheroy. Musique de Jean Nouguès*, Paris 1912. Some scenes are very Greek, like the danse at the beginning during the harvest of grapes on the slopes of Vesuvius (First act, p. 1-18). Nonia, the 'danseuse', sings a sort of Bacchic hymn (p. 13):

'Voyez les grappes qui sont gonflées comme les seins des femmes amoureuses; je les suspends autour de mon cou, précieuses autant que des agates et je le mêle à l'or de mes cheveux. Je suis Bacchante et vous, Silènes! Ah! Ah! (*Elle danse.*) Je les suspends comme un collier précieux et je le mêle à l'or de mes cheveux, je suis Bacchante et vous, Silènes! Ah! Ah! Io! Io! Io! Io! Io!

(*Nonia mime la danse de Bacchus. Autour d'elle, filles et garçons l'exitent de la voix et du geste.*)

In the fourth act a ballet is entitled 'les Nymphes pleurant la mort d'Adonis' (p. 54).

#### WORKS OF ART

Numerous novels contain descriptions of works of art, clearly in order to enhance the atmosphere of wealth and debauchery. Up until today, few masterpieces of ancient art have come out of the soil of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Even famous mosaics like that of Alexander the Great and Darius from the House of the Faun are copies made after lost masterpieces. Most novelists use the descriptions of paintings and mosaics in Book 35 of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*. However, few authors allude to the fact that this encyclopaedian author died, when he tried to rescue people from the burning cities. No one says that Pliny knew this city very well and that, hence, he could have described works of art in Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae.<sup>28</sup>

---

On the fortune of Bulwer: see Zintsen 1998, 225. On movies: Wyke 1997, 147-182 (chapter 6: "Pompeii: Purging the Sins of the City").

<sup>28</sup> Pliny is recorded at length by Maizony, Book VI-VII (death of Pliny). P. primo Levi dedicated the poem 'Plinio' to the polyhistor in *Ad ora incerta*, Milano 1984.

One could even suggest that the tangible remains of both cities were more important than the spiritual legacy of Greece, when authors chose Pompeii as their topic. Apart from specifically Greek or Roman touches, every visitor was (and maybe still is) struck by the vivid atmosphere of the cities. The inhabitants are sleeping or have left to go out to work or to relax and can return every moment. We feel a little ashamed when entering a house of those unknown people without introduction. *Materia* instead of spirit – it is true for Bulwer and Gautier, for the anonymous writer of the *Vestal of Pompeii*<sup>29</sup> and for Mme Bertheroy. The latter, for instance, briefly introduces a shipbroker from Corinth, who lives on the ‘Acropole’ (fig. 2) and possesses real pictures by Zeuxis and other famous painters. All these authors stick to a precise description of the places their protagonists are living in. Some books even contain footnotes to prove the validity of their descriptions. Therefore, I think, a lot of these texts have become unreadable: they contain descriptions of objects that are too long and *mœurs de vie* instead of having psychological depth. A sense of humour is absent all-over, apart from Gautier’s *esprit*.

The afore-mentioned Mazois evokes art works in his novel *Le palais de Scaurus, ou description d’une maison romaine, fragment d’un voyage fait à Rome, vers la fin de la République, par Mérovir, prince des Suèves* (Paris 1819), in which he reconstructs a Roman house. Erotic paintings by Parrhasius in a sort of ‘Venereum’, where the lord of the house receives geisha-like girls, embarrass the Gaulish prince Mérovir, who says to his Greek [!] guide Chryssippe:

‘Sortons, lui dis-je, ce que je viens de voir peut-il exister dans une ville où l’on a élevé des autels à la pudeur! Ah! qu’il soit l’objet de la colère des dieux celui qui le premier peignit de tels tableaux dans les palais, et offrit à de chastes regards des scènes lascives et des nudités obscènes; celui-là fut le premier corrupteur de la jeunesse dont il dégrada les mœurs en souillant les regards. Qu’il gémissé, cet artiste coupable, d’avoir trouvé l’art d’afficher ainsi le crime sur les murailles!’

---

<sup>29</sup> *The Vestal. A Tale of Pompeii*. Boston/London 1830, 220 pp. No name of author on the title. The work is attributed to Thomas Gray by Dahl (1956, 188) and García y García (1998, no. 6285) as well as in the catalogue of the Library of Congress at Washington, whereas the British Library has the – rare – book as an anonymous work. Perhaps the attribution is made due to the editor at Boston, a certain Gray without first name, hence associated with the famous English poet who visited Herculaneum in 1740.

A similar vein is to be found in *Euphorion*, a novel in verses on a Greek artist by Ferdinand Gregorovius (fig. 3). The author paid many visits to Pompeii,<sup>30</sup> so with Jacob Burkhardt and Friedrich Althaus in July 1853 (Knight 1995, 92) and in 1864 with the excavator of Pompeii, Giuseppe Fiorelli. After seeing the gypsum casts of the victims he reflected (p. 182, 185; summer 1864):

‘Ich ging lange in Pompeji umher, auch im Haus des Diomedes, und ich bedacht meinen eigenen Lebenslauf, zumal jene Zeit, wo ich das Gedicht <Euphorion> schrieb. Auch dies ist schon mit Asche verschüttet; die Empfindungen, die mich damals belebten, sind verklungen; kaum vernahm ich davon einen leisen Nachklang im Haus des Diomedes, oder vor dem alten Kandelaber in den Studien. (...[september, p. 185]) Ich wanderte dort ungestört umher und ich sass lange auf der Terrasse des Hauses Diomedes, wo mir Euphorion und Jone wieder erschienen, schon schattenhafte, aber freundliche Wesen aus jener Vergangenheit, als ich mich zum Licht des Ideals emporgerungen hatte.’

*Euphorion, eine Dichtung aus Pompeji in vier Gesängen*<sup>31</sup> describes the vicissitudes of the slave-artist Euphorion, who has made a precious lampstand (fig. 3) for the daughter of Arrius Diomedes, Ione. The Villa of Diomedes is, of course, the place of action. Four ‘Gesänge’ or Books bear the names of figures applied on the precious object: Oneiros, Amor and Psyche, Pallas Athena, Thanatos and Eirene. Euphorion is working on a statue depicting Daedalus and Icarus – who symbolise his search for freedom – and destroys it (see plate 15). He falls in love with Ione (p. 18) who is described like the painting of one of the well-known dancing girls from Stabiae. In the second Song Euphorion walks through Pompeii and compares its small houses (p. 28) to ‘des Arrius fürstliche Landhaus’, where Ione received him in a room adorned

<sup>30</sup> Gregorovius, F. 1991. *Römische Tagebücher 1852-1889*. München (Kruft, H.-W. and M. Völkel, eds.). Cf. Leppmann 1966, 180, 185.

<sup>31</sup> I quote after Gregorovius, F. 1872. *Euphorion. Eine Dichtung aus Pompeji in vier Gesängen*, Illustrierte Prachtausgabe mit Original-Compositionen von Theodor Grosse. Leipzig. The first edition is from 1858 and I know of six editions until 1891. The poem is not included in his ‘Sammelte Schriften’. On this work Zintsen 1998, 207. The name is that of a Hellenistic poet who had some ‘Nachleben’ of his own in nineteenth-century novels.



Fig. 3: The lamp stand made by Euphorion (after Gregorovius, *Euphorion* 1870)

with Maenads. ‘Rom gleicht dem Chaos’ (p. 33), according to her, Pompeii is peace. They sing about their love. The heavy atmosphere alluded to in Book 1 becomes more burdensome in Book 3. During a feast the candelabrum is revealed and criticism comes only from the [Greek] artist Menandros, ‘der treffliche Meister/Bildender Kunst, dem nimmer die Muse mit kargender Huld nur/Gaben gelieh’n [...] Aber er selbst, mißschaffen und klein, von äsopischer Bildung’ (p. 51). Euphorion is freed by Ione

(p. 60), just when an earthquake starts and the volcano begins to erupt (p. 64):

‘Und jetzt finsterte Qualm, dumpf brüllend Geschlurf und  
Gegohre  
Kochte, und jah nun wieder entstieg’s, und es wirbelte Feuer,  
Feuer unendlich, es flogen die Klumpen wie Sterne, wie Monde  
Schwarmweis brennende auf, wie ein donnerndes Heer von  
Kometen,  
Die mit dem sprühenden Schweif durchpeitschten den  
winselnden Luftraum,  
Bis sie hinabwärts sanken, ein feuriger, grausiger Hagel.  
Blutrot schäumte der Berg von den wogenden Erz, und in  
Strömen  
Rollten die Feuerkaskaden und Glut-Katarakte der Lava.’

The protagonists escape: we see them reunited at Capri in the fourth Book. Arrius died and vanished under the ashes, including the candelabrum that will now serve as his ‘Gruftlampe’ (p. 84). The others set sail for Egypt and take some ashes from Pompeii with them. In a short note (p. 90-91) Gregorovius says that the lampstand had been found in the Villa van Diomedes and mentions the skeletons I referred to before.

The text is interesting both as a testimony of the deep impression Pompeii made on the young author and as a proof of the neo-classicist image the city gave to Gregorovius, who at that time had not yet started his famous and fundamental research on Medieval Rome. As we saw in the diary entries, he later made a comparison with early-Christian Naples.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERCULANEUM AS A GREEK CITY

I finally want to draw attention to a project proposed by C. Waldstein and L. Shoobridge to excavate the city of Herculaneum with an international team in their *Herculaneum Past Present & Future* (London 1908). This proposal rested on the assumption that Herculaneum was a Greek town and therefore more important than Pompeii which was considered a Roman settlement. Waldstein was the former excavator of Argos and published on the classical sculptor Polycleitus. He had been director of the American School

at Athens and professor at Cambridge in England. Shoobridge was a former student at Oxford. The book was dedicated to Arrigo Boito 'poet-musician, patriot and citizen of the world'. The authors proposed to install an international commission in 1903 and received a worldwide acclaim, partly on a very high level, which perhaps scared the Italians. The government of Italy decided in 1907 to take up the excavations on their own account. The preface of Waldstein's huge 'pamphlet' is clear:

'Herculaneum is to be excavated. The main object for which my colleague Mr. Shoobridge and I have laboured has thus been attained. The Italian Government has decided to undertake the work itself and at once. It is fully a year since this decision was published and a Commission of highly competent experts was appointed. Let us hope that there will be no further delay in actually beginning this important enterprise.'

Here we find a typical topos for Greece: young, vigorous and noble, in contrast with old tired Rome:

'But our Herculaneum died young and in full vigour, and its embalmed body was hidden away beyond the hand of all rapacious men, excepting those who long lovingly to restore it to the pristine beauty of its early life. Here Vesuvius, as it were, arrested Time, arrested the hand of man bent on ravage or raised in internecine warfare. Thus were the towns of Campania preserved for posterity by the very agencies, which of old caused their destruction?'

Furthermore, Herculaneum has been better preserved and yielded more precious objects. Pompeii, on the other hand, had been a banal and commercial town only. An international project (p. 17-31), not hampered by national borders and chauvinism, in the spirit of a scientific and cultural *koinè*, could recreate a splendid Herculaneum and the collaboration would show up communal Hellenic roots. All in all, it would become a project of peace like the International Court at The Hague. The second half of the book contains a dossier, in which the reader can find the numerous expressions of solidarity and willingness to cooperate.

## CONCLUSION

I could add a lot of other examples of the perceived Greekness of Herculaneum and Pompeii, but I do not think that is necessary. The direct influence of Winckelmann and the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot is retraceable in the oldest texts bearing on these places only. At the same time, the uninterrupted flow of similar ideas shows that this perception was never abandoned. Authors of fiction and poetry not only fancied upon the topic of a suddenly vanished culture, but made use of various sources, both literary and historical texts and archaeological remains. In the first hundred years they narrowly followed the published results of 'Pompeianology', whereas, with the professionalisation of archaeology from the 1870's onwards, the distance between facts and fiction grew wider. Pompeii was - to refer again to Shelley - really a Greek city in the eyes of many writers and therefore, in the eyes of moviemakers, opera composers, ballet choreographers and their audiences and readership.



## REFERENCES

- Aziza, C., 1992. *Pompéi. Le rêve sous les ruines*. Paris.
- Dahl, C., 1956. Recreations of Pompeii. *Archaeology* 9, 182-191.
- García y García, L., 1998. *Nóva bibliotheca pompeiana. 250 anni di bibliografia archeologica*. Rome.
- Knight, C., 1995. *Sulle orme del Grand Tour. Uomini, luoghi, società del Regno di Napoli*. Napoli.
- Leppmann, W., 1966. *Pompeji. Eine Stadt in Literatur und Leben*. München (= *Pompeii in Fact and Fiction*, London 1968).
- Mayer, D., 1994. *Playing out the Empire. Ben Hur and other Toga Plays and Films, 1883-1908. A Critical Anthology*. Oxford (chapter The Last Days of Pompeii. James Pain, 90-103).
- Moormann, E.M., 2000. Una città mummificata: qualche aspetto della fortuna di Pompei nella letteratura europea ed americana. In: *Pompei: scienza e società, Napoli 25-27 novembre 1998*, Rome. 7-18.
- Praz, M., 1979. Le antichità di Ercolano. In: *Civiltà del Settecento a Napoli*. Napoli, I, 35-39.
- Riikonen, H., 1978. *Die Antike im historischen Roman des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Helsinki.
- Seznec, J., 1949. Herculaneum and Pompeii in French Literature of the Eighteenth Century. *Archaeology* 2, 150-158.
- Sogliano, A., 1881. *Pompei nella letteratura*. Napoli.
- Wyke, M., 1997. *Projecting the Past. Ancient Rome, Cinema and History*. New York/London.
- Zintzen, C., 1998. *Von Pompeji nach Troje. Archäologische Literatur und Öffentlichkeit*. Wien.