

## Towards an understanding of the shape of space at VIII.7.1-15, Pompeii: preliminary results from the 2006 season

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In its second season of excavations, the Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: *Porta Stabia* (PARP:PS) had a primary goal of establishing a clearer understanding of the structural and social shape of the *insula*. To this end, five trenches were strategically located to help define certain properties, and to recognise the spatial relationships within and between such buildings. Trenches 5000 and 6000 were opened in property VIII.7.1-2; trench 7000 was located in VIII.7.9-10; trench 8000 was opened in VIII.7.14-15; trench 9000 was opened in VIII.7.12; and trench 10000 was opened within the *Porta Stabia* (figs. 1-2).

To compliment the research of the excavated trenches, PARP:PS continued its investigation into the bio-archaeological record of VIII.7.1-15, as well as an architectural survey of the entire zone. The following preliminary report outlines a selection of results from the activities conducted by our Project in the 2006 season. Each trench (also listed as ‘AA’ – Archaeological Area – in photographs) is organized by phase, though each of these phases awaits a more comprehensive analysis of the ceramic and numismatic material before firm dates can be attributed. This preliminary report therefore represents our continued efforts to publish information from our



Fig. 1. Location of trenches in the 2006 season.



Fig. 2. Overview of VIII.7.1-15 from the *Porta Stabia*.

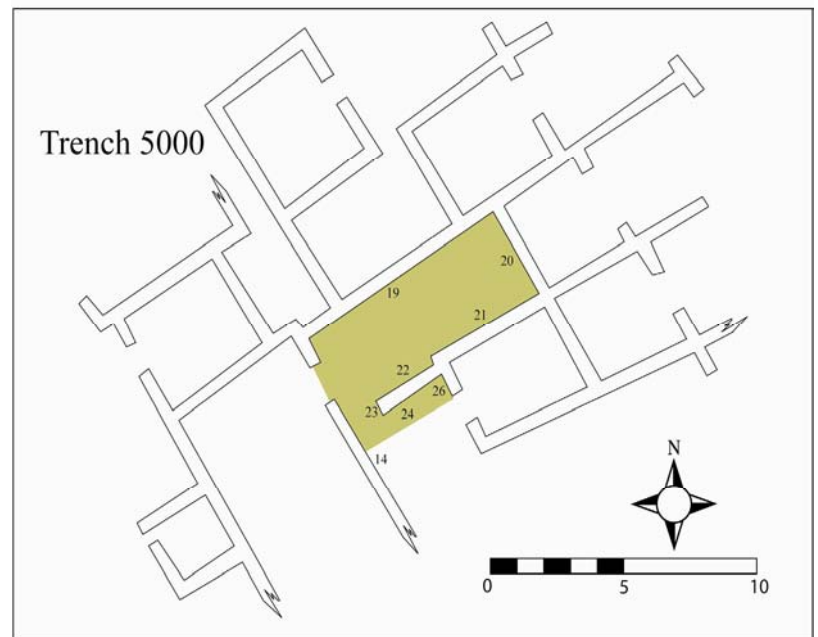


Fig. 3. Plan of Trench 5000.

Pompeian excavations in a timely manner, and through a peer-reviewed, widely accessible, and speedily produced medium.

### Trench 5000

Trench 5000 was located in the northernmost room of VIII.7.1-2 and occupied its entire surface area (fig. 3)<sup>1</sup>. The location of this trench was chosen to delineate the spatial arrangement and northern extent of the property since the southernmost extent of the property had been investigated in the 2005 season (Trench 1000, Devore and Ellis 2005). Additionally, we were concerned with learning more about the function of the (seemingly late) masonry structure skirting the north wall (WF 19) and its possible functional relationship with the industrial fixtures located for the final phase of the property in Trench 1000 (*ibid* 2005, 6)<sup>2</sup>.



Fig. 4. Wall Face 21. Note the surviving relatively smooth surface.



Fig. 5. Remains of the north-south aligned wall (Wall Faces 1022/1023/1024).

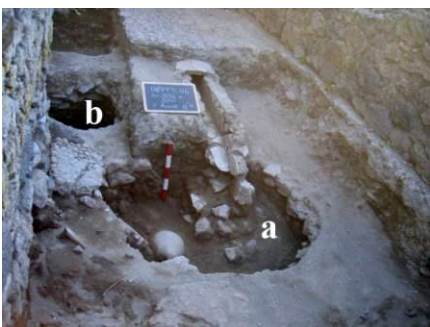


Fig. 6. The two circular features (a and b) of Trench 5000.

#### Phase 1: earliest buried walls

Given the fragmentary nature of this earliest known phase, little may be drawn from its remains to link other early phases within this property at this stage. Although the north wall (WF 19) of this trench appears to have been the original property boundary, it is likely that this wall in fact defined the southern limits of the property directly to the north at VIII.7.5. Therefore, many of its associated features and relationships might have been limited to that northern property. It also proved difficult to garner information from this wall with the excavation of this trench as much of the spatial and physical relationships were obscured by the subsequent construction of the masonry bench at a much later phase (see below).

Other early features included two buried masonry walls located in the south-west corner of the trench. It is unfortunate that most of the physical relationships of and between these early features were unclear, but further archaeological investigation in the area and in adjacent properties may make these primary features intelligible in the future.

#### Phase 2: Stone-lined Features

While the features and events of this second phase were physically distant, they can be linked through relative sequencing and associated elevations. This phase was characterized by the original construction of the easternmost and southernmost walls of the room (WFs 20 and 21). The smooth mortar that faced the foundations of both walls in the south-east corner was evidence of their shared method of construction: mortar and rubble poured between wooden planks that lined the excavation trench, with the mortar that set against the planks creating the smooth facing on the wall (fig. 4). Such a method of construction means that the construction trench required would have been very minimal and therefore difficult to recognise amongst the various levels of differential fill deposit – an explanation for why no construction trenches survived in Trench 5000.

A further north-south aligned wall (WFs 1022-1024), also visible in this phase, may have been residual from an earlier phase, possibly from the contemporary insertion of buried walls from Phase 1 (fig. 5). Interpretation of this feature is therefore limited to the acknowledgement of its existence in this phase (but not its construction), and its destruction in Phase 3.

<sup>1</sup> Trench 5000 was excavated under the supervision of Nick Ray (University of Leicester).

<sup>2</sup> WF = Wall Face. The authors prefer to use the term 'wall face', rather than simply 'wall', as the latter can be less specific and prove misleading, particularly as a wall can cover several trenches, and divide several rooms. To refer to a wall face, on the other hand, enables one to more easily define and locate a specific segment of a wall on such complex urban sites.

Two circular stone-lined features were the most remarkable features in this phase (fig. 6, a). The first was located on the south side of the centre of the room and is thought to have been used for drainage. The western side of this feature had a curved aperture and sloped down beneath the ground at a steep angle in a north-westerly direction.

The second circular stone-lined feature, however, was not fully curved on all sides (fig. 6, b). On the western and southern sides, the edges were built in straight lines. The southern side abutted the vertical face of WF 22 to incorporate it into the structure. There was no evidence of plaster lining or other such detail that would elucidate the nature of this feature's use.

The surface associated with this phase was of *opus signinum*, now only evident in a small patch in the north of the trench against the base of the Phase 4 masonry bench, as well as in some residual traces beneath the bench. The full extent of this surface is unknown but it presumably covered the extent of the room and survived (probably with repatching) throughout several phases.

### Phase 3: Drain and *opus signinum*, Part A

A drain was constructed down the centre of the room from east to west in this phase, although no functional shift seemingly occurred in this area at this time (fig. 7). Some sort of industrial activity seems to have taken place here in this phase. Sequentially, the earlier *opus signinum* surface was destroyed, remnants of which appear to have been thrown into the fill on the south side of the area. Simultaneously, the northern edge of the buried wall (WF 1023) from Phase 1 was cut, and the original construction event of WF 20 was partially removed and cut through to accommodate the course of the drain, which continued to the street where an exit point is still visible (fig. 8). Once the drain was constructed, the second construction phase of WF 20 was built creating a doorway on the east side of this space (fig 9). The associated surface in this phase was another *opus signinum* floor.



Fig. 7. Drain running from west (near end of photo) to east through Trench 5000.

The new *opus signinum* surface did not cover the full extent of the trench, but was laid against several features that were removed in the following (final) phase (fig. 10). In the south of the room, the surface was laid against a rectangular feature of unknown nature. As there are no remnants of a masonry structure or any evidence of scarring on the walls, it is thought to have been a wooden structure, such as a bench – possibly the precursor to the masonry bench constructed in the final ancient phase of this area.



Fig. 8. Likely outflow of the drain from Trench 5000 into the Via Stabiana.



Fig. 9. Note the blocking of the doorway at the eastern end of the room (from Phase 4).



Fig. 10. *Opus signinum* floor that was laid against a possible wooden feature along the south side of the room. Note the masonry bench along the north (left) side of the room.

#### Phase 4: Drain and opus signinum, Part B

The *opus signinum* surface of the previous phase was retained in this phase, but it witnessed minor changes in the spatial configuration of the area, with a high probability of functional continuity. For example, the drain still appears to have been in use at this time. The doorway that existed in WF 20 was blocked, changing the configuration of access so that the sole entry point was from the west end of the room (fig. 9).



Fig. 11. Collapse of the *opus signinum* floor into the circular feature.

The mysterious features, against which the *opus signinum* floor had originally been laid in the previous phase, on the south side of the trench were removed, and a masonry bench was inserted into the north side of the space against WF 19 (fig. 10). Also associated with the insertion of this bench was the final phase in the construction of WF 14, the back wall of the building which separated interior space from a garden with nice vegetation paintings (now gone). A tufa-quoined doorway was constructed using parts of an earlier buried wall (WF 1019) for foundations, thereby narrowing the access through to the rear of the property yet providing a westerly architectural framework against which the masonry bench could be constructed.

#### Phase 5: Modern Events

In modern times, the stone-lined feature in the centre of the trench collapsed, slumping into the circular feature along with the latest floor surface (fig. 11).

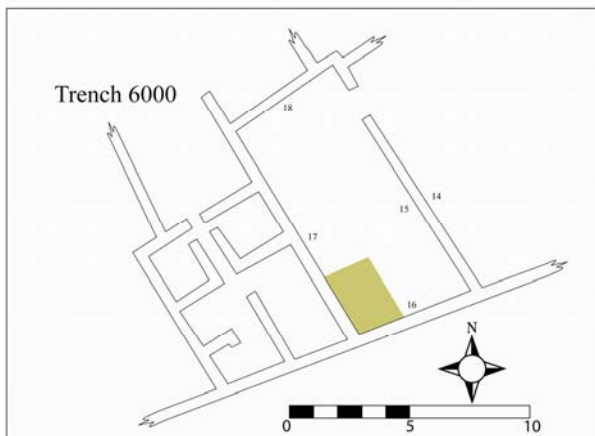


Fig. 12. Plan of Trench 6000.

#### Trench 6000

This trench was sunk in the south-west corner of the rear room of VIII.7.1-2 in order to elucidate the southern and westernmost limits of the property (fig. 12)<sup>3</sup>. The area is bounded, and defined, by WF 16 to the south (along the city defences) and WF 17 to the west (the back wall of the property). The stratigraphic sequences revealed primarily late deposits and activities, even though the deepest limits of the trench reached the natural stratigraphic sequence of palaeolithic soils that usually overlay the Pompeian natural lava outcrop (seen in other sequences across the *insula*).

The earliest known cultural material was from a possibly destroyed wall and associated surface that was unrelated to any other structural features (Phase 1). The next phase of activity (Phase 2) concerned the first possible definition of the southern-most limit to the property with the insertion of a north-south aligned wall and earth surface. The most significant activity in this area occurred during Phase 3 which saw the wholesale definition of the back area of this property through the construction of all four bounding walls upon a substantial levelling deposit. This third phase seems to correspond with the interpretation provided by Fiorelli and Mau that in its latest phase this space was a garden area<sup>4</sup>.

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#### Phase 1: Natural Deposits

The earliest deposits in Trench 6000 represent the sequence of natural stratigraphy: a deposit consisting of a virtually sterile grey silty soil and a sterile yellow silty deposit, the bottom of which was not reached because excavation



Fig. 13. Scant remains of a possible wall.

<sup>3</sup> Trench 6000 was excavated under the supervision of Nick Ray (University of Leicester).

<sup>4</sup> FIORELLI 1875: 348; MAU 1875: 127-128.

was ceased for safety reasons at a depth of approximately 3.5 meters below surface level.

The earliest evidence for cultural activity came from a yellow mortar deposit with large inclusions of brick and stone that most likely represented an early wall fragment on a north-south alignment (fig. 13). To the east of this was what appears to be an associated packed surface of similar matrix.

### *Phase 2: The Coin Hoard*

A north-south aligned wall (WF 1027) was built in the west of the trench, possibly indicating an early property boundary that would eventually lose its significance (fig. 14). The foundations for this wall revealed two clusters of coins, twelve in total (fig. 15). Each cluster was encased in soil and, as a consequence, preliminary statements of coin identification are not currently possible, but will be of tremendous importance in dating this phase.

The surface associated with this phase was recognisable only from the fill deposit for the now lost packed earth floor surface. It was ephemeral to begin with, and later disturbances had all but erased its trace completely. As no architectural components associated with WF 1027 are known at this time it remains difficult to associate this phase to others known throughout the property.

### *Phase 3: Re-organisation and Definition of Space*

This area was significantly re-organized in the third phase. The substantial wall of Phase 2 (WF 1027) was destroyed and a huge levelling deposit laid down over and around the wreckage, upon which the construction events of this phase were built (fig. 14). This fill level was not bound by the existing architectural remains, but overlaid the remnants of the earlier north-south wall, the rear property wall upon which the later north-south wall (WF 17) was constructed (on a slightly different alignment to the earlier version).

An east-west wall (WF 16) was also built at this time on top of the same levelling deposit (fig. 14). The construction of this wall incorporated fragments of the Phase 2 north-south wall (WF 1027), such as a re-used Sarno block as an orthostat for the east side of a possible doorway (see below). This block contained the same plaster as the earlier wall.

It is during this phase that all of the latest walls of the garden were constructed, signifying a large-scale rearrangement of this area that served to clearly define the western end of this property. Only the subsurface of this latest ancient phase survives. If we are to assume that Fiorelli and Mau were correct in labelling this space a garden – and indeed, the general arrangement of the space, together with a possible large opening through its eastern wall (the possible window in WF 15) and the wall decorations of garden scenes suggest they were correct – then it is unsurprising that the latest ancient earthen surface is entirely lost as a result of the earliest removal of the volcanic deposits in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and subsequent growth of modern vegetation<sup>5</sup>.



Fig. 14. Early wall (Wall Face 1027) on a north-south alignment. Note its destruction and subsequent levelling fill for the following sequence of construction.



Fig. 15. Some of the coins found in the foundation of Wall Face 1027.

<sup>5</sup> FIORELLI 1875: 348; MAU 1875: 127-128.

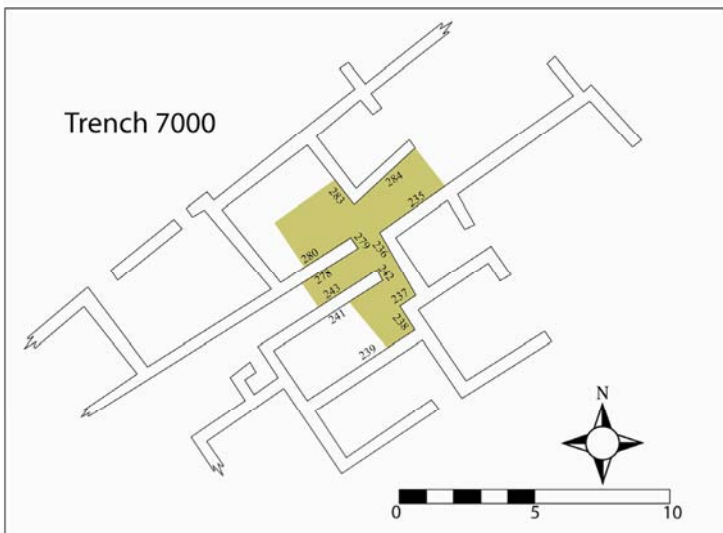


Fig. 16. Plan of Trench 7000.



Fig. 17. The unified construction of Wall Faces 235 and 280. The doorway was created in the fourth phase.



Fig. 18. Wall Face 1069 projecting north from the division wall, at right (Wall Face 235).

#### Phase 4: Modern Events

Other than general accumulation of vegetative deposits in the area, one modern event stood out in the archaeology: a substantial modern cut through the south-west corner of the trench that was filled by a mixed re-deposited lapilli and loam deposit. It extended down through to (and beyond?) the level of the foundations of the north-south wall (WF 1027) of Phase 2. We were not able to discern the original purpose of this substantial cut.

#### Trench 7000

Trench 7000 investigated several walls we considered very important for understanding the construction history of the entire *insula* (fig. 16)<sup>6</sup>. In particular, WF 235/280, the boundary wall between properties 9/10 and 8, seems to have been pivotal to the spatial order of the area. Not only did this wall separate the two properties, at least in plan, it also appeared to have divided the entire *insula* into halves (see fig. 1). Moreover, the construction of the eastern rooms of the *Quadriporticus* appears to have respected this division; the northwestern limits to the *insula* were bound by a wall (WF 333/339/459) that ran southward in an unbroken and straight line from the northernmost confines until it reached our division wall. As the *Quadriporticus* wall proceeded further southward, it shifted its linear alignment several times, as if having to respect pre-existing features or spaces. We therefore located Trench 7000 in the hallway and surrounding area of the break between WF 235/280 in order to investigate and date this important dividing wall, and to test the hypothesis that it had originally been one long wall (hence, 235/280) that was punched through to create access to the rear *triclinium* area behind property 7/8.

#### Phase 1: The Earliest Walls

As expected, the uppermost layers of the trench were very ephemeral and heavily disturbed from the modern vegetation in the area, but we soon came down on to evidence that WFs 235 and 280 were in fact originally unified. Their foundations were still intact, and revealed that they had clearly been built as a single process (fig. 17). This wall was built directly atop the lava that forms the natural topography in this area of the city, and represents the earliest known phase of urban activity in this neighborhood. What is more, this wall remained in use from its earliest phase until 79 CE (so far the only wall found to do so).

Some remains of a north-south wall (WF 1069), surviving only in part in the far north-east corner of

<sup>6</sup> Trench 7000 was excavated under the supervision of Gina Tibbott (Smithsonian Institution).

the trench, and keyed into the north face of the division wall (WF 235), offered the only evidence for the arrangement of space associated with this earliest phase (fig. 18). It seems that the foundation of WF 241/243, to the south of and parallel to the boundary WF 235/280, might have been built at the same time since it was equally built onto the lava, although almost a meter lower, due to the falling away of the natural topography here. No floor surfaces survive from this phase.

#### Phase 2: The Early Drain

In the second phase, a sizable drain was cut into a sequence of simple earthen surfaces (fig. 19). It also incorporated the foundation of WF 235/280 as one of its sides. Lined with plaster, the drain ran presumably from the rear of the *insula* toward the street, passing under, and perhaps limited to, property 8. It was only located through excavations in this area, and the construction of WF 236 in the following phase later destroyed its course, rendering it ineffective. There is currently no outlet visible within the *Via Stabiana* curbstones for this early drain.

#### Phase 3: Destruction of the Drain

The third phase retained the division between properties 8 and 9-10, however it was now that the first distinctive architectural changes occurred. With the introduction of WF 236, the eastward course of the drain was abandoned (fig. 19). It was cut, and filled with a leveling material on which was laid a new plaster floor.

#### Phase 4: Unification

The more fundamental architectural and spatial developments, however, occurred in the fourth phase. A doorway was created in WF 235/280, linking properties 8 and 9/10 for the first time (fig. 17). The property at 9/10 could now enjoy access to the rear parts of property 8, and their unification was further attested by arrangements made for common drainage. A new drain was laid on a similar course to the earlier version from Phases 2-3 (fig. 20). Although somewhat smaller, this later version equally ran along the southern side of WF 235/280 until just before WF 236. It then turned north and ran through the new doorway that punched through WF 235/280. The upper portion of WF 235 was rebuilt and rounded off to further open up the doorway, widening access through the passageway (WF 236a); the rebuilding of this wall incorporated the same material used in the building of the drain, providing strong evidence that they belonged to the same phase. The new drain now ran to the north for a short distance before turning east toward the street where it emptied. The drain broke through the Phase 1 north-south wall (WF 1069) that had been keyed into the division wall (WF 235/280), probably rendering it obsolete.



Fig. 19. Phase 2 drain heading toward the *Via Stabiana* before being cut by the construction of Wall Face 236 in Phase 3.



Fig. 20. Phase 4 drain heading north-east and bending through the newly opened doorway. Note the circular catchment built into the drain.

The drain must have originated in the kitchen to the west, which itself was associated with a *triclinium* (both features are from Trench 2000, excavated in 2005; see Devore and Ellis 2005, 3-5). A fascinating feature of this drain was a circular catchment built as part of its original construction, directly in the middle of the new doorway. Its bottom was 20 cm lower than the level of the drain. The larger items of material and waste from the kitchen would travel through the drain and settle at the bottom of the catchment. A circular stone lid with a handle closed the feature and could be removed for emptying the material (fig. 21). The system appears to be a rather unique arrangement at Pompeii.

As we witnessed in our 2005 excavations in the front of property 9/10 (*ibid*, 2-3; Trench 3000), the drain was blocked in the very last phase of activity in this area, perhaps temporarily to restrict rodent access through



Fig. 21. Stone lid with handle to enable access to the catchment in the drain (scale = 50cm).

the feature. Finally, most of its northward expansion was redirected when WFs 283 and 284 were built very late over part of the drain. A new curve was made in the channel to avoid the very shallow foundations of these new walls.

Since the little doorway in WF 235/280 led through a short hallway to the cooking and toilet area near the *triclinium*, we postulate that this area was a service corridor. The more public approach to the *triclinium* would have been through doorway 11, traversing several dining spaces before turning left to approach the *triclinium* space head-on (through what is now a modern blocked doorway; fig. 22). What is interesting about these arrangements is that it is the property at 9/10/11 that was seemingly growing southward, taking over the rear space from the property at 7/8 which had no spatial connection with the *triclinium* space at the ground floor level.

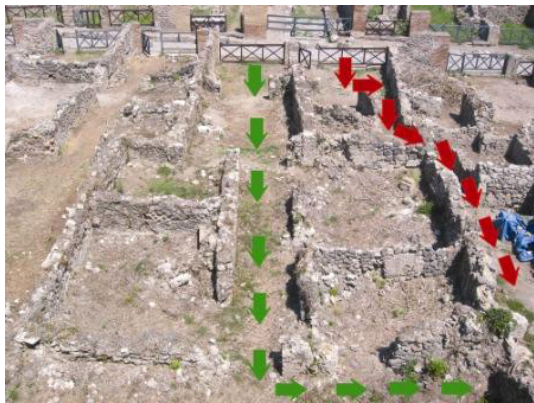


Fig. 22. Access from doorway 11 through to the *triclinium* (green arrows).

### Trench 8000

The level of the northern end of the *insula* is a striking feature. From the street-front to the rear of the *insula* the ground rose about 1.5 meters.<sup>7</sup> In order to determine if this steep incline was the product of natural topographical conditions, or the result of an accumulation of ancient and/or modern deposits, we opened up Trench 8000 (fig. 23). Additionally, there were several questions relating to the spatial arrangement here. Earlier maps of the *insula* provided only a general picture of some small walls and features that were no longer visible on the present surface, and a process of deep excavation and clearance might reveal their remnants and provide a more accurate picture of the development of this space unto its latest phase. To the south-west, along the back wall of the *Quadriporticus* (WF 339/459), the laying of modern electrical wires and water pipes caused considerable disturbance to the open space. A large cistern was also visible at the

back of property 14. These two zones, therefore, were not feasible for excavation. What remained was a sizable area midway along the two northernmost properties, though mostly associated with property 15. This was excavated down to natural deposits, revealing three broad phases of urban development.

### Phase 1: The Early L-Shaped Wall

A crudely constructed *opus incertum* wall, WFs 1040/1041, L-shaped, and running south from the northern limit of the trench for 2 meters before turning east for 0.84 meters, was built directly on top of the lava spur that represents bedrock in this part of the city (fig. 24; *ibid* 2005, 2). This volcanic layer was revealed in three places, between 12.8 meters and 13.2 meters above sea level, and thereby provided a good indication of the natural topography for this northern limit of the *insula*. Of the wall itself, only the eastern and northern faces (WFs 1040 and 1041, respectively) of the L-shaped feature were brought to light, its

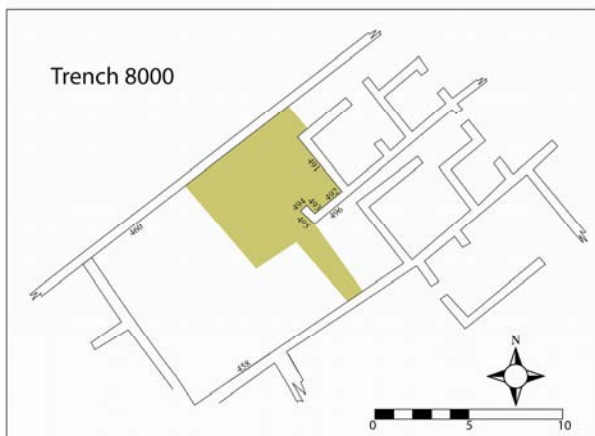


Fig. 23. Plan of Trench 8000.



Fig. 24. Remains of the earliest wall in Trench 8000. Note its construction directly on top of the lava.

<sup>7</sup> Trench 8000 was excavated under the supervision of Kevin Dicus (University of Michigan).



continuation and other faces either remaining buried or destroyed by later developments. Of that which was exposed in the excavations, it appears that the upper reaches of the wall were at some stage destroyed, with the surrounding area leveled to accommodate a new series of walls in the following phase incorporating earlier material in its foundations.

### Phase 2: Larger Walls

A considerably larger wall (0.75 meters in width) distinguishes the second phase of building activity in this area (WF 1036/1037). This wall was built on a north-south alignment directly over the leveling of the earlier wall from Phase 1 (fig. 25). Apart from its unusually broad dimensions, this wall projected northward beyond the latest and northernmost perimeter (WF 460) of the property and *insula*. Therefore at some later stage, possibly with the construction of the large *Odeon* to the north in the 70s BCE, the northernmost area of the *insula* was truncated.

The southern projection of this large wall also extended beyond the limits of excavation in this area.

A smaller wall (WFs 1032-1035) was built into the western face of the large wall, on an east-west alignment before turning southward. Their physical relationship suggests a contemporary construction.

### Phase 3: Fill and Reorganization

It is in Phase 3 that we may witness the architectural delineation of space that would endure here until 79 CE. A substantial leveling fill of re-deposited volcanic material provided an even layer for a floor surface. The fill was comprised of degraded and crushed black lava with white inclusions, on top of which was laid a hard yellow sandy deposit (visible in some sections of fig. 25). This space was then defined by the construction of the northern wall of the property and *insula*, WF 460. WF 496 was built parallel to this northern boundary, but further to the south. The presence of a late cistern prevented any excavation, or even analysis, of the southern face of WF 496. Some excavations at its westward projection, however, revealed it to continue beyond the limits of the trench, and perhaps as far as the *Quadriporticus*.

A third wall (WFs 1046/1071/1056) was built abutting WF 460, on a southward alignment (fig. 25). Its southern end, however, was finished, suggesting the presence of a doorway.

### Phase 4: Indoor and Outdoor

Although the delineation of the area remained the same for the fourth phase, some reorganization did occur, giving us for the first time a clear indication of a distinct division between indoor and outdoor space

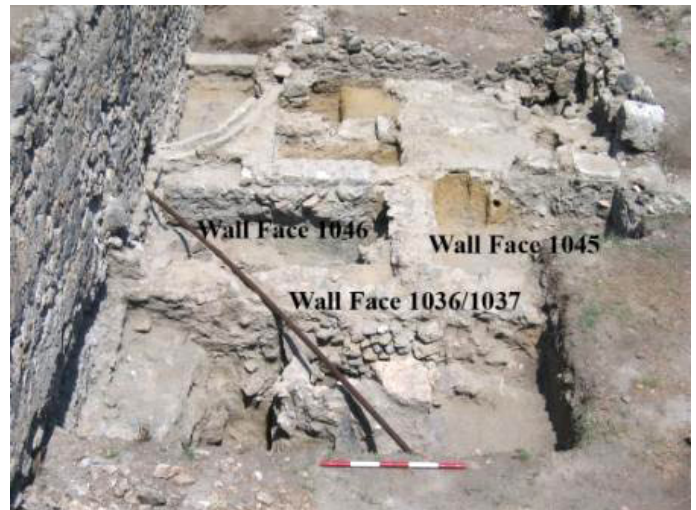


Fig. 25. Trench 8000, looking east.



Fig. 26. The small narrow rooms created in the fourth phase.



Fig. 27. Toilet and waste feature in the south-east corner of the room.

(fig. 26). The inside space was characterized by a lime-mortar floor which filled the space west of WF 491, and spread northward as far as WF 460. Its western limits were defined by a newly constructed wall (WFs 1047/1048/1049) that incorporated the earlier wall (WFs 1046/1071/1056) for its foundations. This new wall also terminated precisely where its predecessor had, suggesting the persistence of this doorway or passage. Instead of continuing through this opening, the mortared floor terminated at this point. The southern extent of this surface was cut before it could meet with WF 492. The cut was made for the construction of a toilet and waste removal feature in the south-east corner of our area, abutting WFs 491 and 492 (fig. 27).



Fig. 28. Northern entrance with limestone threshold, at right. The drain feature was fed by the downpipe in Wall Face 460.

were destroyed and the area leveled and sealed by a new mortar floor, including the toilet feature. This mortar floor now spread as far west as the WF 1037, suggesting an expansion of indoor space. The entrance into this area from the northern passageway, as defined in the previous phase, now received a more formal threshold with a 0.8 meter by 0.3 meter limestone block (fig. 28). Further to the west, a down-pipe was built within WF 460, releasing its contents into a drain which ran eastward and into WF 491, where parts of a lead pipe were preserved. The drain was capped with roof tiles.

The deposits associated with this fifth phase are mostly lost, given their ephemeral nature and proximity to modern layers and activities. For example, at some point in the modern history of Pompeii, a water pipe was laid through the upper layers of this space running diagonally from the *Quadriporticus* area to the north-east (fig. 25).

### Trench 9000

The location for Trench 9000 was chosen for its potential to reveal the developing spatial relationships between the

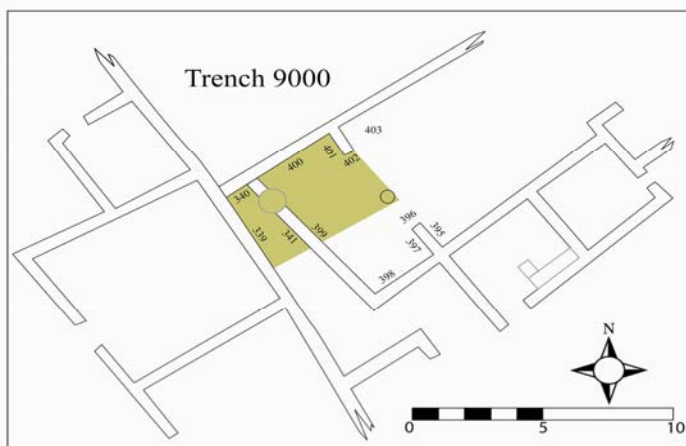


Fig. 29. Plan of Trench 9000.

Two more new walls (WFs 1050-1054-1055 and 1051-1052-1053) served to organize this space yet more, with the creation of two long and narrow rectangular rooms (fig. 26). The creation of these two rooms allowed for a passageway between their northern limits and the property/*insula* boundary (WF 460). This passageway likely provided access to an outdoor area west of the narrow rooms with their concrete surface. A beaten earth surface defines this outdoor space. This space was also defined by an east-west wall (WFs 1043/1044/1045) built between the western limit of the two rooms (from WF 1047) as far west as WF 1037, which continued to act as a major partition of space (fig. 25).

### Phase 5: The Large Open Space

The two separate areas of the previous phase – the two narrow rooms and the outdoor space – were unified in the fifth phase, finally creating the large open space present in 79 CE. All but the westernmost wall (WFs 1036/1037)

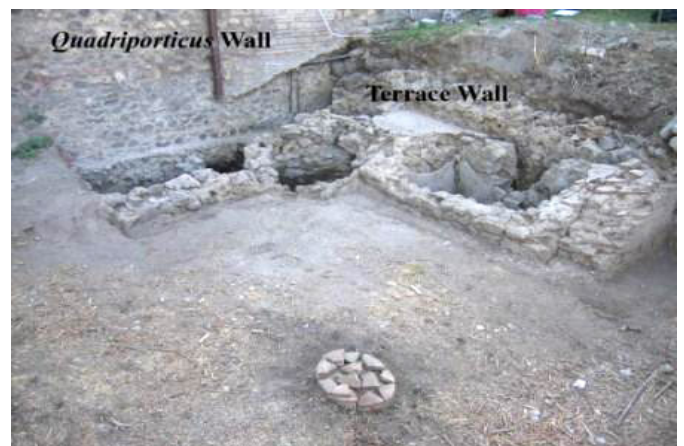


Fig. 30. Terrace wall (Wall Face 340/400/404) along north side of Trench 9000.

*Quadriporticus* and the western parts of *insula* VIII.7, particularly VIII.7.10-12<sup>8</sup>. Early maps of this *insula* illustrated a long tapering corridor against the *Quadriporticus*, where one might expect a toilet to be located. Given the accumulation of modern debris and collapse in this area, very little of the standing architecture or archaeological features were visible prior to excavation. Trench 9000 was therefore positioned precisely at the end of the corridor with the hope of uncovering this toilet and of delineating the space more generally. These modest expectations were raised as a succession of features rapidly came to light, and what began as a 1 meter by 1 meter trench eventually finished as a 5.5 meters by 4 meters trench occupying much of this north-west corner of properties 11 and 12 (fig. 29).

### Phase 1: Creation of the Terrace

WF 340/400/404 represented the earliest activity for this area, and necessarily so, given that this wall served to buttress the elevated terrace space to the north (figs. 30-31). All other features with a physical relationship to this terracing wall were stratigraphically later. This included, very importantly, the construction of the *Quadriporticus* wall (WF 339/459), which illustrates that the construction of the eastern wing of the *Quadriporticus* occurred later than the terracing in the northern half of this *insula*. The creation of this terrace heralded the flourishing urban activities associated with this first phase.



Fig. 31. The eastward continuation of the terrace wall. Note the difference in elevation from one side to the other.

With the retaining wall in place, a cesspit was dug into the volcanic soils and lined with roughly cut pieces of masonry, volcanic stones, and tile (fig. 32). The bottom of the pit was not reached by excavation, given issues of safety, although we were able to detect that parts of its western face incorporated the natural plateau of lava (at about 1.4 meters in depth). This cesspit was fed via a large aperture as well as by a channel incorporated into the wall (WF 1064 – built against the cesspit, and probably in Phase 2) that linked cesspit with the terrace wall, and by another drain that was built, more likely contemporary, into north-south wall (WF 341/399). It ought to be noted that these two walls were not in alignment. This north-south wall (WF 341/399) divided properties 11 and 12, although the two properties apparently shared the use of the cesspit. Excavations also revealed a brief section of a wall aligned east-west (WFs 1066/1067/1068) abutting the junction between the cesspit and WF 399 (fig. 32). This wall likely divided the eastern side of the cesspit into northern and southern sides, though only the southern side retained evidence of a floor abutting the southern face of the division wall (WFs 1066/1067/1068).



Fig. 32. Overhead view of features in Trench 9000.

Ceramic evidence provided a good understanding of the dating of this first phase. It appears that these events date from the middle to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE. The dating of these construction developments is of utmost importance, not least for our understanding of the history of VIII.7.1-15, but equally for fixing the chronology of the related construction of the *Quadriporticus* wall, which is generally considered as a 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE development.

### Phase 2: The Mortared Floor

Phase 2 was defined by the reapplication of a mortared floor. As with the Phase 1 floor, this second surface abutted both WF 399 and the Phase 1 wall (WFs 1066/1067/1068). As with the earlier phase, no such flooring survived – if it had ever existed in the first place – to the west of WF 341/399, or to the north of WF 1066.

### Phase 3: The Tank

<sup>8</sup> Trench 9000 was excavated under the supervision of Kevin Dicus (University of Michigan).

In the third phase a large holding tank (with internal dimensions of 1.80 meters by 0.93 meters) was built of *quasi-reticulatum* to the north-east of the cesspit, against the terrace wall (WF 400; fig. 32). The tank was lined with several layers of plaster. The original function of the tank is unclear. When exposed, it revealed a large deposit of lime, not unlike the piles of lime known from throughout Pompeii that might have been used in antiquity for the creation of mortar and plaster. The deposit in this example, however, was probably created in more modern times (see Phase 6 below).

To return to the events of antiquity, a large *opus signinum* platform appears to have been built in association with the tank. It remains visible to the west of the tank, at the top of its height, but there is some evidence to suggest it might have originally extended over much of the tank itself as traces of the *signinum* are present along the entire northern wall of the tank, as far as its eastern limit.

#### Phase 4: Unified Room with Column

The small east-west wall (WFs 1066/1067/1068) was dismantled in the fourth phase to convert the divided northern and southern spaces into a unified whole. A new cement floor was laid over the entire area. Fragments of broken marble were laid into the cement in an *opus sectile* fashion. An *opus mixtum* wall (WFs 401/402/403) was built from the terrace wall against the east face of the tank, projecting about 1.1 meters (visible in fig. 30). To the south of this wall, and in alignment, survived the bottom three courses of a brick column that formalized the space in this phase (also visible in fig. 30). To the south of this column, and maintaining the alignment with the *opus mixtum* wall against the tank (Wall 401/402/403), a second such wall appears to have been built against WF 394/398 (see fig. 29). Given this area to the south has yet to be excavated, this current hypothesis is based solely on the identical nature of each wall's type and shared alignment. What is clear, however, is that the brick column, set within the framing of the north and south support walls, created a split-entrance into this newly organized and revamped space. These were the final major structural and spatial changes to the entire area of Trench 9000.

#### Phase 5: A New Drain

Only minor changes characterised the final ancient phase of activities in Trench 9000. A new drain was built to empty into the cesspit through its northern side. This drain indicated that the cesspit had continued its operation through all successive phases. Even so, repairs were needed, and so in this fifth phase we saw the introduction of buttressing to support the north-west quarter of the structure possibly due to seismic disturbance.



Fig. 33. Large deposit of lime found within the tank.



Fig. 34. The two arched shrines cut into the east wall of the Porta Stabia. Location of Trench 10000 indicated by red shading.

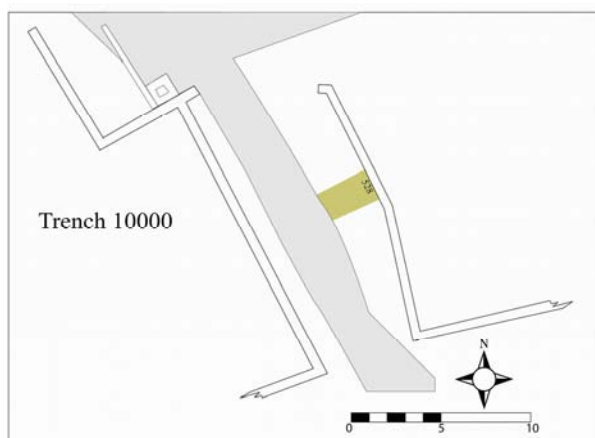


Fig. 35. Plan of Trench 10000.

#### Phase 6: The Modern Lime Pile

Modern activities defined Phase 6. Although similar in appearance to the countless deposits known from throughout the city, and believed to have been left-over from the reconstruction activities prior to the 79 CE eruption, the lime pile in the tank must have been created over the past century as it overlaid several pieces of modern construction material, including modern nails and other debris (fig. 33). This deposit, as with many others throughout the city that are often, and sometimes wrongly, interpreted as ancient, is more likely the by-product of early 20<sup>th</sup> century restoration work in the area.

#### Trench 10000

Two street-side shrines survive midway along the eastern sidewalk within the *Porta Stabia* (fig. 34).<sup>9</sup> A large niche was

<sup>9</sup> Trench 10000 was excavated under the supervision of John Bennett (Boston University).

carved directly into the stone walls (WF 528) of the gate, which at one point in its post-exhumed life still held traces of painting<sup>10</sup>. Below it is a smaller niche. Given the rarity of such shrines within Pompeii's seven gates, and following from some recent excavations into the sidewalks beneath similar examples in Regions VI and VII (see, for example, Anniboletti 2005, 381-382; Piva 2005, 196-197), we decided to open a trench in the sidewalk beneath the two shrines with the aim of learning more about their construction and any ritual activities associated with them, and also to phase the road and sidewalk that penetrated this important gate into the city (fig. 35).

The trench yielded some very positive results, including some votive deposits associated with the shrine/s, although the full potential of these results can only be realised after a more thorough analysis of the datable ceramics and identifiable biological material. The following overview of Trench 10000 therefore represents only a brief summary of the excavations from 2006, and anticipates a more complete article once the ceramic and biological data are assessed and the results digested.



Fig. 36. The earliest surface (the sidewalk, or possibly also the street) in Trench 10000 (scale = 40cm).

#### *Phase 1: The Earliest Sidewalk*

The earliest recognisable phase for this trench consisted of an early sidewalk surface, or possibly the early street itself (fig. 36). This surface was laid directly against the structure of the gate, indicating that an earlier surface, or sequence of surfaces, existed below. This earlier sequence was further suggested by its rather late dating, with deposits in the following phase likely in use not much earlier than the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE.

#### *Phase 2: The Altar*

A square altar was built against the east wall of the gate (WF 528), at which point it is likely that the smaller niche was inserted above (fig. 37). While the floor surface for this space was destroyed by later activities (in Phase 3), the construction sequence for it remained discernible (and represents the same pattern of floor surfaces that overlaid it in the later phases).



Fig. 37. The altar built against the Porta Stabia.

The volcanic stone platform that the altar rested upon was laid directly atop a Sarno rubble deposit, which served the purpose of levelling and stabilizing the surface of the ground for both the volcanic stone and presumably the contemporary floor surface.

#### *Phase 3: Raising the Level*

The floor surface of Phase 2 was eventually raised. This had the effect of partly covering the lower portion of the altar, however, the space seems to have retained its sacred character (fig. 38). Above this new surface a second layer of plaster was applied to the wall of the Gate and to touch up the altar, probably toward the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE.

The partial burying of the altar initiated a series of votive offerings which were observed and recovered from the rubble fill levelling deposit for this second phase of flooring. A small votive cup containing a small amount of carbonised remains was found just beneath this new floor surface, adjacent to the altar (fig. 39). A rim fragment of a glass plate was also located within this upper portion of the levelling deposit near the votive cup.

Equally important among the votive deposits, again within the levelling fill for the new surface (although in its earliest sequence), was the discovery of a votive bowl in which was found the terracotta bust of a woman broken into three pieces (fig. 40). Her head and the left and right portions of her torso survived. Her secure identification awaits further study and association with similar finds. Other finds included a single vertebra, a



Fig. 38. The altar after the raising of the sidewalk in the third phase.

<sup>10</sup> FIORELLI 1875: 29.

fragment of jawbone and other unidentified animal bone fragments and pieces of charcoal.

*Phase 4: The Final Sidewalk*

When the sidewalk was raised for the final time in this area, the altar became completely submerged (fig. 41). It is therefore plausible that this action resulted in the cutting of the higher and larger niche into the east wall of the Gate (fig. 34). While the earlier partial covering of the altar resulted in votive offerings, its complete burial produced no observable ritual. This lack of votive deposits may be attributed to the possibility that the (contemporary) creation of the upper large niche required no offerings to be placed in the ground.

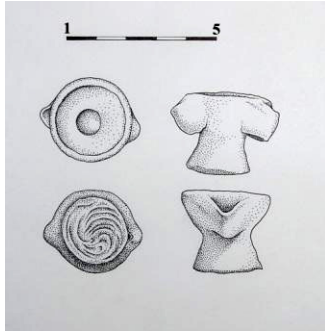


Fig. 39. Votive cup associated with the raising of the sidewalk over part of the altar (Drawn by Gina Tibbott).

The construction sequence for the 79CE surface of the sidewalk was much like the preceding examples, although much more substantial. A lava stone rubble deposit was first laid directly atop the earlier floor surface (that partially buried the altar). This was then followed by a compact silty sand deposit with many clay inclusions. Atop this silty sand deposit was a substantial loose sand rubble deposit with large lava stone pieces mixed throughout, perhaps serving as a drainage deposit for the sidewalk surface. Above this loose sand deposit was laid a compacted lava stone rubble deposit that served to level the surface and provide a stable surface on which to lay the *opus signinum* sidewalk surface.



Fig. 41. The final sidewalk surface.

*Phase 5: Modern Activity*

A cut directly beneath the lower niche extended down through the 79CE sidewalk surface, the levelling rubble deposit and into the loose sand drainage deposit, missing the top of the altar by less than 20 centimeters. This cut was then filled with modern re-deposited pyroclastic volcanic flow material.

Photographic evidence from the Archivio Fotografico of the SAP confirms that the large Sarno stone block which appears in the plans, sections and photos of this trench fell from the east wall of the Gate, most likely during or after the devastating 1980 earthquake (as seen in fig. 34).

The latest modern event to impact the trench was the cutting of a large deep trench into the ancient sidewalk surface in order to lay a series of four electrical pipes (as seen in fig. 36). The cut for this modern trench ran between the tumbled Sarno stone and the sidewalk curb stones, for a width of 50 centimeters.



Fig. 40. Female terracotta figurine found with other votive material (Drawn by Gina Tibbott).

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