

# ‘FROM THIS AREA GO TO...’

An analysis into ancient wayfinding in Roman Pompeii between 89  
BC and 79 AD

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## Abbreviations

Ancient authors and their works are abbreviated following the fourth edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2012). Epigraphical sources are abbreviated following the *Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy* (2015).

*CIL*

*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*

Vetter

E. Vetter, *Handbuch der italischen Dialekte* (Heidelberg, 1953)

## Introduction

In modern towns and cities, the urban environment is systematically organised by named streets and numbered houses. If somebody wants to go to an unfamiliar place inside a city or town, simply looking up the street name with the corresponding house number will be enough to know the exact location in relation to one's current location. When the desired location is known, handheld maps are used to navigate to this location. These handheld maps are made from paper in which case the user needs to keep looking at the map for directions. Or it is a digital map – e.g. *Google Maps* – whereby directions are given by the device which possess the map. In this case the user needs to pay limited attention to the environment and one's own location, because it will be exactly announced when to turn right or left. These modern conveniences make it easy to locate and navigate to an unfamiliar place.

In this modern world it is easy to forget that these conveniences have not always existed. The systematic assignment of official street names and house numbers – i.e. creating street addresses – was only developed and used since the mid-eighteenth-century.<sup>1</sup> Before the eighteenth-century people had to find and navigate to their exact destination without the use of street names or house numbers. In addition, for antiquity no evidence exists for the existence of practical handheld maps.<sup>2</sup> Basically, people from antiquity who travelled to an unfamiliar town or city had absolutely no insight or knowledge – unless given by letter or orally beforehand – of the urban environment they would encounter.

The absence of these conveniences did of course not prevent people in antiquity from travelling. Much like today people travelled to unfamiliar places in antiquity for a variety of reasons – e.g. respectively personal, economic, religious or social reasons. People could have wanted to travel to the house of (distant) family or friends. Workers could have transported goods for the first time to a new location. A person could have wanted to attend a religious rite far from home.<sup>3</sup> Or a client needed to visit his patron for the first time. These are just examples of possible reasons to travel to an unfamiliar environment.

Whatever the reason, people from antiquity certainly needed to rely on other methods to locate and navigate to an unfamiliar place than our modern methods. This research will attempt to analyse these possible methods in antiquity by means of the ancient town of Pompeii.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Rose-Redwood and A. Tantner, 'Introduction: governmentality house numbering and the spatial history of the modern city', *Urban History* 39:4 (2012), 607-613, 607-608.

<sup>2</sup> J.A. Latham, *Performance, Memory, and Processions in Ancient Rome: The Pompa Circensis from the Late Republic to Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2016), 91.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. The Eleusinian Mysteries.

## Historiography

When people travel from point A to point B a process called wayfinding is active. This process focusses on determining and following a path or itinerary between the origin and desired destination. It is a very purposive and directed activity in which a mental map of the environment is created.<sup>4</sup> The term was first introduced in the 1960's by Lynch in the context of architectural research. In his book 'The Image of the City' Lynch described wayfinding as the 'consistent use and organisation of definite sensory clues from the external environment'.<sup>5</sup> In short, wayfinding is the activity whereby a visitor tries to find his way in an unfamiliar environment. For his research Lynch examined three cities in the United States – i.e. Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles – and how the people inside these cities recognised and used elements of the city to understand and navigate through the urban environment. According to Lynch five elements were essential for the creation of mental maps: (1) paths, (2) edges, (3) districts, (4) nodes and (5) landmarks.<sup>6</sup> By means of his work, Lynch's theories became the inspiration for further research into people's interpretations of an urban environment, which also extended to the studies of ancient urban environments.<sup>7</sup>

Further research into urban environments – i.e. physical spaces – really took off and developed since the Spatial Turn beginning in the 1970's. During this period the reassertion of space made scholars see physical spaces as more than the backdrop in their studies, but as a separate component that could be studied. In the social studies and humanities space became to be seen as a social construct, which in turn influenced the history of humanity and the production of cultural manifestations.<sup>8</sup> Lefebvre, a philosopher and neo-Marxist sociologist, is a key figure in the development of the Spatial Turn. His book 'La Production de l'espace' from 1974 introduced the concept of a *Spatial Triad*. The *Spatial Triad* of Lefebvre is a threefold of different spaces: (1) spatial practice, (2) representations of space and (3) representational

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<sup>4</sup> R.G. Golledge, 'Human Wayfinding and Cognitive Maps', in: R.G. Golledge (ed.), *Wayfinding Behavior: Cognitive Mapping and Other Spatial Processes* (Baltimore, 1999), 5-45, 6.

<sup>5</sup> K.A. Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, 1960), 3.

<sup>6</sup> Lynch, *The Image*, 46-48.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. D. Scagliarini Corlàita, 'La situazione urbanistica degli archi onorari nella prima età impériale', *Studi sull'arco onorario romano* 21 (1979), 29-72; W.L. MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire II: An Urban Appraisal* (New Haven, 1986); D. Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge, 1996); S. Malmberg, 'Finding Your Way in the Subura', in: M. Driessen et al. (eds.), *TRAC 2008: Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (Amsterdam, April 4-6, 2008)* (Amsterdam, 2009), 39-51.

<sup>8</sup> B. Warf and S. Arias, 'Introduction: the reinsertion of space into the social sciences and humanities', in: B. Warf and S. Arias (eds.), *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary perspectives* (New York, 2009), 1-10, 1.

spaces.<sup>9</sup> Other modern scholars, most notably Soja and Harvey, used and further developed the *Spatial Triad* of Lefebvre in their studies of premodern cities and societies. For Soja the *Spatial Triad* itself was not enough and he therefore added the concept of ‘Thirdspace’ to Lefebvre’s theories.<sup>10</sup> Harvey also used the *Spatial Triad*, but he added his own concepts to suggest a different relationship between space and time.<sup>11</sup> With their influential research these three scholars showed the possibility of different types of spaces and the interaction they have with each other.

Through the influence of the Spatial Turn studies in Roman antiquity also began to focus on space and movement inside Roman urban environments. The focus shifted from research into urban architecture to the understanding of the use of space inside the Roman cities.<sup>12</sup> MacDonald became one of the first scholars in which this new research direction of ancient studies was noticeable. His work from 1986 focused on streets and open spaces inside Roman towns or cities, which functioned as locations for social interaction. Central to his research into Roman urban environments was his notion of *urban armature*. MacDonald defines *urban armature* as ‘a clearly delineated, path-like core of thoroughfares and plazas’.<sup>13</sup> *Urban armature* made it possible to travel uninterpreted through the urban environment to the most important public buildings. According to MacDonald *urban armature* made a city or town typical Roman.<sup>14</sup>

In the field of ancient studies, the influence of the Spatial Turn became most prominent in studies concerning the town of ancient Pompeii, which had approximately a population between 8000 and 10.000 inhabitants.<sup>15</sup> Of course, the focus on Pompeii is not a surprise as Pompeii is, together with Herculaneum, an almost complete preservation of a Roman town of one particular moment in time – i.e. the moment Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD. Pompeii is the closest a researcher can come to fully analysing a ‘complete’ original Roman urban environment. A highly researched city such as ancient Rome has never been uninhabited since

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<sup>9</sup> H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, 1991), 38-39. The ‘spatial practice’ is the given neutral space, which can be found daily in our society. The ‘representations of space’ is the conceptual space, that is designed by planners and scientists. And the ‘representational space’ is the space that is experienced by habitants and users.

<sup>10</sup> E. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real and imagined places* (Oxford, 1996). The ‘Thirdspace’ has to be understood as a combination and extension of the real material world, ‘the Firstspace’ and the representation of space, the ‘secondspace’.

<sup>11</sup> D. Harvey, ‘Space as a Keyword’, in: N. Castree and D. Gregory (eds.), *David Harvey: A Critical Reader* (Oxford, 2006), 270-293, 281. Harvey added the concepts of ‘absolute space’, ‘relative space’ and ‘relational space’ to the *Spatial Triad* of Lefebvre.

<sup>12</sup> R. Laurence, ‘Preface’, in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), VII-VIII, VII.

<sup>13</sup> MacDonald, *The Architecture*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> R. Ling, *Pompeii: History, Life & Afterlife* (Stroud, 2005), 99.

antiquity. Therefore, the city has been continuously rebuild resulting in the loss of the original urban landscape of ancient Rome. For spatial studies, Pompeii is the best, if not possibly the only, comprehensive option in Roman antiquity.

The first spatial studies of Pompeii, before the new approach of MacDonald, focused on the creation of models of the town based on economic and social spatial planning. The most notable studies during this time were the works of Raper and Eschebach in the 1970's.<sup>16</sup> The work of Eschebach was a major undertaking in which he tried to systematically compose a list of every building in Pompeii. Every building was in detail described with an assumption of its possible function – e.g. inn or shop. This research was continuously updated and eventually his widow took over and published in 1993 an extensive work with an updated map of Pompeii (1:1000).<sup>17</sup>

After the research of MacDonald and the continuous influence of the Spatial Turn, Pompeii's spatial studies also began to focus more on movement within the urban environment instead of the buildings located within the environment. New research was based on the interaction between movement and the organizing framework of Pompeii's urban network. This interplay existed of the interaction people had with each other inside the spatial organization of Pompeii, but also focused on the reciprocal impact between the urban spatial environment and the users of this environment.<sup>18</sup> Zanker and Laurence became the earliest and most influential scholars in this new approach of Pompeii's spatial studies. Two years after MacDonald's publication Zanker published his *Stadtbilder* of Pompeii, which was eventually translated and expanded into an English version in 1998. The work of Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society*, was first published in 1994 with a revised edition in 2007. Both authors primarily focused on the spatial organisation of Pompeii and emphasised the importance of recognising the influence of this spatial organisation in the scholarly understanding of Pompeii.<sup>19</sup> The growing interest in ancient spatial studies and the movement within these spaces was further developed by Laurence, who collaborated with other scholars to publish the major interdisciplinary volume *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space*.

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<sup>16</sup> R. Raper, 'The Analysis of the Urban Structure of Pompeii: A Sociological Examination of Land Use (Semi-Micro)', in: D.L. Clarke (ed.), *Spatial Archaeology* (London, 1977); H. Eschebach, *Die Stättenaulische Entwicklung des Antiken Pompeji: Die Baugeschichte der Stabianer Thermen* (Heidelberg, 1970).

<sup>17</sup> L. Eschebach, *Gebäudverzeichnis und Stadtplan der antiken Stadt Pompeji* (Köln, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> D.J. Newsome, 'Introduction: Making Movement Meaningful', in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 1-54, 4-7.

<sup>19</sup> P. Zanker, *Pompeii: Stadtbilder als Spiegel von Gesellschaft und Herrschaftsform* (Mainz, 1988); P. Zanker, *Pompeii: Public and Private Life* (Cambridge, 1998); R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society* (New York, 2007).



Recently, spatial research of Pompeii moved their analysis to the streets itself. At first these studies consisted of an analysis of the location of the streets in relation to the entire urban network and the traffic these streets accommodated.<sup>20</sup> Poehler's work from 2006 was especially innovative and influential through his analysis of the preserved wheel ruts in Regio VI. In this research Poehler attempted to reconstruct the traffic patterns in Regio VI and concluded that a complex system of one- and two-way streets existed. This work was a continuation of the work of Tsujimura in which the wheel ruts in Pompeii were first described and analysed to understand ancient Roman traffic.<sup>21</sup> Since his first published work Poehler has continued to research this field of study and very recently published a new extensive book of Pompeii's traffic patterns.<sup>22</sup> At present, a new shift is noticeable in which Roman streets are not only seen as a mode of transportation, but also as space for social interaction. More attention is given to the activities in the streets and the manner in which people experienced the streets – e.g. smells and sounds.<sup>23</sup>

The Spatial Turn also influenced new modern research into the concept of wayfinding. These new studies were predominantly done in the field of architectural and design studies. The work of Lynch was expanded in the 1980's by architect and environmental psychologist Passini. He argued that mental maps are not solely created by the five elements of Lynch, but also by signage and other graphic communication.<sup>24</sup> Eight years later Passini published a new work together with graphic designer Arthur. Their work brought three elements of wayfinding together: (1) architecture, (2) human interaction and (3) graphic signs. According to Passini and Arthur wayfinding is a lot more dynamic than Lynch described with his five elements. This is because environments are very complex entities that are perceived by the activities in the environments themselves. Wayfinding decisions are made as a response to the stimuli people receive in environments.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> E.g. B. Gesemann, *Die strassen der antiken Stadt Pompeii: Entwicklung und Gestaltung* (Frankfurt, 1996); E. Poehler, 'The circulation of traffic in Pompeii's Regio VI', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19 (2006), 53-74; R. Laurence, 'City traffic and the archaeology of Roman streets from Pompeii to Rome: The nature of traffic in the ancient city', in: D. Mertens (ed.), *Stadtverkehr in der Antiken Welt* (Wiesbaden, 2008); A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011).

<sup>21</sup> S. Tsujimura, 'Ruts in Pompeii: The Traffic system in the Roman city', *Opuscula Pompeiana* 2 (1991), 58-86.

<sup>22</sup> E.E. Poehler, *The Traffic Systems of Pompeii* (Oxford, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> E.g. R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011); J. Hartnett, *The Roman Street: Urban Life and Society in Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Rome* (New York, 2017); E. Betts (ed.), *Senses of the Empire: Multisensory Approaches to Roman Culture* (New York, 2017). This new shift in the ancient spatial studies is connected to the newly formed Sensory Turn.

<sup>24</sup> R. Passini, *Wayfinding in Architecture* (New Jersey, 1984).

<sup>25</sup> R. Passini and P. Arthur, *Wayfinding: People, Signs and Architecture* (New York, 1992), 31-33.

In 2005 a new term was developed by designer Mollerup that was closely connected with the concept of wayfinding: wayshowing. According to Mollerup wayshowing enables wayfinding, because wayshowing is the act of assisting wayfinding. For example, gate number signs at an airport are wayshowing elements and help the wayfinding of a person to the right gate. However, wayshowing is not limited to graphical signs. Good wayshowing starts with the planning and construction of the urban environment. A good wayshowing environment needs a combination of repetitive and alternating elements. Repetitive elements make the urban environment recognizable and makes it more difficult for a person to lose his orientation in the whole urban network. Variation makes specific areas distinguishable and facilitates local wayfinding.<sup>26</sup>

These new concepts and theories developed by these disciplines never quite reached the field of history. Moreover, studies into ancient wayfinding are almost completely absent or lacking in their analysis. A first attempt was made in the 1940's by Italian scholar Paoli. He dedicated one chapter in his book to summarise possible objects in the urban environment, which could facilitate the wayfinding of people in Classical antiquity.<sup>27</sup> Paoli did not use the term landmarks, but landmarks are essentially what he is summarising in his book. The 1990 article written by Ling was the next and still is the only research into the wayfinding of strangers in ancient Pompeii. In this article Ling summarised the preserved wayshowing elements in Pompeii – e.g. street and gate names – and concluded that the Romans did not develop a systematic nomenclature of street and house numbers which could be used by strangers and visitors. He thereafter analysed the practicality of ancient wayfinding, which is not limited to Pompeii. Strangers had to ask the way and were probably given directions by the use of landmarks.<sup>28</sup> After Ling two other works analysed ancient wayfinding. Malmberg applied the five elements of Lynch to the wayfinding in the *Subura* in Rome.<sup>29</sup> And Latham dedicated a very small part of his chapter to wayfinding in republican Rome. In this part he confirms the use of landmarks in ancient wayfinding.<sup>30</sup> These studies are the sum of all limited research into ancient wayfinding.

The limited amount of studies in ancient wayfinding all focus on the theoretical possibilities of ancient wayfinding without applying these theories to an actual ancient urban landscape. An exception could be made for the research of Malmberg, however he still uses

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<sup>26</sup> P. Mollerup, *Wayshowing: A Guide to Environmental Signage* (Zurich, 2005), 71.

<sup>27</sup> U.E. Paoli, *Vita Romana*, (Firenze, 1948), 181-201.

<sup>28</sup> R. Ling, 'A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City', *Greece & Rome* 37:2 (1990), 204-214.

<sup>29</sup> Malmberg, 'Finding Your Way', 39-51.

<sup>30</sup> Latham, *Performance, Memory, and Processions*, 91-98.

the theories of Lynch, while new and contradicting theories have been developed since the 1960's. This research will attempt to reconcile the big gap that has appeared between the new modern studies into wayfinding and the field of ancient history. The newly coined term wayshowing will play an important part. Also, this research will try to apply the theories concerning ancient wayfinding into practice by using the urban landscape of ancient Pompeii. The following question will be the core of this research: 'how did strangers find their way in the ancient town of Roman Pompeii between 89 BC and AD 79?'

This research will make use of a combination of literary, archaeological and epigraphical evidence from ancient Pompeii, which still consists of a lot of uncertainties. Therefore, this research will also be hedged with numerous assumptions. By using and expanding the three wayshowing elements of Passini and Arthur – i.e. architecture, human interaction and graphic signs – as a framework for the analysis of ancient wayfinding in Pompeii, the research of possible Pompeian wayshowing elements inside these three wayfinding elements may take place. The first chapter of this research will focus on the practical aspect of how people in antiquity exactly found and navigated to their desired destination. The second to fourth chapter will respectively use the three wayfinding elements of Passini and Arthur to analyse Pompeii and simultaneously point to possible wayshowing elements. The final chapter will combine the knowledge of the previous chapters and give three possible examples of itinerary ancient Pompeii.

## Chapter one

### Ancient Wayfinding

This first chapter will establish the basis of this research: the exact manner in which ancient wayfinding took place. First, the chapter will analyse the existing street names in the ancient Roman world and the problems connected to these street names in their wayfinding capability. Second, the use of landmarks and the congregation of different kinds of people in the giving of directions. And third, the wayfinding to a private residence. No evidence exists for the existence of handheld maps or a system of house numbering in antiquity.<sup>31</sup> Street names did exist, albeit very limited.<sup>32</sup> The limited amount of official named urban streets were not systematically developed into a system which could be used by people travelling the towns and cities of the Roman Empire.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, most urban streets did not have an official name or any name at all.<sup>34</sup>

The archaeological evidence of the names of the streets in Pompeii is very scarce. A single inscription located at the *Porta di Stabia* mentions two *aediles* who defined three different streets in Pompeii: (1) the *Via Pompeiana*, (2) the *Via Jovia* and (3) the *Via Dequviaris*.<sup>35</sup> The *Via Pompeiana* is the present *Via Stabiana*. The exact location of the other two streets in the present urban plan of Pompeii is not known. Although it has been suggested that these three streets were connected with each other, because they are named together in the inscription.<sup>36</sup> Another Oscan inscription mentions the *Via Meffiu*.<sup>37</sup> Because of the bad condition of the inscription the two words could refer to a street named *Mefira* or it could mean middle street. The location of this possible street is also unknown.<sup>38</sup> At present, no further evidence exists for other streets names in Pompeii. It could be that the other street names have been lost or simply that no other official street names existed in Pompeii. These assumptions will be difficult, if not impossible, to prove.

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<sup>31</sup> Paoli, *Vita Romana*, 181.; Latham, *Performance, Memory, and Processions*, 91; Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 204; Malmberg, 'Finding Your Way', 41.

<sup>32</sup> For an overview of the approximately 180 Roman street names we know of see: S. Zimmer, 'Zur Bildung der altrömischen Straßennamen', *ZVS* 90 (1976), 183-199.

<sup>33</sup> Latham, *Performance, Memory, and Processions*, 91.

<sup>34</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 34; Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 8; Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 208; Paoli, *Vita Romana*, 181.

<sup>35</sup> Vetter 8.

<sup>36</sup> Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 207.

<sup>37</sup> Vetter 28.

<sup>38</sup> T.K. Henderson, 'Constructing an Oscan Cityscape: Pompeii and the *Eituns* Inscriptions', in: A.M. Kemezis (ed.), *Urban Dreams and Realities in Antiquity: Remains and Representations of the Ancient City* (Leiden, 2014), 99-120, 99; Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 207.

According to Ling some informal streets names were created on an *ad hoc* basis or periphrases were used to describe the streets. For example, an inscription north of Rome in the ancient town of Falerii (Civita Castellana) refers to the ‘new road’ located from long street to the arch next to the Capitolium.<sup>39</sup> Street names such as ‘the new road’ or ‘long street’ function as *ad hoc* street names for the locals and are orally transmitted to each other.<sup>40</sup> As long as the ‘new road’ stays the newest road and the ‘long street’ stays the longest street, these informal names function adequate for the locals to pinpoint precise locations. However, it could quickly become very confusing if a newer street or a longer street is laid down. The old ‘new street’ and old ‘long street’ need to be renamed. Thus, it seems informal street names were often not very permanent.

The main problem with informal street names is that they were created by the locals and orally transmitted to the locals. An added difficulty is that we have no evidence of street signs or signposts being made and used in an urban environment.<sup>41</sup> A stranger would not have known that these names existed and even if the name was given to him, he would not know where the street was located. From the evidence we have from Roman street names it seems that the Romans did not consider the naming of streets, and thereby creating one system of nomenclature, as important as it is considered in the modern world. A stranger had to ask the way to an inhabitant, because no maps or signposts were available, which would have made it possible to look for the desired location himself. The giving of directions to strangers could not be based on street names but was probably a matter of pointing to different landmarks in the urban landscape.<sup>42</sup>

The use of landmarks for giving directions and navigating an urban environment in antiquity is confirmed by a small amount of ancient literary sources. The most obvious of these sources is a fragment of the Roman playwright Terence from the second-century BC. In this fragment of Terence’s comedy *Adelphoe*, Demea is looking for his brother. His brother’s slave, named Syrus, knows his master’s whereabouts and gives Demea the directions to his brother.

DEM: Tell me the place, then.

SYR: You know the portico down that way (pointing) by the market?

DEM: Of course, I know it.

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<sup>39</sup> *CIL* IX.5438

<sup>40</sup> Ling, ‘A Stranger in Town’, 209.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 211; Paoli, *Vita Romana*, 191-201.

SYR: Go past it straight up the street. When you get to the top, there's a downhill slope in front of you; run down there. Then there's a shrine on this side (pointing) and not far away there's an alley.

DEM: Which one?

SYR: The one by the large fig tree.

DEM: I know it.

SYR: Proceed down this.

DEM: But there's no through way.

SYR: Of course not. Blast! You must think I've lost my senses! My mistake. Go back to the portico. In fact, this is a much shorter route and there's less chance of losing your way. You know the house of that wealthy Cratinus?

DEM: Yes.

SYR: When you've passed this, turn left, go straight down the street, and, when you get to the city gate, right by the pond, there's a bakery and facing that a workshop. That's where he is.<sup>43</sup>

This fragment was originally meant to be funny for its audience. Syrus purposely tried to deceive Demea in taking the wrong itinerary. He fails because Demea is familiar with the urban environment and the streets within it. The audience could relate with both figures, because they experienced the same kind of explanations and difficulties in their navigation of the urban environment.<sup>44</sup> Although its purpose was to deceive this fragment shows the essential elements of urban navigation in the ancient Roman world. In order to travel through a town or city an inhabitant or visitor focused on a multitude of prominent landmarks in the urban environment. These landmarks could be urban, natural or topographical features in the direct environment.<sup>45</sup> In the play of Terence these landmarks are the portico, the market, a downhill slope, a shrine, the large fig tree, the house of Cratinus, the city gate, the pond, a bakery and a workshop. Especially for inhabitants, who gave the directions, it was important to develop a mental map based on the prominent landmarks in relation to each other. Directions are thus given not in abstract distance terms, but on what a visitor will encounter in his travels through the urban environment.

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<sup>43</sup> Ter. *Ad.* 571-583.

<sup>44</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 299.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

In the hot Mediterranean climate and because of cramped housing, the outside – i.e. the streets – became an extension of the living space of inhabitants in Pompeii, which meant that the streets were always occupied during daytime.<sup>46</sup> The experience of the visitor or inhabitant moving through a city or town is influenced by the people he encounters. The different types of people that congregated in certain parts of a city or town could be used to assist the wayfinding of the visitor. In the comedy *Curculio*, by the Roman playwright Plautus from the second-century BC, a supplier of costumes from the market speaks to the audience and tells them in an exaggerated and humorous manner, where the different types of people in Rome are located.

‘But until he comes out I’ll show in which place you can easily find which sort of person, so that no one labours too laboriously if he wants to meet someone, be it a man of vice or a man without vice, be it a worthy or a worthless character. Anyone who wants to meet a perjurer should go to the assembly place. Anyone who wants to meet a liar and a braggart must look for him at the temple of Venus Cloacina, and anyone who wants to meet rich and married wasters must look below the colonnaded hall. In the same place there will also be grown-up prostitutes and men who ask for formal guarantees from prospective debtors. Those who contribute to shared meals are on the fish market. At the lower end of the market decent and wealthy people stroll around; in the middle part of the market next to the open drain are the mere show-offs. Arrogant, overtalkative, and malevolent people are above the Lake, ones who boldly insult their neighbour for no good reason and who have enough that could in all truth be said about themselves. Below the Old Shops there are those who give and receive on interest. Behind the temple of Castor there are those whom you shouldn’t trust quickly. In the Tuscan Quarter there are those people who sell themselves. In the Velabrum you can meet the miller or the butcher or the soothsayer or those who turn or give others the opportunity to turn.’<sup>47</sup>

This information is given to the audience because the supplier wanted to speed up and facilitate the process of finding someone who belongs to one of these categories. Again, this fragment is highly exaggerated to be funny. Nevertheless, it shows a different system to organise an

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<sup>46</sup> C. Holleran, ‘The Street Life of Ancient Rome’, in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 246-261, 259; Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 50.

<sup>47</sup> Plaut. *Curc.* 4.1.467-481

urban environment to give directions: the supplier has created a mental map based on people instead of inanimate landmarks or buildings functions. Not every person has a clear profession that is connected to an obvious building, such as the baker who is located at the bakery. A beggar may wander in the streets of a certain area and a travelling merchant sells his good from place to place.

Roman society existed of different social classes with a clear hierarchy.<sup>48</sup> Although people from all different social classes came into contact with each other in their movement through the streets, their houses were mostly segregated.<sup>49</sup> For example, the Palatine Hill in Rome was an exclusive location for elite housing.<sup>50</sup> While the *Subura* was inhabited by people from the lowest social class in badly constructed *insulae*.<sup>51</sup> Thus, different social classes - i.e. different types of people – congregated in different parts of an urban environment. If a person was not as easily found, such as the example of the baker above, assumptions about his whereabouts could be made based on his social class. The inhabitants of the urban environment knew where the different social classes would congregate and could direct the stranger to the right area. Indeed, this could speed up the process of wayfinding by limiting the search area of the visitor. It is not likely that such a big social-economic gap as in Rome – i.e. the Palatine Hill and the *Subura* – occurred in the much smaller town of Pompeii. However, even in Pompeii evidence exist that people from low social classes – e.g. prostitutes – congregated in difficult to find alleys removed from the busy public places.<sup>52</sup>

Until now the sources and examples focused on finding non-private buildings or a person outside his private home in the urban street network of antiquity. The wayfinding of a specific residential building is possibly a slightly more complex process for a stranger. The *Epigrams* of Martial give an example of finding a specific residential building. In this fragment Martial instructs his book to visit the house of Proculus', his patron, to perform the morning *salutation* in his place. To help his book Martial provides the directions to Proculus' house.

'Go to my place and present my greetings, book. You are bidden to proceed in duty to Proculus' handsome house. You ask the way? I'll tell you. You will pass the temple of Castor, close by ancient Vesta, and the house of the Virgins. From there you will take the

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<sup>48</sup> D.P. Kehoe, 'Law and Social Formation in the Roman Empire', in: M. Peachin (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World* (Oxford, 2011), 144-166, 149.

<sup>49</sup> Hartnett, 'Nuisances', 136.

<sup>50</sup> G.S. Aldrete, *Daily Life in the Roman city: Rome, Pompeii, and Ostia* (London, 2008), 13.

<sup>51</sup> Aldrete, *Daily Life*, 102.

<sup>52</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 92.



Sacred Slope and make for the august Palatine, where shines many an image of our exalted Leader. Do not be delayed by the rayed mass of the marvellous colossus that joys to outdo the work of Rhodes. Make a turn at the dwelling of tipsy Lyaeus, where stand Cybele's dome with its painted Corybants. Right ahead on your left the shining façade of a mansion and the hall of a lofty house await your approach. Seek this house. Have no fear of arrogance and a haughty threshold. The doorway opens wide from post to post, none wider, and to none does Phoebus and the poetic sisterhood bear closer affection. If he shall say, 'Why does he not come himself?', you make this excuse: 'Because no matter what these poems are worth, a morning caller could not have written them'<sup>53</sup>

Geyssen has identified this itinerary from beginning at the *Sacra Via*, through the *Forum Romanum*, to the *Summa Sacra Via* and up to the Palatine Hill.<sup>54</sup> With this itinerary in mind, Martial's book will find Proculus' house on the left. Just as in the previous examples the directions are given by the use of landmarks in the urban environment – e.g. the marvellous colossus and Cybele's dome. Directions to a private building are therefore no different than the directions to public buildings or to persons on the street.

In the case of this fragment the directions are already known and written down. However, we must assume that this was often not the case. Most probably first-time visitors only knew the town or city of the person they wanted to visit and not the precise location of the residential building. Inside the town or city, the stranger had to ask directions to the private house but could not use streets or house numbers as they did not sufficiently exist.<sup>55</sup> Ling therefore concludes that private houses must have been known and referred to by their owner's names.<sup>56</sup> In Pompeii evidence exists for this assumption in the painted advertisements for apartments to rent on the buildings of Pompeii. These advertisements clearly state the owner's names – i.e. Maius and Julia Felix – instead of describing the location of the apartments.<sup>57</sup> Evidently, the name of the owner was enough knowledge to locate the apartments.

Proculus' mansion, as it is described by Martial, is rather easy to find with the given directions, because his house is an epitome of wealth and therefore stands out in the urban environment. In addition, his house is his property and of him alone. He only has to share his

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<sup>53</sup> Mart. 1.70

<sup>54</sup> J. Geyssen, 'Sending a Book to the Palatine: Martial 1.70 and Ovid', *Mnemosyne* 52:6 (1999), 718-738, 719.

<sup>55</sup> Latham, *Performance, Memory, and Processions*, 91; Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 204; Malmberg, 'Finding Your Way', 41.

<sup>56</sup> Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 211.

<sup>57</sup> *CIL* IV.138; *CIL* IV.1136

house with his possible family. With this information and his function as patron, it is much more likely that he is a known figure in Rome and that most inhabitants of Rome knew how to give the directions to his house if a stranger asked for it.

Of course, not every Roman was as rich as Proculus. Most Romans lived in the cramped and badly build *insulae*, which they had the share with multiple families.<sup>58</sup> These Romans had no own house to refer to and possibly only inhabitants living in the vicinity of the same *insulae* knew where the ‘house’ of the person was the stranger was looking for. These much poorer Romans were much less known in the whole urban environment. Assumingly, a stranger had to be lucky to encounter the right person outside the vicinity of the desired *insulae* to ask for directions. If such a person was found it is possible he did not know the exact location and instead directed the stranger, by the use of landmarks, to the general area where the *insulae* was located. Once the stranger arrived in the right area he had to further ask the inhabitants of the area for the specific *insulae* and the person he was looking for.<sup>59</sup> These inhabitants living in close proximity of the person the stranger was looking for probably guided him to the right *insulae*.

In the wayfinding to a residential building it may be carefully assumed that a difference existed in the wayfinding of a house belonging to someone of a high social-economic class or someone belonging to the opposite class. ‘Direct’ directions to the house of a well-known person – i.e. a person of high social-economic status – are more likely to occur, because many people know the exact location of the house. A stranger only has to be given the directions once to find the house on his own. Although for both kind of residential buildings directions were given by the use of landmarks, the location of a specific *insulae* required more steps to be found. A stranger had to keep asking the way to different inhabitants to slowly get closer to his desired location. And in the end, may even be guided to the *insulae* by neighbours of the person living in the *insulae*. Assumingly, a stranger is much more dependent on the help of multiple inhabitants when searching for people or houses belonging to a low social-economic class.

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<sup>58</sup> Aldrete, *Daily Life*, 102.

<sup>59</sup> Ling, ‘A Stranger in Town’, 212.

## Chapter two

### The Urban Environment of Pompeii

From this chapter onwards, an attempt will be made to give a, albeit very selective, descriptive outline of the town of Pompeii and life inside it for a stranger or inhabitant moving through ancient Pompeii. In turn, this descriptive outline will be analysed for its wayfinding and wayshowing capabilities. This chapter will focus on the first wayfinding element of Passini and Arthur – i.e. architecture – however this element will be much more expanded. Architecture is defined as the ‘practise of designing and constructing buildings’.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, this chapter will focus on the constructed (public) buildings in ancient Pompeii and how they may facilitate wayfinding. However, this analysis will not be limited to these buildings and will also focus on the design and construction of the whole urban plan of Pompeii – e.g. streets. Pompeii’s urban plan and the buildings in this space are intertwined and cannot be analysed separately. Otherwise an incomplete analysis would be given.

As Mollerup stated, good wayshowing starts with the planning and construction of the urban environment.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the first part of this chapter will concentrate on the development of the urban plan of Pompeii to determine if Pompeii was purposely designed to facilitate wayfinding and thus expresses good wayshowing. Thereafter, the urban landscape of AD 79 will be examined. And at last, with the help of the three quantitative methods of Kaiser, the street network of Pompeii will be analysed.

The entire origins and urban development of early Pompeii are unclear for scholars who research the ancient town of Pompeii. Both the literary and the archaeological evidence are scarce and uncertain in providing information about early Pompeii – i.e. pre-Roman Pompeii.<sup>62</sup> Strabo and Pliny the Elder are the only authors who give any information about Pompeii’s pre-Roman existence and they do so in one dense sentence. According to Strabo Pompeii was once held by the Oscans, then by the Tyrrhenians and the Pelasgians and at last by the Samnite before the Romans came.<sup>63</sup> In a contradictory statement Pliny the Elder claims that Pompeii

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<sup>60</sup> Oxford Dictionary, ‘Architecture’ <<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/architecture>> [consulted on 17-07-2018].

<sup>61</sup> Mollerup, *Wayshowing*, 71.

<sup>62</sup> Ellis, S.J.R., ‘Preface’, in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series 85* (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 7-10, 7; P.G. Guzzo, ‘The origins and development of Pompeii: the state of our understanding and some working hypotheses’, in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series 85* (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 11-18, 11; J. Descœudres, ‘History and Historical Sources’, in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 9-27, 9.

<sup>63</sup> Strabo 5.4.8.

and the area surrounding it has been in the hands of Oscans, Greeks, Umbrians, Etruscans and Campanians.<sup>64</sup> Other literary sources concerning Pompeii date from the after the Social Wars (91-88 BC) in the first-century AD and only briefly mention the most known events of Pompeii – i.e. the Social War, the earthquake of AD 62 or the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79.<sup>65</sup>

Excavations into the complex and lacking archaeological remains of early Pompeii have sporadically taken place.<sup>66</sup> Although the archaeological evidence is lacking, this evidence is the main source for constructing the urban development of Pompeii. Archaeological excavations have shown that the earliest traces of cultivation in Pompeii appeared in the seventh-century BC.<sup>67</sup> However, it is not until the beginning of the sixth-century that major building projects took place, whereby Pompeii could be defined as a town. In this period the Doric Temple, the Temple of Apollo and the first tuff walls, called *pappamonte*, were build. The *pappamonte* functioned as an enclosure for agricultural needs and enclosed an area of approximately 66 hectares, which had the same alignment as later fortifications. Thus, the boundaries of the final town were already established in the sixth-century BC.<sup>68</sup>

The exact chronology of Pompeii's urban development inside the enclosure to the final form of Pompeii in AD 79 is a highly debatable topic. Especially during the centuries of the Samnite period (fifth-century BC – 89 BC) the exact building order is uncertain. In 1913 Francis Haverfield proposed the influential dichotomy of the *Altstadt* and the rest of Pompeii, which would later be called the *Neustadt*. The *Altstadt* formed the original built up area in the southwest corner of Pompeii. According to Haverfield this area was the primitive residential nucleus of Pompeii because the streets in this area were not regular in itself and in its relation to one other. The *Altstadt* did not fit the highly uniform pattern of the *Neustadt*.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Plin. *HN*. 3.60.

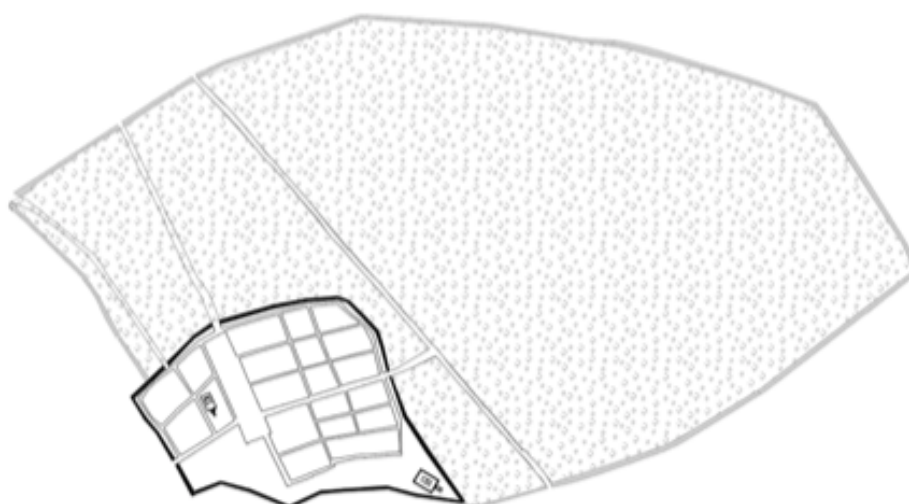
<sup>65</sup> E.g. Vitruvius. *De arch.* 2.6; Livy 9.38.2; Vell. Pat. 2.16.2; Sen. *QNat.* 6.1; Mart. 4.44; Stat. *Silv.* 3.5.72-104, Tac. *Ann.* 15.22; Plin. *Ep.* 6.16; App. *B Civ.* 1.50; Cass. Dio 66.21-23.

<sup>66</sup> Ellis, 'Preface', 7-9; R. Ling, 'Development of Pompeii's Public Landscape in the Roman Period', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 119-128, 119; F. Coarelli and F. Pesando, 'The urban development of NW Pompeii: The Archaic period to the 3rd c. B.C.', in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series* 85 (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 37-58, 37.

<sup>67</sup> Guzzo, 'The origins and development', 11.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 12; Descœudres, 'History and Historical Sources', 14; Ling, *Pompeii*, 29; Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 69; P. Carafa, 'Recent Work on Early Pompeii', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 63-72, 63; C. Chiaramonte, 'The Walls and Gates', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 140-149, 140; Poehler, *The Traffic Systems*, 25.

<sup>69</sup> F. Haverfield, *Ancient Town-Planning* (Oxford, 1913), 64-67.



**Figure 1.1:** Pompeii's *Altstadt* and the existing suburban roads during the 'hiatus', by E.E. Poehler, *The Traffic Systems of Pompeii* (Oxford, 2017), 27.

In the second half of the fifth-century until the middle of the fourth-century Pompeii experienced a period of regression and depopulation, whereby Pompeii shrunk to the area of the *Altstadt*.<sup>70</sup> This period is called the 'hiatus' by its lack of archaeological material from this period and by its uncertainty why exactly this regression took place.<sup>71</sup> After the 'hiatus' the development of the urban town plan – i.e. the town plan that exists in AD 79 – would be almost completely laid out by the Samnites, an Oscan speaking people, during the fourth and third-century BC.<sup>72</sup> In this period a new set of fortification walls was built, which established the final position of the seven town gates.<sup>73</sup> In addition, the area inside the walls was completely built in by the *insulae* blocks and the extended network of smaller streets. With the exception of Regio II, the urban town plan of Pompeii was already complete and in its final form before the arrival of the Romans.<sup>74</sup> (Map 1).

It seems that the already existing suburban streets outside the *Altstadt*, which lead to the forum inside the *Altstadt*, formed the basis for the main streets in Roman Pompeii (Figure

<sup>70</sup> Guzzo, 'The origins and development', 15; Poehler, *The Traffic Systems*, 27; D. Esposito, P. Kastenmeier and C. Imperatore, 'Excavations in the Caserma dei Gladiatori: a contribution to the understanding of Archaic Pompeii', in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series 85* (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 113-137, 131; L. Pedroni, 'The history of Pompeii's urban development in the area north of the 'Altstadt'', in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series 85* (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 159-168, 159-160.

<sup>71</sup> Coarelli, 'The urban development', 47; D. Esposito, 'Excavations in the Caserma', 13.

<sup>72</sup> Guzzo, 'The origins and development', 16; Descœudres, 'History and Historical Sources', 15.

<sup>73</sup> Poehler, *The Traffic Systems*, 31.

<sup>74</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 20; Ling, 'Development of Pompeii's', 119; C.W. Westfall, 'Urban Planning, Roads, Streets and Neighborhoods', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 129-149, 129.

## Pompeii



**Figure 1.2:** Pompeii's main streets and town gates, by H. Geertman, 'The Urban Development of the Pre-Roman City', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 82-97, 87.

1.1.). The main streets in Roman Pompeii followed the alignment of these early suburban streets, whereby most of them were extended and connected to a town gate. This extension meant that the forum still acted as the centre of the town, because almost all the main streets needed to end up in the forum. The main street combinations based on the early suburban streets – i.e. *Vico del Farmacista/Via Consolare*, *Via del Foro/Via di Mercurio*, *Via Vesuvio/Via Stabiana* and *Via Marina/Via dell'Abbondanza* (partial) – were properly laid down to the *Porta Marina*, *Porta di Ercolano*, *Porta del Vesuvio* and *Porta di Stabia* town gates.<sup>75</sup> In addition, the new main streets were created by extending the *Via dell'Abbondanza* to the *Porta del Sarno*, by creating the *Via di Nocera* from the *Porta di Nocera* to the *Via dell'Abbondanza* and by creating the street combination of the *Via delle Terme/Via della Fortuna/Via di Nola*. The latter street combination connected itself to the *Porta di Nola* and crossed the *Via Vesuvio/Via Stabiana* and the *Via del Foro/Via di Mercurio* (Figure 1.2; Map 1).

No consensus exists about the planned nature of Pompeii's urban plan. Although the orthogonal plan of Pompeii seems like a unitary plan, the approach to this question dictates the answer. Therefore, scholars are divided into two theories: (1) the *Neustadt* area of Pompeii's urban landscape developed gradually and organised or (2) the *Neustadt* area of Pompeii was

<sup>75</sup> H. Geertman, 'The Urban Development of the Pre-Roman City', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 82-97, 82-90; Poehler, *The Traffic Systems*, 27-32; Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 69.

built in by one unitary plan. Scholars who support the former theory look at the different shapes of the *insulae* blocks to differentiate each development phase. Even inside this theory no agreement exists on the exact amount of development phases – e.g. Ling recognises four development phases, Descœudres five and Geertman seven.<sup>76</sup> Supporters of the latter theory see the coherence of the urban street plan as evidence for a unitary plan. According to them the different shapes of the *insulae* blocks are not the consequence of chronology but the influence of topography.<sup>77</sup> Because of this ongoing debate and the lack of clear archaeological evidence it cannot be claimed that Pompeii was a planned town. Even more so if the later Roman changes of the urban plan are considered.

The last changes in the urban lay-out – i.e. before the final outline of AD 79 – were made during the Roman Period of Pompeii (89 BC – AD 79). Pompeii was made a veteran colony, which meant an accompanying influx of Roman veterans to the town. The previous Samnite town was not designed to the social and cultural desires of the Roman veterans.<sup>78</sup> A proper Roman town needed a monumental urban centre with the appropriate Roman public buildings – e.g. temples dedicated to Roman gods and public baths – which would ensure Roman quit and peace.<sup>79</sup> Also important were provisions for entertainment purposes, which the Romans highly valued.<sup>80</sup> Samnite Pompeii primarily functioned as a commercial centre and therefore lacked these kind of buildings.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, the Romans added a multitude of public buildings to Pompeii – e.g. the amphitheatre, the ‘covered theatre’, the temple of Vespasian and the forum baths. (Map 2).

The most dramatic change made by the Romans in Pompeii’s urban landscape was the destruction of the existing *insulae* blocks in Regio II.<sup>82</sup> To meet the desire for entertainment facilities, the Romans built a large amphitheatre and *paleastra* in the southeast corner of the city. According to Ling the Latin term *spectacular*, which was written above the entrances of the amphitheatre, is evidence for the Roman character of the entertainment facilities and

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<sup>76</sup> Ling, *Pompeii*, 31; Descœudres, ‘History and Historical Sources’, 12; Geertman, ‘The Urban Development’, 89.

<sup>77</sup> M. Holappa and E. Viitanen, ‘Topographic conditions in the urban plan of Pompeii: the urban landscape in 3D’, in: S.J.R. Ellis (ed.), *The Making of Pompeii: Studies in the History and Urban Development of an Ancient Town*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementary series 85* (Portsmouth-Rhode Island, 2011), 169-189, 182-183; Poehler, *The Traffic Systems*, 33-35.

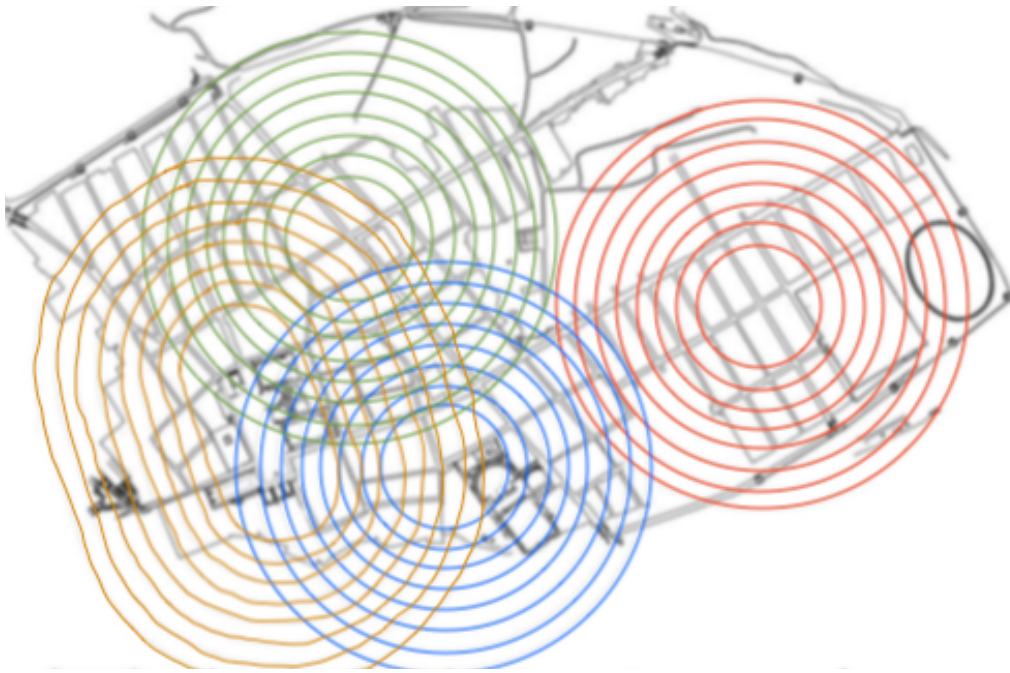
<sup>78</sup> Ling, *Pompeii*, 53; Ling, ‘Development of Pompeii’s’, 120; Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 69.

<sup>79</sup> J. Edmondson, ‘Cities and Urban Life in the Western Provinces’, in: D.S. Potter (ed.), *A Companion to the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 2010), 250-280, 280.

<sup>80</sup> Juv. 10.77-81; Tac. *Dial.* 29.

<sup>81</sup> Westfall, ‘Urban Planning’, 129.

<sup>82</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 70.



**Figure 1.3:** Roman Pompeii's four districts, based on C.W. Westfall, 'Urban Planning, Roads, Streets and Neighborhoods', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 129-149, 130.

thereby proof as a response to Roman colonist demands.<sup>83</sup> The term *spectacular* was a common Roman term used for amphitheatres in the Republican Period. Only later in the Imperial Period would the term *amphitheatrum* be commonly used.<sup>84</sup> As a result of the construction of these two facilities the street grid in Regio II was changed. Three streets disappeared completely and four *insulae* block were combined into two *insulae* blocks (II.IV and II.V), which also destroyed two small streets between these *insulae* blocks. Although it was not part of the original urban street plan, the space between the amphitheatre and the *palaestra* came to be used as a street.<sup>85</sup> After these last Roman changes Pompeii reached its final urban plan of AD 79 (Map 1).

The urban plan of Pompeii of AD 79 is the lay-out that will be analysed for its possible facilitating function of wayfinding in the town of ancient Pompeii. In Roman Pompeii the Romans defined four overlapping districts: (red) a district for outdoor entertainment in the southeast centred around the amphitheatre and the *palaestra*; (green) a residential district centred around the central baths; (blue) a cultural district for theatrical entertainment centred around the theatre; and (yellow) a district entirely centred around the forum. The diameter of each district is approximately 500 metres, whereby it is possible to walk to each district within

<sup>83</sup> CIL X.852; Ling, *Pompeii*, 54-55.

<sup>84</sup> K.E. Welch, *The Roman Amphitheatre: From its Origins to the Colosseum* (New York, 2007), 76.

<sup>85</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 70.



15 minutes (Figure 1.3; Map 2).<sup>86</sup> The focus of the same kind of thematically related buildings in each district – i.e. the same area – makes the wayfinding for strangers from antiquity and modern tourists easier, because it makes the search area smaller. Strangers who do not know the location of a specific building in Pompeii can instead travel or be pointed to a certain area in Pompeii. With the acquired knowledge that a particular area holds the same kind of buildings, of which the designated building belongs to, a stranger knows to stay in the area to search further – i.e. in the case the stranger fails to immediately find his destination. Because the diameter of each district is approximately 500 meters, the search area in itself is not too big. In comparison with the whole town of Pompeii it should not take too long to find the destination. The logical and easy to navigate orthogonal plan of Pompeii further facilitates wayfinding. Thus, in these well-defined districts and the orthogonal plan, good wayshowing is already evident.

However, the urban landscape of Pompeii does not exist entirely of clear demarcations. Indeed, the theatrical and entertainment buildings are all grouped together in the same area, but this is not the case for all buildings. In 1978 Eschebach published his work ‘Pompeij: Erlebte antike Welt’ in which he reconstructed a map consisting of all buildings in Pompeii and their functions.<sup>87</sup> As the map shows many buildings – i.e. with the same function – are not grouped together but spread throughout the town. For example, brothels, workshops, commercial businesses and inns do not have fixed designated places in Pompeii (Map 3). In addition, brothels and inns are harder to find because they are not located near the main streets. Instead, these buildings are often located in alleys, which are much harder for stranger to stumble upon. The location of these buildings – i.e. taverns, inns and brothels – is no coincidence, but a decision connected to its moral depravity, which the Romans associated with these buildings.<sup>88</sup> Because the buildings all functioned as places of prostitution, they were located away from the gazes of visitors, especially women and children.<sup>89</sup>

Shops in Pompeii can hardly be missed even by strangers. Almost all shops are located on the main streets – i.e. *Via Vesuvio*, *Via Stabiana*, *Via di Nola*, *Via della Fortuna*, *Via delle Terme*, *Via del Foro* and the *Via dell’Abbondanza*. And near the forum in the *Altstadt* many shops are located on the *Via degli Augustali*.<sup>90</sup> By placing the shops on the main streets it

<sup>86</sup> Westfall, ‘Urban Planning’, 129-134.

<sup>87</sup> H. Eschebach, *Pompeji: Erlebte antike Welt* (Leipzig, 1978), 284-285.

<sup>88</sup> Sen. *Vit. Beat.* 7.

<sup>89</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 92.

<sup>90</sup> A. van Nes, ‘Measuring Spatial Visibility in Pompeii’, in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 100-117, 106.

becomes clear that shops were placed in places with the highest potential for moving, passing and trade.<sup>91</sup> Shops wanted to be as visible as possible for potential customers. Therefore, shops carry the intention to be easily found – even for strangers. It seems that if a stranger wanted to go to a specific shop, he could stick to the main streets – i.e. the liveliest streets – to eventually find the destination (Map 3).

To get to the aforementioned places, inhabitants and strangers used the street network of Pompeii, which existed partially of an orthogonal plan. The importance of the streets inside Pompeii cannot be underestimated for their possible facilitating or hindering wayfinding factor. Although the whole urban plan of Pompeii is inclined towards being a part of good wayshowing, individual streets do not necessary contribute to good wayshowing. Strangers were forced to walk the existing streets – i.e. buildings enclose the forced travel area – and therefore relied upon the exact placements of the streets in connection to each other and the entire urban network. Hillier and Hanson coined the term ‘depth’, which describes how many streets a visitor from the edge of the city must pass through to reach a chosen street within the city.<sup>92</sup> According to Kaiser this methodology is also applicable to ancient cities – e.g. Pompeii. He uses three types of quantitative methods to define the role of a Pompeian street in the entire urban plan of Pompeii: (1) depth from outside the city gates, (2) depth from the forum and (3) the number of intersections.<sup>93</sup>

The first method is also the first possible methodology a stranger would encounter in his visit to ancient Pompeii. A stranger would enter the town of Pompeii through one of the eight gates – i.e. the *Porta di Ercolano*, *Porta del Vesuvio*, *Porta di Capua*, *Porta di Nola*, *Porta del Sarno*, *Porta di Nocera*, *Porta di Stabia* and the *Porta Marina* (Map 1). The town gates form the starting point in the urban network of Pompeii. As the figure shows the depth of Pompeii’s streets does not go higher as four with the main streets having a depth of one. The urban plan of Pompeii mostly exists of a street depth of two. Especially in the irregular *Altstadt*, the *Triangular forum* and in the later changed Regio II do we see a street depth of three or four (Figure 1.4). Because the town gates are the starting point of the journey through Pompeii, this street depth analysis from the gates is very important in their facilitating wayfinding factor. If the starting point is already well organised in its connection with the entire urban network and therefore ‘easy’ in its use, then it should not be too hard for the stranger to maintain his orientation.

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<sup>91</sup> van Nes, ‘Measuring Spatial Visibility’, 107.

<sup>92</sup> B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The social logic of space* (Cambridge, 1984), 108.

<sup>93</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 52-56.

Pompeii's street depth from the town gates of mostly two means that the urban plan of the town is not too complex to navigate – i.e. most places are easily found. However, the street depth also depended on the exact town gate the stranger entered and the location of the destination in relation to the specific town gate. The higher the street depth, the more difficult it is for a stranger to find the destination, because it would take too many turns. With this observation in mind, it could be that buildings that were not supposed to be found easily – e.g. brothels – were placed on streets with a high street depth. While buildings that wanted to be easily found – e.g. shops – were placed on streets with a very low street depth.<sup>94</sup> Shops in Pompeii are primarily located on the main streets, which have a street depth of one. The *Vico del Balcone Pesile* and the *Vico dei Scheletri* are both located in the *Altstadt* and both have a street depth of three (Figure 1.4; Map 1). This would make these streets one of the harder streets to find in Pompeii. It is in these two streets that a total of five brothels are located (VII.XIII and VII.XII).<sup>95</sup> Indeed, it seems that brothels were purposely located on difficult to find streets and therefore away from the gaze of visitors.

However, this does not explain why the space between the *palaestra* and the amphitheatre has a street depth of 3 (Figure 1.4). These are both places that do not have the intention to stay away from the gaze of visitors. Especially the amphitheatre that needs as many spectators as possible to thrive and was specifically built for a large amount of people. It would have been more logical to place these two facilities on streets with a street depth of one or two. It seems that the high street depth of this space was the unintended result of the changes made by the Romans in Regio II. By destroying the existing regular street grid in Regio II and placing these two facilities, which did not fit in the remaining street grid, an irregular street grid was created. This irregular street grid is the cause for the higher street depth.

The second method focusses on the forum. The forum in Roman Pompeii was the town's urban and civil centre. The whole urban plan of Pompeii was eventually linked to the forum.<sup>96</sup> Because of this importance of the forum, the Romans made the forum the beginning of the main itinerary of sight and travel within Pompeii.<sup>97</sup> A stranger could have been led to the forum or with purpose travelled from the town gates to the forum, where he would start his journey to his destination. The forum itself is well reachable through its connection with the main streets. In addition, the five arches that have been found in Pompeii function as obvious

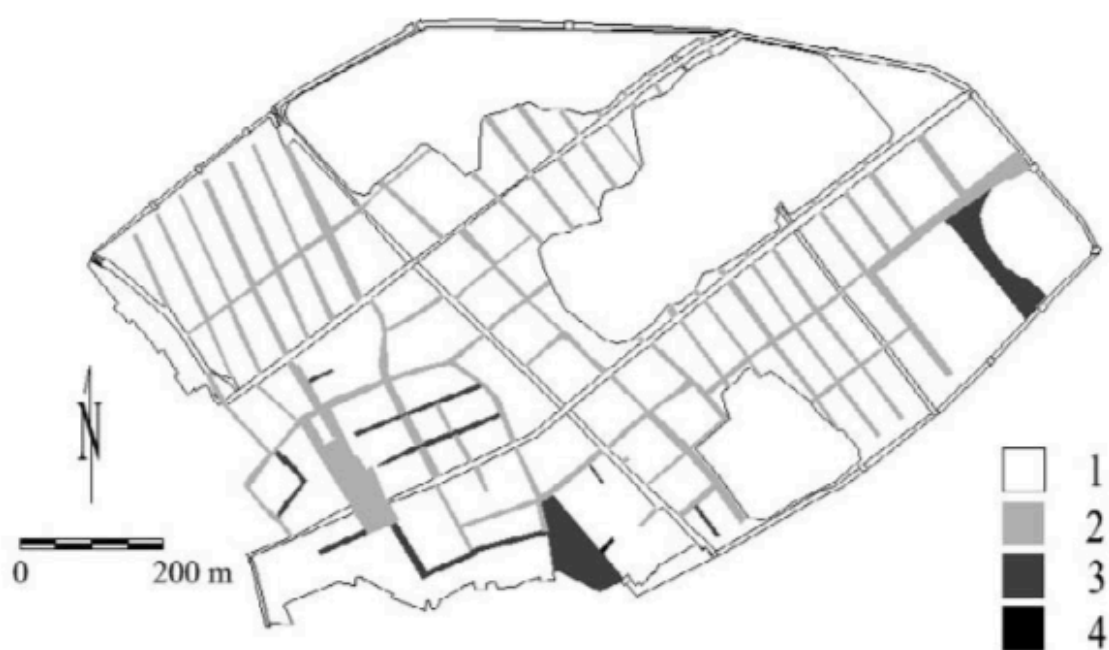
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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>95</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 88.

<sup>96</sup> Westfall, 'Urban Planning', 129.

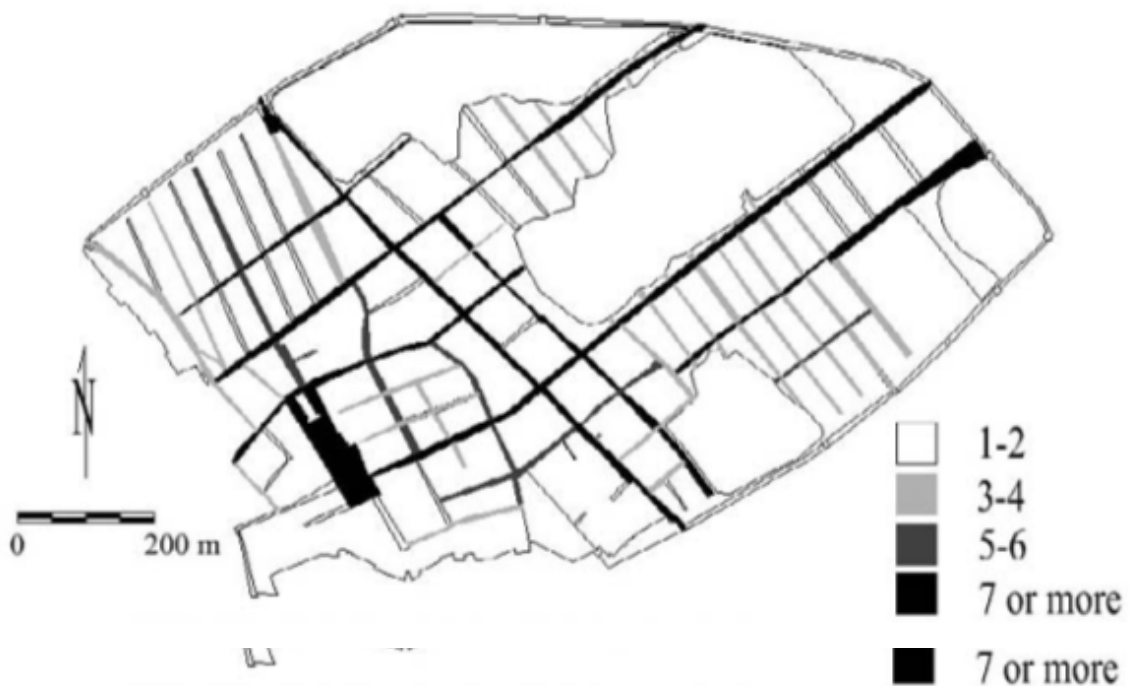
<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.



**Figure 1.4:** Depth of Pompeii's street from the town gates, by A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011), 78.



**Figure 1.5:** Depth of Pompeii's street from the forum, by A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011), 84.



**Figure 1.6:** Number of intersections Pompeii's streets have with each other, by A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011), 90.

elements of wayshowing and could point a stranger to the direction of the forum. Three arches are located in the forum itself. However, one of these arches – i.e. the arch of Nero – no longer exists. The limestone slabs still show its past location.<sup>98</sup> The other two arches outside the forum stand on the main streets which led to the forum. The arch of Caligula stands on the *Via di Mercurio* near the intersection between this street, the *Via della Fortuna*, the *Via del Foro* and the *Via delle Terme*. The other arch, the *Tetrapylon of the Holconii*, stood on the *Via dell'Abbondanza* near the intersection with the *Via Stabiana* (Map 1).<sup>99</sup>

Just as the street depth from the town gates, the street depth from the forum does not go higher as four. The only streets with a depth of one are the streets that are directly connected to the forum. In this approach the *Triangular forum*, Regio II and some streets in the *Altstadt* stay streets with a high streets depth. For example, brothels are still located in the streets with a street depth of three. The main difference between this approach and the first approach, is that this approach has a lot more streets with a street depth three or more (Figure 1.5). The forum is located in the irregular *Altstadt*, which is in turn connected to the regular *Neustadt*. This connection – i.e. connecting an irregular plan with a regular plan – creates some extra

<sup>98</sup> J.J. Dobbins, 'The Forum and its Dependencies', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 150-183, 160.

<sup>99</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 89.

turns to be taken by travellers. Therefore, it is slightly easier for strangers to navigate from the town gates instead of the forum.

The last method focusses on the number of intersections the streets have in connection with each other. People from antiquity were well aware of the significance of the amount of intersections a street had. As written by Roman authors, cities with streets that intersected many other streets were praised for its grandeur.<sup>100</sup> In addition, the number of intersections formed a useful tool for navigating cities or towns. Directions could have been given by stating the number of the intersection a visitor should take. A street with many intersections plays an important role through its connecting and integrating factor in the overall urban plan. The streets with the most intersections are also the most visible streets, because most transportation will take place in these streets. Streets with only one intersection separate themselves from the overall urban plan and thus are not as easily visible for strangers (Figure 1.6).<sup>101</sup>

The figure shows that the streets with the most intersections are the main streets of Pompeii, the forum and the surrounding circular streets and *Via di Castricio* – i.e. the street next to the *paleastra* and the amphitheatre. All these streets contain a high level of visibility. This is no surprise because most of these streets contain shops, public buildings and entertainment facilities, which are all buildings that are intended to be highly visible. The streets with a lower number of intersections in Pompeii contain mostly residential buildings. These buildings are private and do not need or desire to be very visible (Figure 1.6; Map 1; Map 2; Map 3).

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<sup>100</sup> Strabo 17.1.8; Cic. *Verr.* 4.117-119; Ach. Tat. 5.1.

<sup>101</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 55-56.

## Chapter three

### The Ancient Experience of Pompeii

The analysis of Pompeii's urban plan, especially the street network, in the previous chapter does not consider the actual 'living' aspect of ancient Pompeii. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the second wayfinding element of Passini and Arthur – i.e. human interaction. As dead as the town is at present, this was not the case in antiquity. Ancient Pompeii was full of people and animals, who all moved through the town with their own destination in mind. The people and animals living or only passing through gave shape to the space of Pompeii and thereby affected the movement through Pompeii.<sup>102</sup> A traveller would encounter all sorts of people, nuisances, sights, sounds and smells.<sup>103</sup> Movement through a city or town – e.g. Pompeii – was not without obstacles and therefore not as straightforward or as smooth as may be assumed from the previous chapter.

In the first chapter concerning ancient wayfinding it was established that human interaction forms the basis for all ancient wayfinding techniques, because strangers were first forced to ask for directions before they could start their journey. This chapter will focus on human interactions and the product of these interactions in the urban landscape during the journey through ancient Pompeii. First, the sensory experience of people travelling through ancient Pompeii will be discussed. Smells and sounds play an important part in the everyday experience of an urban environment and could possibly function as a wayshowing element. Second, the chapter will focus on the movement of carts through the streets of Pompeii, because this movement was very obstructed as a result of the negative interaction between the cart drivers and the inhabitants of ancient Pompeii.

As has been stated before, most ancient literary sources mention Pompeii in the context of the Social War, the volcanic eruption or the earthquake of AD 62. These sources describe Pompeii and the events surrounding the town in the greater picture of Roman history and are therefore very brief and rather emotionless.<sup>104</sup> Nor do they provide information about life in Pompeii or the feelings of the inhabitants and visitors surrounding it. Only Cicero gives a small insight in the feelings of the inhabitants of ancient Pompeii in his writing about a dispute between the natives of Pompeii and the Roman colonists.<sup>105</sup> The exact nature of the dispute is

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<sup>102</sup> J. Hartnett, 'The Power of Nuisances on the Roman Street', in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 135-159, 139.

<sup>103</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 300.

<sup>104</sup> Exceptions exist, e.g. Plin. *Ep.* 6.16 and 6.20

<sup>105</sup> Cic. *Sull.* 60.

not clear, but a certain dissatisfaction for the Roman colonists is tangible. To gain any information of the experience of an urban environment in antiquity – e.g. Pompeii – the ancient sources concerning the city of Rome need to be included.

The vividness of the Roman street is extensively described by Juvenal in his *Satires*. In this work Juvenal describes the Roman streets as too busy, dangerous and loud. Although the nature of his work – i.e. a satire – makes his account of the Roman street probably an exaggeration, his account of the Roman streets would have offered a recognisable image for the inhabitants and visitors of ancient Rome. In this passage of the *Satires* Juvenal's friend Umbricius tries to leave Rome for Cumae:

‘The continual traffic of carriages in the narrow twisting streets and the swearing of the drover when his herd has come to a halt would deprive a Drusus or the seals of sleep. If duty calls, the crowd gives way as the rich man is conveyed, racing along above their faces in his huge Liburnian galley, reading or writing on the way or sleeping inside. Yet he'll get there first. As I hurry along, the wave ahead gets in the way and the great massed ranks of people behind me crush my kidneys. One pokes me with his elbow, another with a hard pole. This guy bashes my head with a beam, that guy with a wine cask. My legs are caked with mud. Soon I'm trampled by mighty feet from every side and a soldier's hobnail sticks into my toe. Do you see all the smoke that's crowding around the handout? There are a hundred diners, and each is followed by his own portable kitchen. Corbulo would have difficulty carrying on his head all those enormous pots and other objects which the wretched little slave transports, keeping his head upright and fanning the flames as he runs. Tunics just recently mended are ripped. A long fir log judders as its waggon gets closer and another cart trundles a whole pine tree. They wobble threateningly way above the crowds.’<sup>106</sup>

Juvenal is not the only ancient author who complains of the noise and the busy character of the city. Martial complains that no place exists to rest or think in Rome, because anytime and everywhere a lot of noise is made by the people working and moving through Rome.<sup>107</sup> Horace asked his friend Scaeva if he would be offended by the constant noise and dust of the wagons and taverns, otherwise he would find lodgings for him outside Rome. Because in Rome a

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<sup>106</sup> Juv. 3.236-256.

<sup>107</sup> Mart. 12.57



pleasant ease and sleep till sunrise is not possible.<sup>108</sup> And Seneca complaints of his lodgings above a bathing establishment. The assortment of sounds originating from the bathing establishment and the food vendors hawking next to it, who all shout as loud as possible to attract customers, are so loud that it makes him hate his own hearing capability.<sup>109</sup>

In addition to sound ancient authors also wrote of the many smells a person could encounter in Rome. The *Vicus Tuscus* in Rome was full of the smell of fish, perfumed oils, ointments and incense.<sup>110</sup> From another street in Rome – i.e. the *Velabrum* – the smell of cheese could be smelled from afar.<sup>111</sup> A more extensive range of smells is described by Martial in his *Epigrams* in which he insults an old woman named Thais:

‘Thais smells worse than the veteran crock of a stingy fuller, recently broken in the middle of the road, or a billy goat fresh from his amours, or a lion’s mouth, or a hide from beyond Tiber torn from a dog, or a chicken rotting in an aborted egg, or a jar polluted with putrid garum. In order to exchange this stench for a different odour, whenever she takes off her clothes to get into the bath, the crafty lady is green with depilatory or lurks under a lining of chalk and vinegar or is coated with three or four layers of thick bean meal. A thousand tricks, and she thinks she’s safe. But when all’s done, Thais smells of Thais.’<sup>112</sup>

Just as Juvenal Martial created an exaggerated image that would have been familiar to the inhabitants and visitors of Rome.<sup>113</sup> Thais was not the only person who would conceal her own smell with perfumes and oils. Many Romans would use perfumes and ointments.<sup>114</sup> However, all these smells would be nothing in comparison with the most penetrating smell which encompassed the whole the city: the smell of burning wood, which was the primary source for cooking, heating and illuminating the city.<sup>115</sup> The burning of wood also gave Rome an ever-

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<sup>108</sup> Hor. *Epist.* 1.17.6-8.

<sup>109</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 56.1-2.

<sup>110</sup> Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.227-228.

<sup>111</sup> Mart. 11.52.10

<sup>112</sup> Mart. 6.93

<sup>113</sup> M. Bradley, ‘Introduction: Smell and the Ancient Senses’, in: M. Bradley (ed.), *Smell and the Ancient Senses* (New York, 2015), 1-17, 6.

<sup>114</sup> Plin. *HN.* 13.4; Mart. 13.101; Juv. 8.159

<sup>115</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 72; N. Morley, ‘Urban Smells and Roman Noses’, in: M. Bradley (ed.), *Smell and the Ancient Senses* (New York, 2015), 110-120, 114.

present layer of smoke. Together the many smells and smoke created an oppressive atmosphere in Rome, which made Seneca leave the city for the healthy countryside.<sup>116</sup>

In comparison with Rome, Pompeii is of course a lot smaller with a lot less inhabitants and visitors. Ancient Pompeii was not as busy or as noisy as Rome. However, we may presume that inhabitants and visitors of Pompeii encountered the same sensory experiences, but on a much smaller scale. The town was full a variety of sounds and smells. As the centre of Pompeii with most public buildings, the forum would undoubtedly be a gathering place for many people, where a lot of sound would be produced by the different people interacting with each other. The loud sound of wagons or carts was not heard here, because wheeled traffic was restricted in the forum.<sup>117</sup> The concentration of many people made the forum a concentrated area for sound. The same could be said of the area surrounding the amphitheatre and the theatre. When a performance was held, many people would gather in these places, thereby also creating a concentrated area for sound.

The streets of Pompeii were also full of the sound of people interacting with each other, but also of noises such as: wagons and carts thundering over uneven streets, drivers shouting, animals howling, the splashing of water in the fountains, the sound of workshops and much more.<sup>118</sup> Pompeii's main streets, where most of the shops were located, – i.e. *Via Vesuvio*, *Via Stabiana*, *Via di Nola*, *Via della Fortuna*, *Via delle Terme*, *Via del Foro* and the *Via dell'Abbondanza* – were full of vendors who all shouted to attract customers. At the same time these streets would contain a variety of smells from all the different shops, workplaces and food stalls, which could attract a hungry visitor to its establishment. Other smells of daily activities – e.g. people wearing perfume, burning wood and human and animal excrement – were all part of the urban image of ancient Pompeii.

Sounds and smells are not only part of daily life, but also function as a useful tool for wayfinding and thus are an element of wayshowing. Instead of only focussing on the visual aspect of ancient Pompeii, a visitor may also be consciously or unconsciously attracted by certain sounds or smells. Certain areas or buildings in Pompeii producing a strong smell or a loud sound could help visitors to locate and navigate to a particular area or even a specific building.<sup>119</sup> The street noises and smells helped a visitor to place himself in the urban

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<sup>116</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 104.6

<sup>117</sup> Hartnett, 'Nuisances', 142.

<sup>118</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 70.

<sup>119</sup> E. Betts, 'Towards a Multisensory Experience of Movement in the City of Rome', in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 118-132, 123-125; J. Veitch, 'Soundscape of the street: Architectural acoustics in Ostia', in: E. Betts (ed.), *Senses of the Empire: Multisensory Approaches to Roman Culture* (New York, 2017), 54-70, 69; E. Betts, 'The Multivalency of sensory artefacts in

environment as the noises and smells increased or decreased with each step.<sup>120</sup> For example, the roaring crowd in the amphitheatre could help the visitor by sound to locate and navigate to the amphitheatre. Or the smell of strong perfume could help the visitor to the nearest bathing establishment.

In contrast to the facilitating factor of sensory wayfinding, the many obstacles – e.g. road blocks – in Pompeii were a hindrance in the smooth movement to the desired destination. This is most obvious in the many obstacles carts and wagons encountered in Pompeii. The carts and wagons that moved through Rome played a major role in the noise pollution and the dangers of the city, which is evident by the emphasis ancient authors put on these transportation vehicles in their complaints about the Roman streets. It seems that the Romans felt a lot of contempt and distrust for carts and wagons that travelled the streets.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, wooden carts and wagons were very loud when they thundered the uneven paved streets and they left a trail of dust behind them.<sup>122</sup> Especially wagons were considered to be very dangerous because buildings shook when heavy wagons passed by, which made Romans afraid for possible damage.<sup>123</sup> Juvenal voices his concern for heavy wagons in busy public places: if the axle of the wagon breaks the heavy content of the wagon could fall into the people with deadly consequences.<sup>124</sup> Based on the archaeological evidence it seems that this distrust and discontent for wagons and carts was also actively present in ancient Pompeii.

Because of the noise and dangers of carts and wagons inhabitants of Pompeii actively tried to exclude these transportation vehicles from parts of the town, even though the cart traffic must have been small.<sup>125</sup> Most Romans could not afford a cart or wagon and very limited storage facilities for these vehicles existed in Pompeii.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, the inhabitants placed many impediments unsystematically throughout the town, which they also changed regularly.<sup>127</sup> The action of the inhabitants to block the streets in Pompeii was within their legal right. The *Tabula Heracleensis*, one of the few sources in Roman traffic law, states that it is the responsibility of each property owner to maintain the sidewalk and the street in front of

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the city of Rome', in: E. Betts (ed.), *Senses of the Empire: Multisensory Approaches to Roman Culture* (New York, 2017), 23-38, 28-30; Morley, 'Urban Smells', 112-113.

<sup>120</sup> Veitch, 'Soundscape of the street', 69.

<sup>121</sup> A. Kaiser, 'Cart Traffic Flow in Pompeii and Rome', in: R. Laurence and D.J. Newsome (eds.), *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii: Movement and Space* (Oxford, 2011), 174-193, 189.

<sup>122</sup> Juv. 3.236-256; Sen. *Ep.* 56.4; Hor. *Epist.* 1.17.6-8; Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.43-45;

<sup>123</sup> Plin. *Pan.* 51.1; Plin. *HN.* 36.2.6

<sup>124</sup> Juv. 3.257-260.

<sup>125</sup> Kaiser, 'Cart Traffic Flow', 189; Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 96; Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 54.

<sup>126</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 96.

<sup>127</sup> Kaiser, 'Cart Traffic Flow', 179-180.

their property, with the responsibility of the *aediles* to enforce this law.<sup>128</sup> In practise this meant that the right to control the street in front of the property came with the enforced responsibility.<sup>129</sup>

The *Tabula Heracleensis* also prohibited the *plaustrum*, a heavy ox wagon, during the daytime. However, these heavy wagons were permitted during the daytime if they transported buildings materials for public buildings or transported debris for the demolished public buildings. And wagons which had arrived in the night were allowed to leave during the daytime.<sup>130</sup> After the earthquake of AD 62 many public buildings needed to be rebuilt or renovated, which gave large wagons with building materials free access to the streets in Pompeii. Besides these traffic laws we have no evidence of other traffic laws in the Roman Empire – e.g. traffic signs. The absence of clear traffic laws could make the streets of Pompeii even more chaotic. For example, a greater possibility existed that drivers could encounter each other head on.

According to Kaiser a cart or wagon driver needed to have a mental map of the street network of Pompeii and thus already needed to be familiar with the street network. Otherwise, the driver could face many troubles – i.e. meeting another driver head on or running into a dead end – which meant that the driver was faced with the difficult and painstaking task of turning his cart or wagon around in the limited space of Pompeii.<sup>131</sup> Not only was this time consuming but it also created hindrances for other cart drivers and the pedestrians walking the streets. Driving through Pompeii was a very complex process, because drivers could not take the simplest and most logical itinerary to the destination. Instead, they had had to be guided by the streets that were possible for them to take, which often added several hundred meters and extra turns in their itinerary.<sup>132</sup>

The figure of traffic patterns shows the situation of Pompeii in the year the Vesuvius erupted (Figure 2.1). These traffic patterns are not fixed and probably looked different the years preceding AD 79.<sup>133</sup> Therefore an analysis of the possible itineraries for cart or wagon drivers can only be derived from the year of the eruption. As the figure shows many obstacles were placed in Pompeii and only a handful of streets were suitable for two lanes of traffic. These suitable streets are almost all the main streets with the exception of the *Via Marina*, *Via del*

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<sup>128</sup> *CIL* XII.593

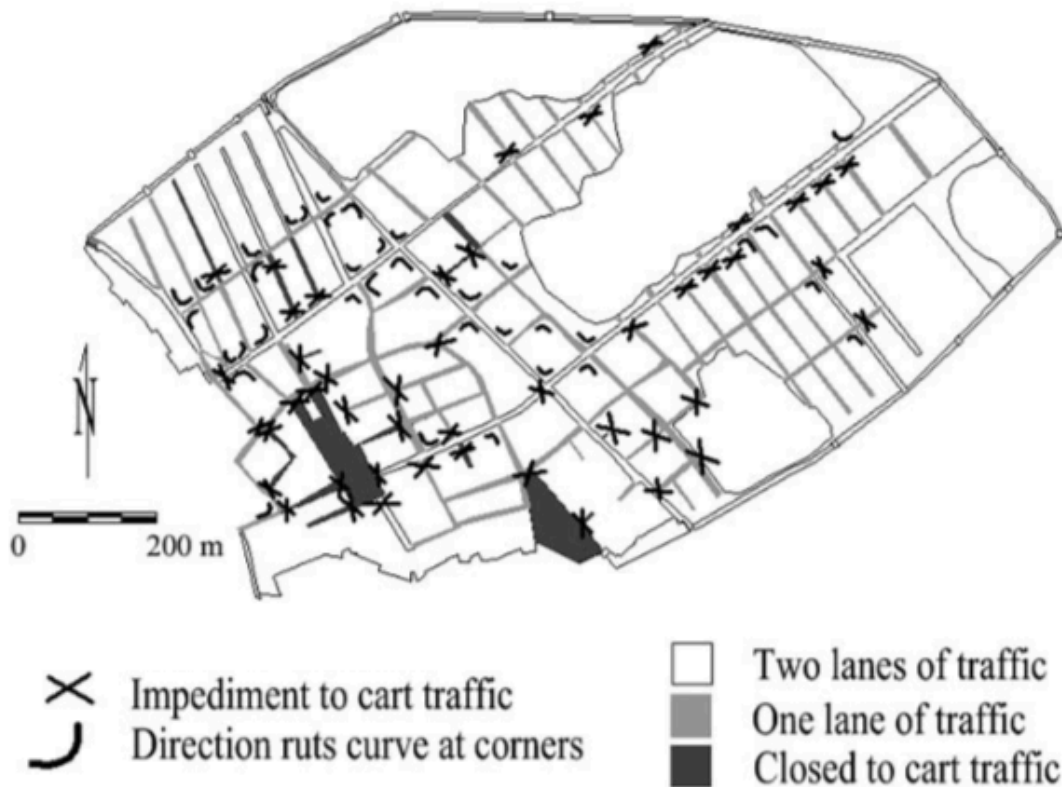
<sup>129</sup> Kaiser, 'Cart Traffic Flow', 186.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 174-175; *CIL* XII.593.

<sup>131</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 94.

<sup>132</sup> Hartnett, 'Nuisances', 141.

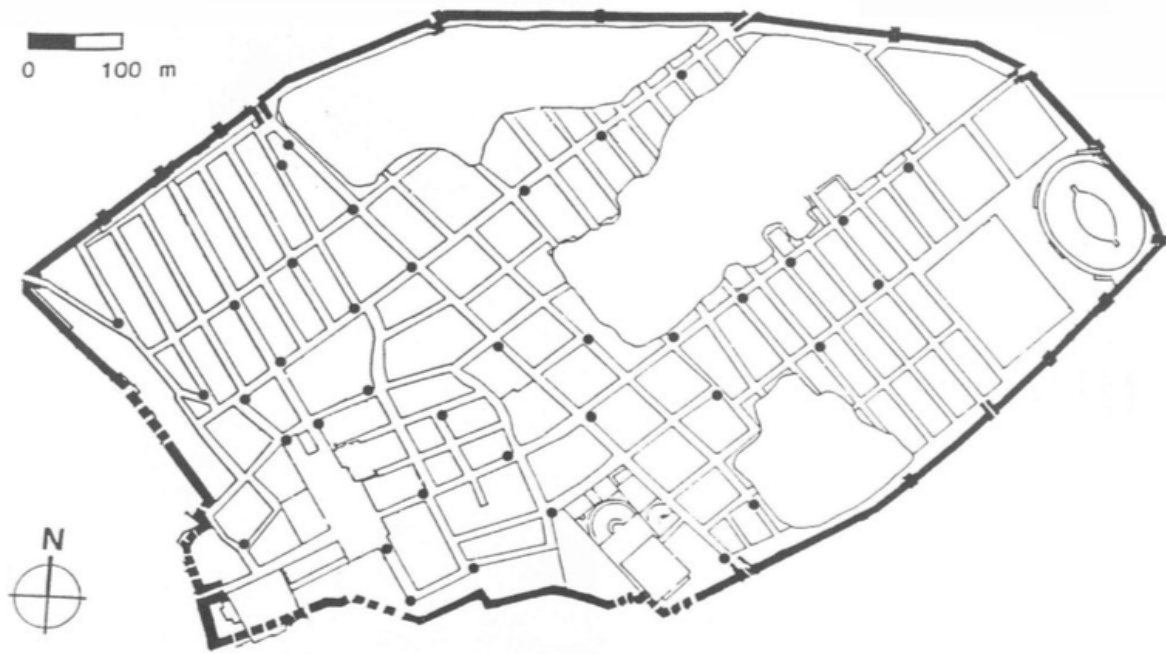
<sup>133</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 95.



**Figure 2.1:** Traffic patterns and obstacles in Pompeii in AD 79, by A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011), 94.

*Foro* and a part of the *Via di Nocera*. Other streets include the *Vico dei Vetti*, the *Via della Scuole*, part of the *Vico del Labirinto*, part of the *Vico del Fauno* and the space between the *palaestra* and the amphitheatre. The *Via dell'Abbondanza* is accessible for two lane traffic, but due to an obstacle placed on this street near the intersection with the *Via di Stabiana*, no further passage is possible. Drivers had to take a multitude of different one lane streets to reach the part of the *Via dell'Abbondanza* in the *Altstadt* (Figure 2.1; Map 1). Most of the main streets, which were surrounded by public or commercial buildings, were kept clear of obstacles to facilitate the traffic flow from the town gates. However, outside these main streets a driver would encounter the discontent of the inhabitants for him and the impediments connected to it.

The forum, the *Triangular forum* and some other small parts of the streets – e.g. the *Vico del Labirinto* – were completely closed to cart traffic. Many obstacles were placed in the *Altstadt* to prevent cart and wagon access to the forum. The remaining streets in Pompeii were one lane streets, which mostly led to residential houses (Figure 2.1; Map 3). Outside the *Altstadt* in the predominantly residential area's many impediments tried to restrict the access of carts and wagons to the private houses. In the Regio I and II almost all streets next to the *Via dell'Abbondanza* and the *Via Stabiana* were blocked for cart traffic. Regio II is even almost completely cut off from cart traffic. From the six streets that lead to the amphitheatre and



**Figure 2.2:** Distribution of fountains in Pompeii in AD 79, R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society* (New York, 2007), 47.

*palaestra* five are blocked. Only the first street on the *Via dell'Abbondanza* from the *Porta del Sarno* is probably unobstructed for cart traffic.<sup>134</sup> And in Regio VI some streets are closed for cart traffic, which also limits the presence of carts and wagons. Regio V, IV, IX and III are still not completely excavated. When these regions will be completely excavated further research into the obstructions of cart traffic in these regions and the whole of Pompeii will be possible (Figure 2.1; Map 1).

In addition to the obstacles cart and wagon drivers faced, pedestrians also encountered a variety of obstacles in their stroll through ancient Pompeii. People spent their days outside as a result of the hot climate and some because of their cramped living space.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the streets in Pompeii were always busy with activity. The average width of the streets in Pompeii was five to six meters, with a sidewalk of approximately two meters. Animals, carts and wagons on the streets pushed the pedestrians on the sidewalk, which could barely hold two people next to each other.<sup>136</sup> From the other side, pedestrians were pushed into the streets by what Hartnett likes to call 'street furniture'.<sup>137</sup> Animals, benches, fountains, wandering traders and loitering crowds of people were all present on the sidewalk and all diminished the available

<sup>134</sup> Kaiser, 'Cart Traffic Flow', 179; Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 51. It is assumed that this street had no impediments for cart traffic, however this street is still not completely excavated. Further excavations could show that the street was obstructed, which would mean that Regio II was completely closed off for cart traffic.

<sup>135</sup> Holleran, 'The Street Life', 259; Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 50.

<sup>136</sup> Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 70.

<sup>137</sup> Hartnett, 'Nuisances', 137.

walking space.<sup>138</sup> Although street furniture would cause great annoyance for the pedestrians in ancient Pompeii, the street furniture could also act as easily recognisable landmarks for strangers. Especially fountains could be easily recognised, because they were placed on the street corners, which made them hard to miss and the sound of splashing water would attract a stranger from afar. (Figure 2.2). Likewise, shops and workshops often spilled out into the sidewalk before the property and therefore also pushed pedestrians into the street. Martial complains this once made the city of Rome one big shop.<sup>139</sup> Thus, pedestrians were pushed from both sides, which did not facilitate smooth movement through the streets of ancient Pompeii.

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<sup>138</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 49; Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 70; Hartnett, 'Nuisances', 137-141.

<sup>139</sup> Mart. 7.61; Hartnett, *The Roman Street*, 60; Holleran, 'The Street Life', 257.

## Chapter four

### Signage in Pompeii

This chapter will examine the last wayfinding element of Passini and Arthur – i.e. graphic signage – in ancient Pompeii. As was already established no signposts, street signs or house numbers existed in antiquity. However, it is possible that other forms of ancient signage existed that *de facto* acted as modern streets signs or house numbers. To examine this possibility of wayshowing signage in ancient Pompeii the third element of Passini and Arthur will be adapted to be applicable to an ancient town. This means that in addition to visual signage this chapter will also examine epigraphical signs – i.e. inscriptions. First, this chapter will analyse Pompeian inscriptions that could facilitate wayfinding, most notably the *étuns* inscriptions. Second, available visual signage in Pompeii will be examined for their wayshowing capabilities.

The most obvious inscriptions in ancient Pompeii concerning wayshowing are the six surviving Oscan *étuns* inscriptions. The inscriptions are referred to as the *étuns* inscriptions, because all six begin with almost the same phrasing; *eksuk amvianud étuns*, which translates to ‘from this area go to’.<sup>140</sup> All the inscriptions give directions to specific locations of Pompeii’s defences by the use of landmarks or by referring to individuals.<sup>141</sup> During the siege of Pompeii by Sulla in the 89 BC – i.e. the beginning of Roman Pompeii – these inscriptions were painted in red on the pillars and walls situated on the street corners.<sup>142</sup> The locations of the *étuns* inscriptions is telling, because it shows that the inscriptions were carefully placed facing the busiest streets – i.e. the main streets – to increase their visibility. With the exceptions of Vetter 25 all the inscriptions were placed on streets that lead to one of the town gates. Vetter 23 (VI.II) was placed facing the *Via Consolare*. Vetter 24 (VI.VI) and 26 (VI.XII) were both placed in line with each other – i.e. Vetter 24 on the *Via delle Terme* and Vetter 26 on the *Via della Fortuna*. Vetter 25 (VII.VI) was placed on the corner of the *Vico dei Soprastanti* and the *Vicolo delle Terme*, which is near the Forum. And both Vetter 27 (VIII.V) and 28 (III.IV) were placed on the *Via dell’Abbondanza*. (Figure 3.1; Map 1).

When some of the inscriptions were first discovered it was assumed that the inscriptions were meant for the new influx of Roman veterans during the Social War, who were unfamiliar with Pompeii.<sup>143</sup> At present, it is assumed that the inscriptions were placed for the local Oscan

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<sup>140</sup> Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 99.

<sup>141</sup> Ling, ‘A Stranger in Town’, 209.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*; Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 99.

<sup>143</sup> Ling, ‘A Stranger in Town’, 209.





**Figure 3.1:** The *eituns* inscriptions and their muster points in Pompeii, based on T.K. Henderson, 'Constructing an Oscan Cityscape: Pompeii and the *Eituns* Inscriptions', in: A.M. Kemezis (ed.), *Urban Dreams and Realities in Antiquity: Remains and Representations of the Ancient City* (Leiden, 2014), 99-120, 104; R. Ling, 'A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City', *Greece & Rome* 37:2 (1990), 204-214.

residents. This assumption is based on the language of the inscriptions – i.e. Oscan – and by the landmarks and people who are mentioned in the inscriptions. Without an intimate familiarity with the urban environment of Pompeii and its inhabitants, the mentioned landmarks and people would not be recognisable or usable for the giving of directions.<sup>144</sup> During the turbulent years of the Social War the local Oscan male residents needed to be able to quickly muster themselves in case of an emergency.<sup>145</sup> Henderson has attempted to locate these muster points by determining and following the location of each individual landmark in the *eituns* inscription (Figure 3.1). Although the *eituns* inscriptions are the closest akin to a signpost in the ancient Roman world, they were never permanently intended as such.<sup>146</sup>

It is unnecessary to deal with all six *eituns* inscriptions in this research, because this research focusses on the wayfinding and wayshowing means of strangers in ancient Roman Pompeii, while the *eituns* inscriptions were not meant for strangers. Strangers had very little use for these inscriptions because they not needed to muster for military purposes in Pompeii. Furthermore, the Oscan language virtually disappeared in the Augustan period, which made it

<sup>144</sup> Henderson, 'Constructing an Oscan Cityscape', 113.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 99; Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 209;

<sup>146</sup> Ling, 'A Stranger in Town', 209; Descœudres, 'History and Historical Sources', 10.

unlikely that the *éituns* inscriptions could still be read after this period.<sup>147</sup> Even if a stranger could read the Oscan inscriptions he would not know the locations of the landmarks or the people mentioned in the inscriptions. And the information given in the inscriptions would be mostly obsolete, because the urban environment of Samnite Pompeii was changed by the Romans. Furthermore, the people mentioned in the inscriptions would not be alive anymore during the Augustan period. Only the appearance of inscriptions itself could function as a wayshowing element for strangers – e.g. ‘go left by the red painted inscription’. However, to get an understanding of hypothetical ancient ‘signposts’ and ancient direction giving strategies specifically for ancient Pompeii, three different *éituns* inscriptions will be very briefly analysed.

Vetter 23 was the first of the *éituns* inscriptions to be discovered at the end of the eighteenth-century. Today it is no longer visible and only known through records when it was still legible.<sup>148</sup> Vetter 23 mentions two landmarks – i.e. the twelfth tower and the Sarina gate – and one person. It is remarkable that the tower is referred to as the twelfth tower, because this meant that Pompeiians probably knew the towers by number. This numbering system of the towers is confirmed by the remains of tower eight, which was inscribed with the corresponding number eight. The numbering started from the *Porta di Stabia* and continued counter clockwise along the defensive walls of Pompeii.<sup>149</sup>

*eksuk.amvianud.éituns*  
*anter.tiurri.XII.iní.ver(u)*  
*sarínu.puf.faamat*  
*mr.aadíriis.v*<sup>150</sup>

From this area go to  
 Between the twelfth tower and the  
 Sarina gate where  
 Maras Atrius, son of Vibius is stationed<sup>151</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 113.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>149</sup> Chiaramonte, ‘The Walls and Gates’, 143.

<sup>150</sup> Vetter 23.

<sup>151</sup> Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 103.

Especially Vetter 25 requires intimate knowledge of the urban environment of ancient Pompeii and the people living in it. This inscription does not name any ‘neutral’ landmarks – e.g. a fountain or tree – but only refers to specific people and their properties. As was already established in this research private houses were known and referred to by their owner’s names.<sup>152</sup> Only (Oscan) inhabitants of Pompeii could understand the directions given in this inscription, because they knew the other inhabitants living in ancient Pompeii.

*eksuk.amv[i]anud.*  
*eítuns.ante[r.tr]íibu*  
*ma.kastrikiéis.iní*  
*mr.spuriéis l.*  
*puf.faamat*  
*v.sehsímbriis.l*<sup>153</sup>

From this area go  
 between the houses of  
 Mamercus Castricius and  
 Maras Spurius son of Lucius  
 where Vibius Sexembrius son of Lucius is stationed<sup>154</sup>

Vetter 28 is the most extensive of the six *eítuns* inscriptions. Altogether five landmarks are mentioned – i.e. the *domus publica*, the Mefira road, the left tower, the Urbanlanese gate and the Mefira tower – and two persons described – i.e. Lucius Popidius and Maras Purellius. This inscription shows that towers in Pompeii were not only known by a number, as was perceived from Vetter 23, but also by name or by their location in relation to another landmark. The inscription also mentioned a street by name – i.e. Mefira road or middle road – which meant that the inhabitants of ancient Pompeii certainly knew some roads by name.

*eksuk.amv[anud -----]*  
*set puz.haff[iar.trib.tú]v*  
*íní.víu.meff[iu.íní.tiurr]is.*

<sup>152</sup> Ling, ‘A Stranger in Town’, 211.

<sup>153</sup> Vetter 25.

<sup>154</sup> Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 105.

*Nertrak.ve[ru.urublan]u*  
*Piis.sent.ei[seic.nert]rak*  
*Veru.urubla[nu.ant.tiu]rri.*  
*Mefira.faa<m>mant.*  
*l.púpid.l.mr.puríl.ma*<sup>155</sup>

From this area go ...  
 in order to hold the *domus*  
*publica*, by the Mefira [or possibly middle] road, and the tower  
 to the left of the Urbanlanese gate.  
 where between the left of the Urbulanese gate  
 and the Mefira tower  
 Lucius Popidius son of Lucius and Maras Purellius  
 son of Mamercus are stationed<sup>156</sup>

These three *étuns* inscriptions again confirm that direction giving in antiquity was based on the use of landmarks and also applicable in ancient Pompeii. Specifically, for Pompeii the inscriptions show that directions from inside the town to the outskirts of the town were mainly given by the use of gates, towers and familiar people. This seems logical as people needed to use the town gates to leave Pompeii and both the gates and towers were large structures, which made them probably well visible from afar. However, it is remarkable that a lot of the directions are based on the locations of people and their properties instead of ‘neutral’ landmarks. It seems that knowing the other inhabitants in Pompeii was just as important as being familiar with the urban environment of ancient Pompeii.

The directions in the *étuns* inscriptions are not very useful for strangers visiting Roman Pompeii, however a different graffito located in Pompeii was certainly placed for strangers. In this case aimed at strangers who wanted to visit a brothel in Nuceria (Nocera Inferiore). This graffito was located near the House of Menander (I.X) and informs the reader: ‘at Nuceria ask for Novellia Primigenia in the Vicus Venerius by the Rome Gate’.<sup>157</sup> Although the graffito is again not useful for strangers who visited Pompeii, it shows that graffiti could be deliberately made and placed to facilitate the wayfinding of a stranger. Of course, the reverse could also be

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<sup>155</sup> Vetter 28.

<sup>156</sup> Henderson, ‘Constructing an Oscan Cityscape’, 109.

<sup>157</sup> *CIL* IV.8356.

possible – i.e. this kind of wayshowing graffiti was placed in neighbouring towns in Pompeii to facilitate the wayfinding inside Pompeii to a particular destination. However, at present no epigraphical evidence is found to confirm this assumption.

A small number of other inscriptions in Pompeii are actually useful for strangers for their content. These inscriptions do not give directions but inform the reader of the ownership of the land or the building the text is inscribed on. In essence, these inscriptions function as the equivalent of the modern name plate people place next to their front door. Four such ‘name plates’ are located in the urban environment of Pompeii. First, near the *Temple of Fortuna Augusta* Marcus Tullius placed a boundary marker, which divided the public land of Pompeii from his private property (Map 2).<sup>158</sup> On this marker he inscribed: ‘private land of Marcus Tullius, son of Marcus’.<sup>159</sup> Second, at *insulae* block IX.IX a graffito simply informs its readers: ‘Aemilius Celer lives here’ (Map 1).<sup>160</sup> The third and fourth graffito are advertisement for apartments available for rent, which were inscribed on the corresponding *insulae* with the available apartments.<sup>161</sup> These advertisements also mention the names of the property owners. The estate of Julia Felix is located in *insulae* block II.IV and the property of Gnaeus Alleius Nigidus Maius is located in *insulae* block VI.VI (Map 1).<sup>162</sup> If a stranger wanted to visit one of these four persons his journey was made slightly easier by means of these wayshowing ‘name plates’. After the stranger was given the first directions and arrived in the correct vicinity, the stranger was not forced to completely depend on the help of inhabitants. Instead a stranger could roam the area and look independently for the appropriate inscription on the corresponding house.

Possible signage in ancient Pompeii was not limited to texts – i.e. inscriptions – it also extended to illustrations which were carved in or placed on the buildings in Pompeii. In addition to literary carvings in the walls, the graffiti made by the ordinary people in ancient Pompeii also consisted of drawings. For example, a multitude of gladiators were carved into the walls scattered throughout the whole town of Pompeii.<sup>163</sup> Again, the content of these drawings would not facilitate wayfinding, however the graffiti could act as a landmark in itself. Thus, if the graffiti was eye-catching enough it could be a reference point in the direction giving of the stranger. The problem with graffiti is that most of them are not eye-catching enough for

<sup>158</sup> A. E. Cooley and M.G.L. Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook* (New York, 2014), 135.

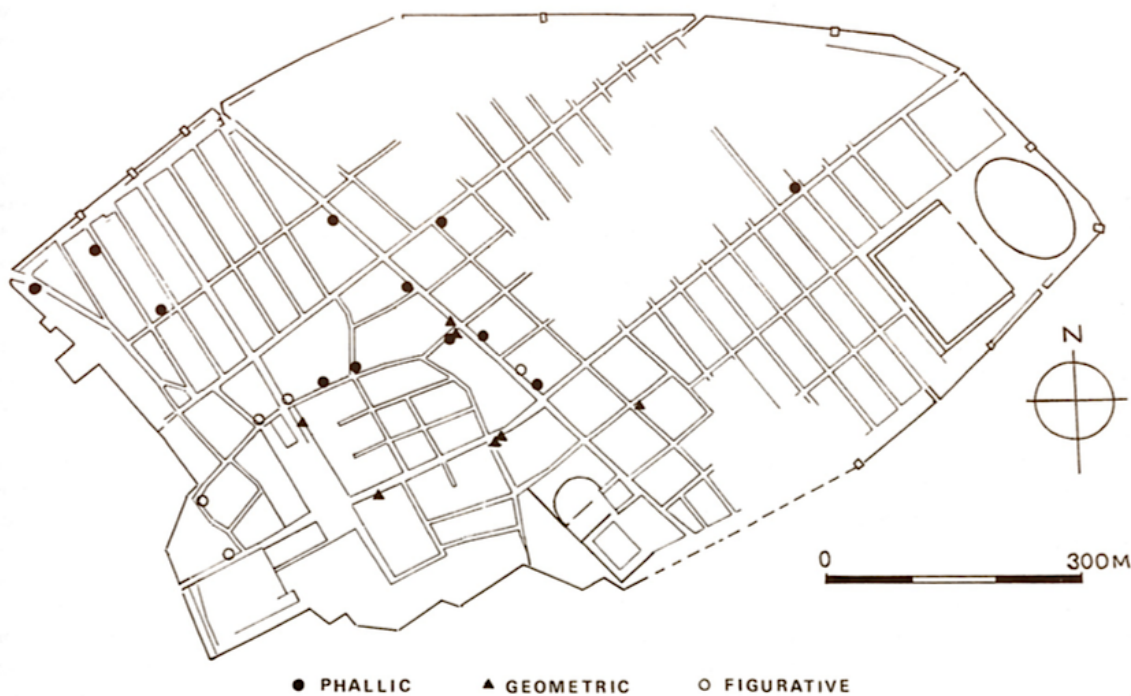
<sup>159</sup> *CIL* X.821.

<sup>160</sup> *CIL* IV.3794.

<sup>161</sup> *CIL* IV.138; *CIL* IV.1136

<sup>162</sup> Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum*, 264.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.; *CIL* IV.1421; *CIL* IV.10236; *CIL* IV.10238; *CIL* IV.10237



**Figure 3.2:** Pompeii's Street Plaques, by R. Ling, 'Street Plaques at Pompeii', in: Martin Henig (ed.), *Architecture and Architectural Sculpture in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1990), 51-66, 63.

a stranger to immediately notice it. Graffiti are the result of casual scribbles of people in antiquity and blend well into the walls they were written upon.<sup>164</sup> This is in contrast with the *ēituns* inscriptions, which were painted red on the walls with the intention to be very visible.

More suitable as an object of visual wayshowing in the urban environment of Pompeii are the street plaques located near the building entrances and on street corners. Ling has divided these street plaques into three categories: (1) phallic reliefs, (2) figurative reliefs and (3) geometric reliefs.<sup>165</sup> First, the phallic image on the reliefs mainly functioned as a good-luck charm or were meant to drive evil away. However, another possibility is that an illustration of a phallus indicated the availability of sexual pleasures in the building the relief was placed on.<sup>166</sup> This would certainly made it slightly easier for strangers wandering the streets of Pompeii looking for this kind of services. Second, the figurative reliefs in Pompeii depict two men carrying an amphora, a goat and builder's tools.<sup>167</sup> These reliefs were placed next to (work)shop entrances and probably serves as advertisements for the craft or trade of the corresponding building.<sup>168</sup> Last, the geometric reliefs primarily functioned as decorative reliefs

<sup>164</sup> Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum*, 2.

<sup>165</sup> R. Ling, 'Street Plaques at Pompeii', in: Martin Henig (ed.), *Architecture and Architectural Sculpture in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1990), 51-66, 51.

<sup>166</sup> Ling, 'Street Plaques', 62.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-57.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

to attract the attention of the people walking the streets. According to Ling these geometric reliefs also served as shop signs, because they are all located near (work)shops. However, the exact significance of the geometric shop signs is not known.<sup>169</sup>

It was the intention of the street plaques to be as visible as possible. The street plaques were all colourfully painted to stand out in the urban environment and they all were deliberately placed at a high height, where they would not be obscured by other objects in the vicinity.<sup>170</sup> The locations of the different street plaques also indicate the importance of high visibility. Most street plaques were placed on or near busy street, i.e. *Via dell'Abbondanza*, *Via Stabiana*, *Via Vesuvio*, *Via di Nola*, *Via Consolare* and the outer rim of the *Altstadt* (Figure 3.2). The street plaques could act as very noticeable landmarks for strangers. And just as the ownership inscriptions, the street plaques could slightly ease the wayfinding of strangers by functioning as a 'name plate' for the building the stranger was looking for.

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<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

## Chapter five

### Travelling to the Destination

The last chapter of this research into ancient wayfinding in ancient Pompeii will examine three hypothetical itineraries strangers could have taken or were directed to in their search for their desired destination. Of course, the itineraries are only examples based on the information provided in the previous chapters of this research. Many other different itineraries could have been taken by strangers based on numerous factors, such as different starting points, landmarks, people who gave the directions and the eventual destination. The three itineraries which will be examined differ in their starting point, destination and means of transportation. The itineraries will be visualised on map 4 in which the coloured dots each represented a landmark used in the hypothetical itinerary. The first itinerary will start at the forum and guide a stranger to the house of Aemilius Celer (red). The second itinerary is aimed at the arrival of a new supplier, who wanted to take his supplies by cart to a bakery in Pompeii (blue). Last, the third itinerary will take a stranger from the *Porta di Nocera* to a brothel in the *Altstadt* (green).

The first itinerary to a residential building – i.e. the house of Aemilius Celer (**B**) – starts at the forum (**A**). The forum has been chosen as a starting point, because the forum in Pompeii was the town's urban and civil centre.<sup>171</sup> For the Romans the forum was the beginning of all sight and travel inside Roman Pompeii.<sup>172</sup> Therefore, the forum is a convenient place for a stranger to start his journey. The house of Pompeian citizen Aemilius Celer is located at *insulae* IX.IX (Map 1; Map 4).<sup>173</sup> Near his house several other notices were written by him (IX.VIII, IX.VII).<sup>174</sup> One of his written notices has been dated 'at some time after AD 50'.<sup>175</sup> Based on this notice, the uncertain dating of the other notices and the uncertainty concerning the life of Aemilius Celer, this itinerary of the stranger to his house will also take place near the year AD 50. Which meant that the journey of the stranger would take place before the earthquake of AD 62 and the numerous building renovations associated with the earthquake.

The street depth from the forum to Celer's house is two or three, depending on the location of the front door – i.e. on the *Via di Nola* or in the alley (Figure 1.5). A street depth of three would make his house more difficult to find for a stranger. However, because Celer himself wrote on the *insulae* IX.IX that his house is located at the place of his writings, it

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<sup>171</sup> Westfall, 'Urban Planning', 129.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>173</sup> Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum*, 179.

<sup>174</sup> *CIL* IV.3820; *CIL* IV.3775.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 69; *CIL* IV.3884.



should be easier for a stranger to immediately find the correct alley.<sup>176</sup> In the forum the stranger would first be given directions to his desired destination from an inhabitant. Assumingly, the inhabitant would direct the stranger first from the forum to one of the busy main streets in ancient Pompeii – i.e. the *Via della Fortuna/Via di Nola* or the *Via dell'Abbondanza* – by the use of landmarks. Once the stranger arrived on the *Via di Nola* the stranger needed to follow the busy street in the direction of the *Porta di Nola*, where he would eventually encounter the notices written by Celer himself.

Again, the directions given to the stranger would be based on the landmarks he would encounter in his journey to the house of Aemilius Celer. For example, if the stranger was directed directly to *Via della Fortuna/Via di Nola* from the forum he first needed to walk through two arches – i.e. the Arch of Nero and the Arch of Tiberius – which were located next to the *Macellum*. In the near distance he would see a third arch – i.e. the arch of Caligula – which he needed to walk towards. Instead of also walking through this arch, the stranger would have been given the direction to turn right just before the arch of Caligula. Additional reference points for the stranger at this intersection could have been given by mentioning the temple of *Fortunae Augustae* on his right and the Forum Baths on his left, which could also be identified by the smell of ointments and perfumes used in the baths. However, even without the reference to these two public buildings, the directions by the use of the arches to the main street would be quite clear (Map 2; Map 4).

Once the stranger arrived at the *Via della Fortuna* it would be obvious that he arrived on one of the main busy streets in ancient Pompeii, where almost all the shops were located. The *Via della Fortuna/Via di Nola* would be full of people, wagons, animals and street furniture – e.g. fountains and benches. The stranger needed to stay on this busy street and cross the *Via Stabiana*. The Central Baths could not act as a landmark in this instance, because the construction of these baths began after the earthquake of AD 62.<sup>177</sup> The stranger had to walk straight ahead and look for a phallic relief to the right of him. After the phallic relief the stranger would quickly encounter a fountain on the *Via di Nola* (Figure 3.2). The next street past the fountain was the alley next to the house of Aemilius Celer (Figure 2.2). The many notices of Celer himself near his house would already be noticeable for the stranger on the *Via di Nola* and indicate to the stranger that he was getting near his destination. When the stranger

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<sup>176</sup> CIL IV.3794.

<sup>177</sup> Ling, 'Development of Pompeii's', 126.

eventually encountered the graffito: ‘Aemilius Celer lives here’, he was certain that he had arrived at his destination. (Map 4)<sup>178</sup>

The second itinerary starts at the *Porta Marina* (A). This itinerary will take place in the year AD 79, because traffic patterns can only be derived with certainty from this year. The *Porta Marina* derived its name from the commercial harbour near Pompeii and it was therefore the most obvious route visitors took to travel from or to the harbour.<sup>179</sup> In the context of this research and its hypothetical itineraries it is decided that the stranger arrived from the harbour with a shipment of grain in his cart, which he needed to deliver to a bakery (B) in ancient Pompeii. Because this supplier never visited Pompeii before he took the most obvious route to the *Porta Marina*. However, driving from the *Porta Marina* inside ancient Pompeii was a very complicated process, because many obstacles were placed to hinder the cart traffic. Kaiser therefore assumes that the *Porta Marina* cannot have been a popular route to bring supplies from the harbour into the town.<sup>180</sup> Cart drivers who were familiar with the urban environment most likely travelled through another town gate to enter the town. The *Porta di Ercolano* seems like a suitable alternative. This town gate was connected to the *Via Consolare*, which was a street wide enough for two lanes of traffic and it was easy to navigate from this street to the other main streets in Pompeii (Figure 2.1).

However, because this research has decided to choose a supplier unfamiliar with the urban environment of Pompeii – to show the difficulties of driving in ancient Pompeii – he will start his journey at the *Porta Marina*. The destination of the cart driver is a bakery located on the *Via Stabiana* at *insulae* VIII.IV.XXVI (Map 1; Map 3; Map 4).<sup>181</sup> The street depth from the town gates to this bakery is only one, because the bakery is located on one of the main streets of Pompeii (Figure 1.4). But the street depth of one is only applicable if the stranger started from the *Porta di Stabia* or the *Porta del Vesuvio*. Since the stranger started from the *Porta Marina* and could not take the most logical and direct itinerary to the bakery – i.e. obstacles forced the driver into specific directions – the street depth is much higher in this instance, which made the journey very complex (Figure 2.1).

From the *Porta Marina* the most obvious and direct itinerary would be to cross the forum into the *Via dell’Abbondanza* and to turn right at the *Via Stabiana*. But the forum was completely inaccessible for wheeled traffic, which forced cart drivers to turn left into the *Vicolo*

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<sup>178</sup> *CIL* IV.3794.

<sup>179</sup> Ling, ‘Development of Pompeii’s’, 121.

<sup>180</sup> Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street*, 96.

<sup>181</sup> Eschebach, *Gebäudverzeichnis und Stadtplan*, 375.

*del Giganta* and turn right on the *Vico dei Soprastani*, because the *Vico del Gallo* was restricted for cart traffic. Once the supplier arrived on the *Vico dei Soprastani* he could choose the *Via del Foro* or the *Vico Storto* to reach the *Via della Fortuna* – i.e. the main street. Although the *Vicolo delle Terme* could also be an option, the wheel ruts directed to the left suggest that most cart drivers did not take this street to reach the *Via Stabiana*. In a sense, this forced itinerary for cart drivers, made their journey also less complex, because they simply did not have any other options to choose from (Figure 2.1; Map 4).

In this instance the supplier was given the direction to turn left when he encountered a second figurative relief, which made him arrive at the *Via del Foro* (Figure 3.2). Just as in the itinerary to the house of Aemilius Celer the stranger had to turn right before the arch of Caligula and needed to keep driving straight ahead. At the junction of the *Via della Fortuna* and the *Via Stabiana* the cart driver had to turn right. This change in direction would be recognisable for the stranger, because he would probably have been given the instruction to turn right before the Central Baths, which were still under construction at the time of the eruption in AD 79.<sup>182</sup> And therefore also recognisable for a stranger as the building that was still under construction. On the *Via Stabiana* the stranger needed to drive straight ahead until he encountered the *Tetrapylon of the Holconii* to his right. The next *insulae* after this arch was the *insulae* where the bakery was located. For the precise location of the bakery in this *insulae* the supplier could look for the front door of the bakery on the *Via Stabiana* himself or possibly even locate the bakery by smell. And if he could not find it himself, ask inhabitants near the bakery for the precise location (Map 4).

The third itinerary also starts at a town gate – i.e. the *Porta di Nocera* (A). This choice has been made, because until now all itineraries started in the southwest corner of Pompeii. Of course, not every stranger arrived immediate in this corner of Pompeii, where most public facilities were located, which probably often made it the destination for many visitors. Thus, starting in the southwest corner of Pompeii would make the journey for a stranger relatively short and easy. Nevertheless, the destination of this itinerary is also located in this corner – i.e. the *Altstadt*. This journey will take place at the end of the Augustan period, when the construction of the public fountains was just complete.<sup>183</sup> Also, for this itinerary it is assumed that the bright red *ēituns* inscriptions were still visible. The stranger in the third itinerary wanted

<sup>182</sup> A.O. Koloski-Ostrow, 'The City Baths of Pompeii and Herculaneum', in: J.J. Dobbins and P.W. Foss (eds.), *The World of Pompeii* (New York, 2007), 224-256, 234.

<sup>183</sup> Ling, 'Development of Pompeii's', 123.

to visit a brothel (**B**) located at *insulae* VII.XII (Map 1; Map 3).<sup>184</sup> As been stated before in this research, brothels were deliberately kept out of sight and thus placed in difficult to find alleys.<sup>185</sup> This is evident by the street depth to this brothel, which is at least three. However, from the *Porta di Nocera* the street depth to this brothel is slightly higher with a street depth of four (Figure 1.5).

From the *Porta di Nocera* the stranger needed to walk straight ahead until he encountered a fountain to his right. After this fountain the stranger would have reached the *Via dell'Abbondanza*. If a major public event was being held in the amphitheatre, the nearby streets could be quite busy to travel for a stranger. This could possibly make his journey slightly more disorientating if some of the landmarks were blocked from his view by the many people in the streets. After the fountain the stranger needed to turn left. In the distance he would probably already see the *Tetrapylon of the Holconii*, which he needed to walk towards to. Once the stranger walked through the *Tetrapylon of the Holconii* he needed to look for one of the *ēituns* inscriptions on his right – i.e. Vetter 27. It is not of importance if the stranger could read the inscription, because the bright red words would act as landmark in itself. After the inscription the stranger had to turn right and at the next fountain needed to turn left to reach his destination. If the entrance of the brothel was not obvious enough, he had to ask people in the vicinity for help (Map 4).

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<sup>184</sup> Laurence, *Roman Pompeii*, 88.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

## Conclusion

This research has attempted to provide an insight into ancient wayfinding by analysing different ancient wayfinding strategies and the suitability of an ancient urban environment for its facilitating wayfinding aids for strangers. In this instance, the ancient town of Pompeii was examined, as it is still one of the few almost complete original preservations of a Roman urban environment. With this in mind, the research question: ‘how did strangers find their way in the ancient town of Roman Pompeii between 89 BC and AD 79?’, became the core of this research. With the use of the three wayfinding elements of Passini and Arthur the urban environment of ancient Pompeii could be examined for its possible wayshowing elements.

First, strangers were very dependent on the knowledge and advice of other people – i.e. the inhabitants of ancient Pompeii. It is evident that no systematic nomenclature existed in ancient Pompeii, which made it impossible to navigate or to give directions by the use of the few street names that did exist. Therefore, strangers were forced to ask the way to the inhabitants of Pompeii. In turn, these inhabitants were forced to give directions by the use of landmarks. For the inhabitants it was vital to possess a mental map of the urban environment and to possess knowledge of the other inhabitants in ancient Pompeii. This knowledge of the other inhabitants was important, because private houses were known and referred to by their owner’s names, as street addresses did not exist. Essentially, knowing an inhabitant also meant knowing the place of his residence or at least the general area where the person would be located. Thus, an inhabitant could create a mental map based on the inanimate landmarks or the people he would encounter.

Second, strangers were dependent on the urban environment of Pompeii. If an urban environment consisted of a balance between repetitive and alternating elements it was easier for a stranger to navigate a town or city. In Pompeii the repetitive elements exist through the orthogonal urban plan. The logical designed nature of an orthogonal plan makes it an ideal plan to establish towns or cities which needed to be easy to navigate. Although Pompeii indeed possess the convenience of this plan, it cannot be ascertained that the town was purposely designed to facilitate wayshowing. From the scarce archaeological and literary evidence scholars have determined Pompeii originated from the irregular *Altstadt* to the regular *Neustadt*. No consensus exists about the unitary nature of the *Neustadt*. If the orthogonal plan of the *Neustadt* was never intended – i.e. the result of different circumstances in time – than it seems no real value was seen in facilitating the wayfinding of strangers. Much like in the absence of street names and signs no special steps were taken to purposely organise an urban

environment for strangers. Nevertheless, no evidence exists to support this assumption and the fact remains that Pompeii has this orthogonal plan even in the case it was not intended. Thus, in the *Neustadt* Pompeii expresses good wayshowing.

However, this systematic and convenient urban plan is not used to its full extend. Through the influence of people and animals the streets in the orthogonal plan are often very crowded, which makes it harder to move through the town. Especially for cart traffic the convenient nature of the orthogonal plan is completely useless, because the inhabitants of ancient Pompeii have deliberately cut some street off for cart traffic from the rest of Pompeii. Therefore, cart drivers could not take the most straightforward itinerary, which was created by the orthogonal plan, but were forced to drive the streets that were possible for them. This often made their journey a lot longer and more complex than was necessary in the orthogonal plan of Pompeii.

The alternating elements exist through the spatial planning of the urban environment of ancient Pompeii. The spatial planning created the unique landscape of Pompeii and made specific areas distinguishable from others. Basically, these alternating elements in Pompeii are the landmarks inhabitants referred to in their directions. This further enables good wayshowing, because it assists the wayfinding of the stranger. In this research different building structures were pointed out as possible landmarks in Pompeii – e.g. public buildings, fountains and arches. The sensory experience could further facilitate the wayshowing, because smells and sounds were consciously or unconsciously a wayshowing element in the journey of a stranger. Although smells and sounds were assumingly not often referred to as a landmark in the direction giving to strangers, they also brought variation in the urban landscape of ancient Pompeii.

In addition, inscriptions and reliefs placed in the town functioned as possible signage for strangers and could also be used as landmarks. The *étuns* inscriptions are the most obvious form of signage in ancient Pompeii, as the inscriptions gave clear directions to the Oscan inhabitants of ancient Pompeii. However, the *étuns* inscriptions were never intended to be permanent and their content quickly became obsolete. Still, the inscriptions could still be used as a landmark through their eye-catching bright red appearance. Other inscriptions and visual signage – i.e. reliefs – functioned as landmarks but could also function as *de facto* modern street signs or house numbers. For example, instead of the modern house number eighteen a shop depicted an image of a goat. Thus, strangers looked for a specific image on a building instead of a house number.

In comparison with modern society it was much more complex for a stranger in antiquity to find an unfamiliar destination. Nowadays, modern people are far less dependent on the inhabitants of a town or city to find their destination. Strangers in ancient Roman Pompeii found their way by relying on the directions of the inhabitants. And thus, following the directions from landmark to landmark until they reached their precise destination or the area of their desired destination. Luckily for them, the urban environment of Roman Pompeii consisted of a good balance of repetitive and alternating elements, which made it for inhabitants easy to give clear directions. While for strangers, with the notable exception for cart drivers, this balance made it easier to navigate Roman Pompeii. Thus, the wayfinding of a stranger was frequently well supported by manifestations of good wayshowing in ancient Roman Pompeii.

Possible additional research of ancient Pompeii is necessary for a complete understanding of ancient wayfinding in Pompeii. Through a limited supply of time and resources, deliberate choices have been made in this research and therefore the urban environment of Pompeii has been analysed very selectively. Everything in the town needs to be carefully analysed for its wayfinding and wayshowing capabilities. This can only be done by expanding the analysis to other omitted components present in the urban environment of Pompeii. And eventually, by analysing the urban plan of Pompeii again when the whole town is excavated.

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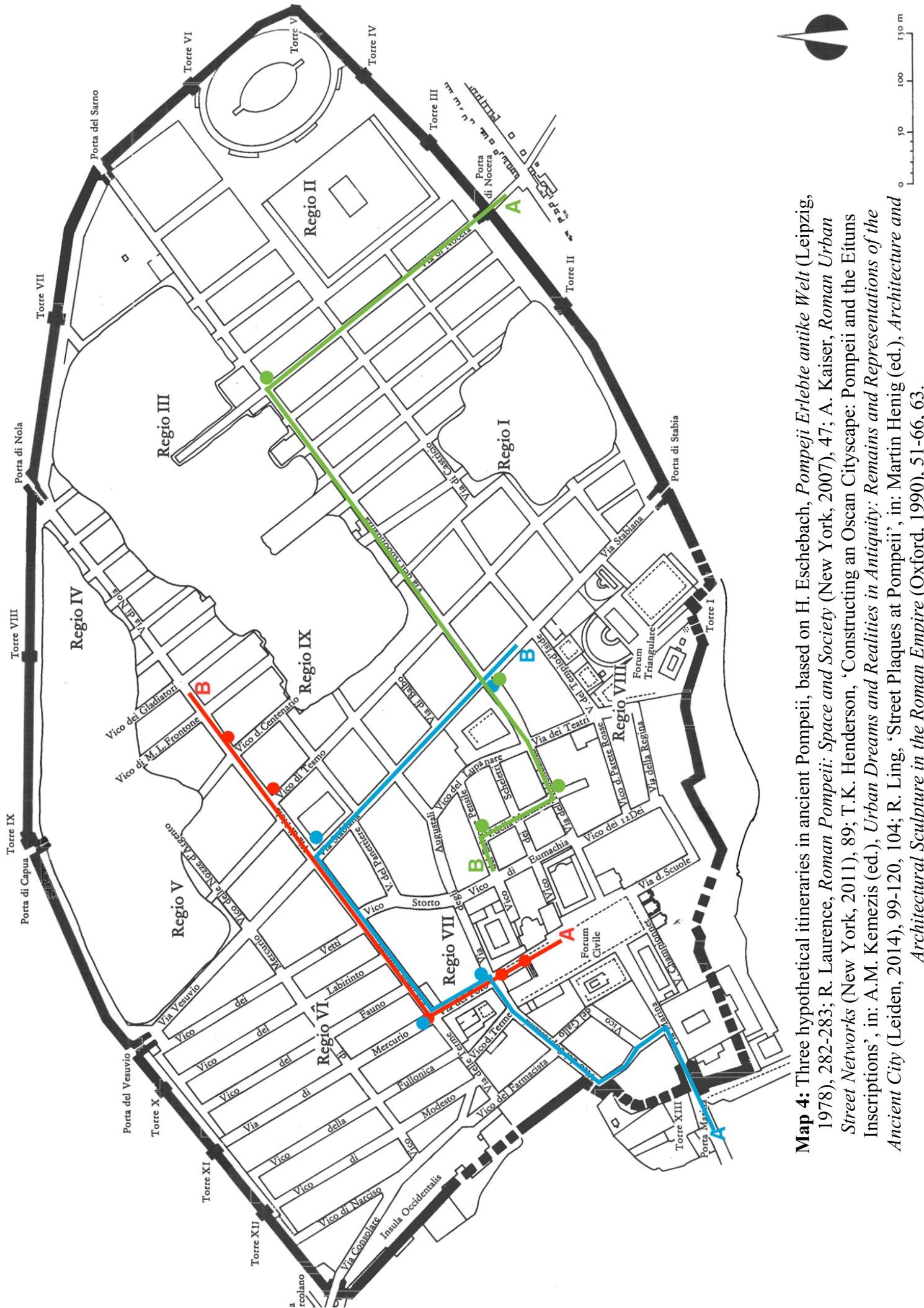






**Map 3:** Reconstruction of Pompeii's building functions in AD 79, based on H. Eschebach, *Pompeii: Erlebte antike Welt* (Leipzig, 1978), 284-285.





**Map 4:** Three hypothetical itineraries in ancient Pompeii, based on H. Eschbach, *Pompeii Erlebte antike Welt* (Leipzig, 1978), 282-283; R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii: Space and Society* (New York, 2007), 47; A. Kaiser, *Roman Urban Street Networks* (New York, 2011), 89; T.K. Henderson, 'Constructing an Oscan Cityscape: Pompeii and the Etruscan Inscriptions', in: A.M. Kemezis (ed.), *Urban Dreams and Realities in Antiquity: Remains and Representations of the Ancient City* (Leiden, 2014), 99-120, 104; R. Ling, 'Street Plaques at Pompeii', in: Martin Henig (ed.), *Architecture and Architectural Sculpture in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1990), 51-66, 63.