The Last Days *of* Pompeii

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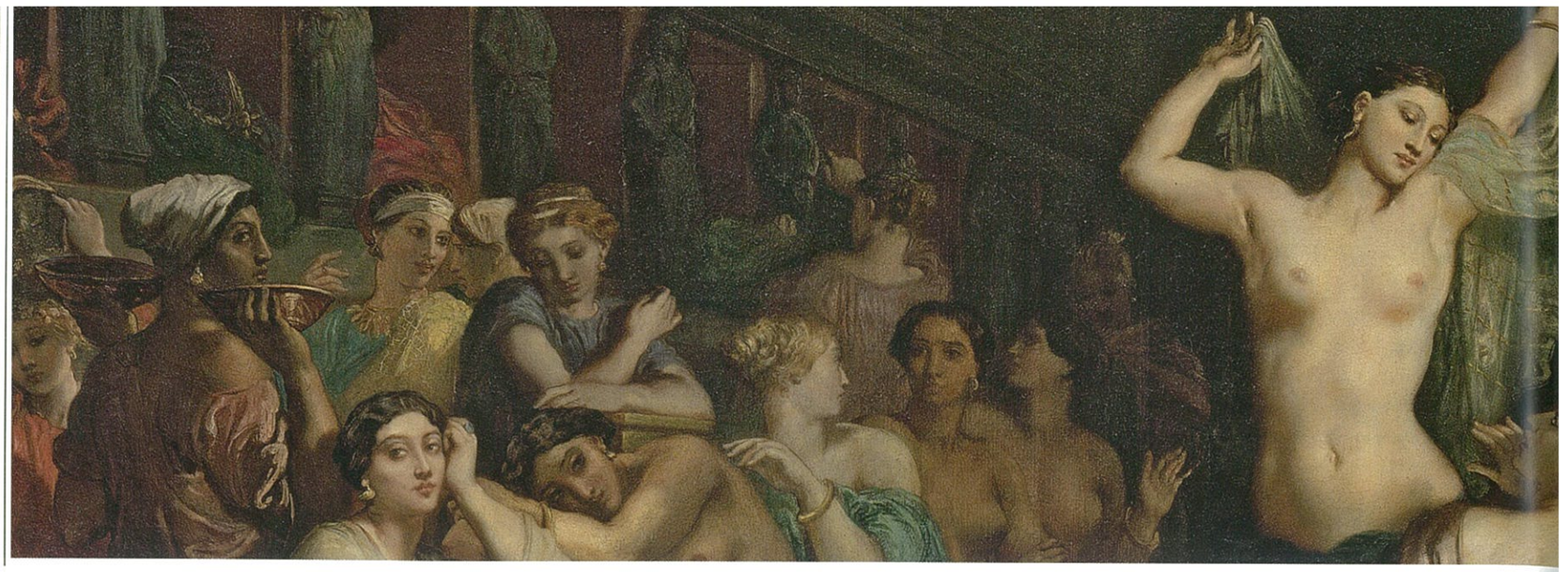


MARY BEARD

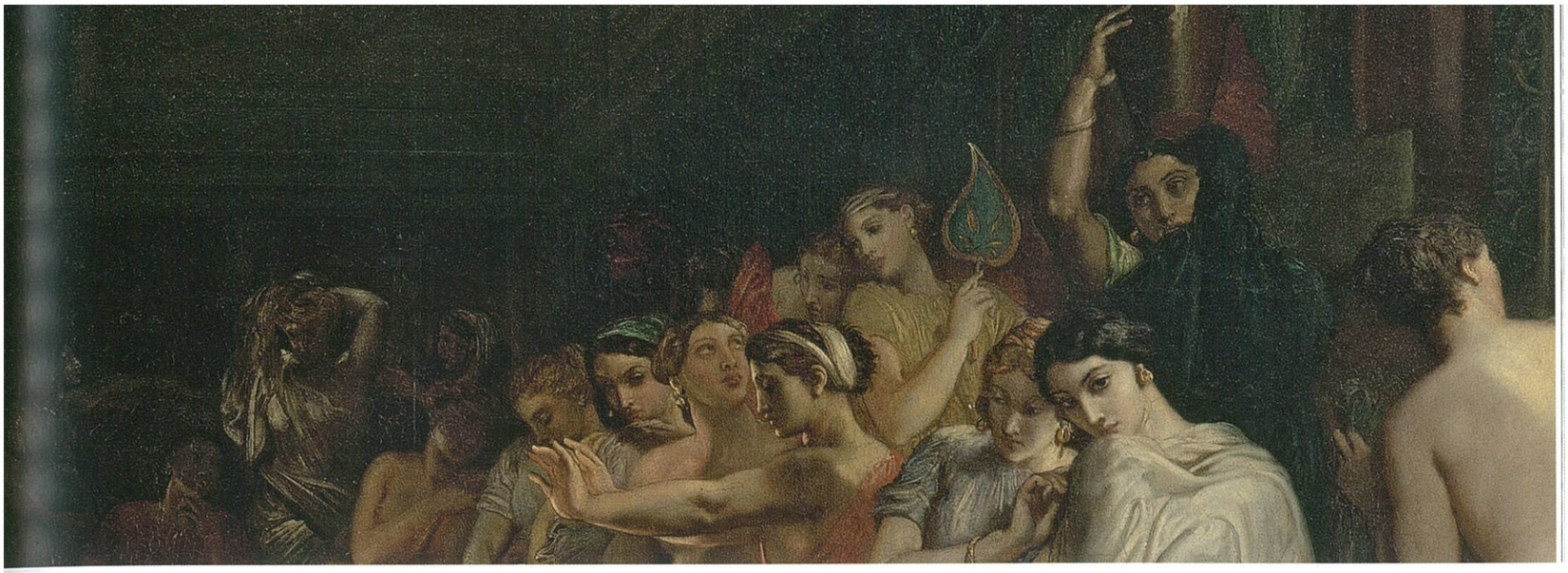
Dirty Little Secrets

CHANGING DISPLAYS OF POMPEIAN "EROTICA"

In 1838 "A Traveller"—a respectable Englishman concerned to preserve his anonymity—published his *Notes on Naples*. More than three hundred pages long, this book was in part a memoir of a recent journey to Italy ("a portion . . . of a continental journal kept to divert the languor of sickness, and the lassitude of idleness"); in part a guidebook for the benefit of future tourists, including descriptions of archaeological sites and museums; as well as a handy appendix on the "Idiosyncrasies of Neapolitans" (listing most of the northern European clichés about the south, from "sloth" to "sensibility").[1]

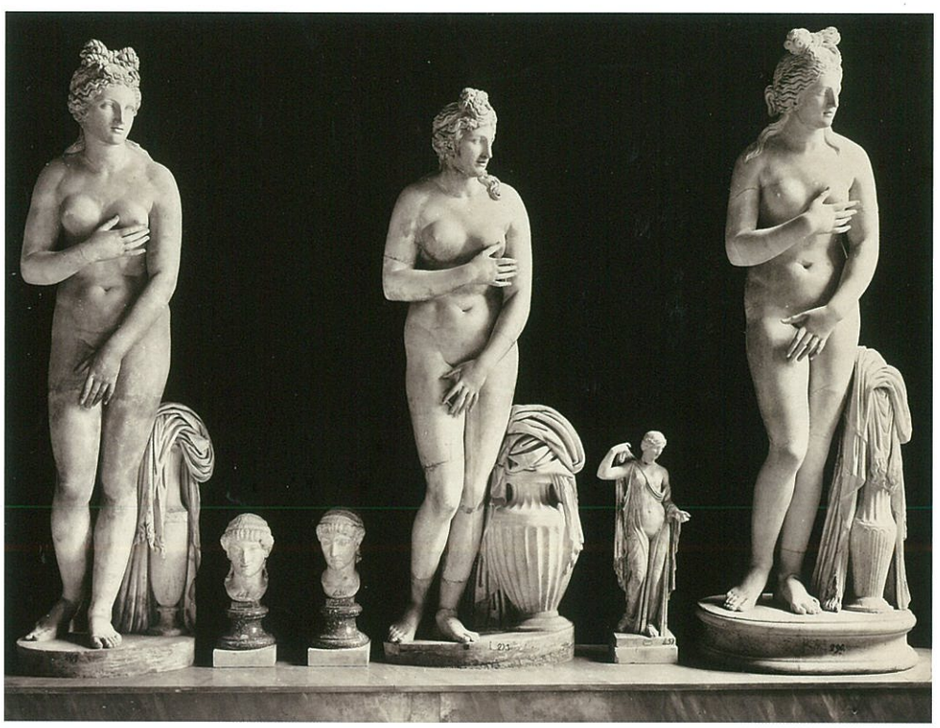
Unsurprisingly, he devoted a whole chapter to Pompeii, which—he insisted—rather exceeded his expectations. True, before his visit, his interest in the place had been fading ("Alack, our interest palls now toward the old Campanian city" for "stale to us now are . . . the domestic privacies of Greece and Rome, and the art, and science, and manners of old days"). But as soon as he trod those ancient Roman streets, he experienced the excitement of discovery, almost as if he were the very first person to have uncovered it. "Walk Pompeii," he enthused, "and on you comes the spirit of the spot as though it were your excavating spade first struck in disentombing its first shaft, as though to you its tale were now first told, and myriads had not trodden its dust before you."[2]

A later chapter is devoted to what is now the National Archaeological Museum in Naples but was then called Il Museo Borbonico (after the Bourbon kings of South Italy). There were some highlights here for our "Traveller": he loved the bronze statue of the dancing faun from the House of the Faun at Pompeii (which he rated almost "the most wonderful statue in the world") (pl. 77.1) and stood in awe of the busts of the famous Greek worthies from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum (copies of which today stand in the atrium and gardens of the Getty Villa in Malibu, Calif.). But there were some uncomfortable curiosities too. He was particularly puzzled by the fact that all the nude statues of Venus had been put together in a single room, picked as "plums out of the pudding and huddled . . . away out of sight into a dark room by themselves" (fig. 39). Seeing them as a group was a very different experience from seeing the



figures individually, partly because they were all in much the same pose, "the same timorous head and frightened fingers" covering their private parts. As the visitor entered, he felt as if he had interrupted the rehearsal for the performance of some carefully synchronized mimes. And, of course, the visitor was always a "he." Women were strictly excluded from the room, "only allowed to see inside . . . through the furtive medium of the keyhole." The incongruous result of this arrangement, the "Traveller" observed, was that "those of the gentler gender" were freely allowed to look at "nudities masculine" (for there had been no attempt to segregate the naked male statues); they were prevented only from viewing "nudities feminine," a form with which they were, of course, perfectly well acquainted. Perhaps, as I suspect, the real point was to stop them observing *men* in the act of observing "nudities feminine." But if so, that point was lost on the "Traveller."[3]

Ever since the rediscovery of antiquity in the Renaissance, sex has been one of the most controversial areas of our engagement with the classical world. From pederasty to phallic display, the different sexual norms of the ancient Greeks and Romans have been vehemently abominated, treated with disdain, secretly admired, or heroically blazoned in various campaigns for sexual liberation. Nowhere have the problems been clearer than at Pompeii and Herculaneum, where from the earliest excavations some of the most startling finds included ingenious or lurid images of copulation and nudes aplenty, not to mention the ubiquitous Roman phallus. What was the modern world to make of a culture in which Pan penetrating a goat (fig. 40) was thought a suitable subject for high-class sculpture and in which male genitalia could proudly hang over a bread oven or decorate an ordinary household lamp? Was this a sign of the prudishness of the modern world or of the depravity of the ancient? And what were the implications for the display and study of this material? How should these "immoral" and potentially dangerous images be policed? Who should, or should not, be allowed to look at them, in what context, and for what purpose? Some of the complexities of those questions (and, more to the point, of their answers) are clearly visible in our "Traveller's" account



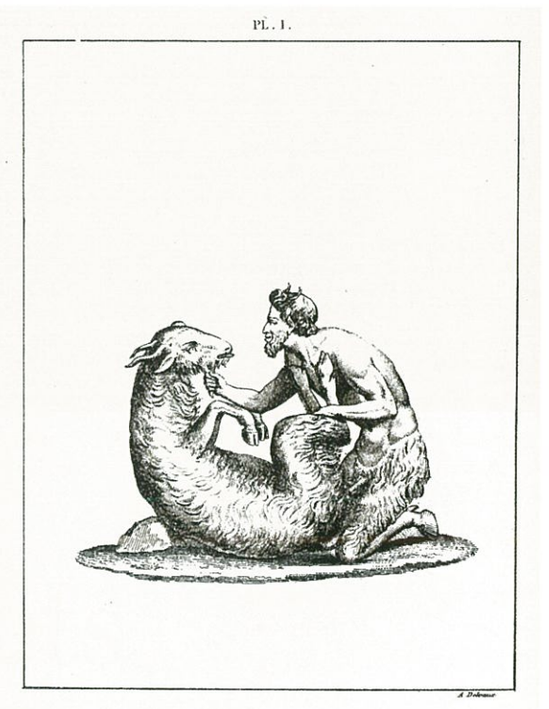


FIG. 39. Giacomo Brogi Photographic Studio, *Venus Room, National Museum, Naples*, ca. 1878–86. Gelatin silver print, 21 × 27 cm (8¼ × 10⅝ in.). Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale.

FIG. 40. A. Delvaux, *Pan and Goat*. Illustration in César Famin, *Musée royal de Naples: Peintures, bronzes et statues érotiques du cabinet secret; avec leur explication* (Paris, 1857), pl. 1. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 86-B5371.

of the Venus Room in the museum—pointing as it does to the unintended consequences of isolating the nudes, the potentially divergent reactions of the viewers, and the inconsistencies in the principles applied (why, for example, female nudes only and not male?).

The most notorious attempt to police the "obscenity" of Pompeii and Herculaneum was what is usually called the Secret Cabinet (the Italian title varied, from Gabinetto Segreto to Gabinetto degli Oggetti Osceni, Gabinetto Riservato, or Raccolta Pornografica).[4] The arrangement was based on broadly the same principles as the Venus Room: namely, to remove from public view the images deemed inappropriate for unrestricted access, while devising rules for who, if anyone, might be allowed to see them. The history of this cabinet is normally told as a story that correlates those changing rules of access with the growth (or rejection) of cultural liberalism and political openness more generally. In broad terms, so this narrative goes, the trajectory over the last two centuries has been toward greater openness, so that now the Secret Cabinet in the museum is open to all, with only a mild warning outside about its contents. But admittedly there have been a few ups and downs: repressive regimes generally excluded all-comers; Fascism kept people out, whereas liberal democracy has let people in.

The standard account of the Secret Cabinet runs something like this:[5] it was established in 1819 in the Museo Borbonico, where the archaeological collections from the old Royal Museum at Portici had gradually been transferred. Behind the scheme was the museum director Michele Arditi—though a few years later (in the final footnote of a little tract in which he argued that the phallic symbolism of the ancient world was not a sign of erotic excess, but a weapon against the evil eye) he went out of his way to credit the future King Francis I with the idea. Francis had enjoyed a royal visit to the museum with his wife and daughter, and as he was leaving, he observed that it would be a good idea to "shut away all the obscene objects, of whatever material they were made, in a single room, and only to allow entry to adults of good reputation."[6] We cannot be certain who first thought of it, and it was anyway hardly an original idea, for there had already been various forms of restricted access to erotica in the old museum at Portici. (In his 1762 *Letter and Report on the Discoveries at Herculaneum*, J. J. Winckelmann discusses the infamous statue of Pan copulating with a goat and explains that when he visited Portici a special license was required to see it—which he did not apply for.[7]) But the upshot was that just over a hundred objects—paintings, sculptures,

bronzes—were removed from open display. Access was to be granted only on formal application.

By the middle of the century, the revolutionary changes that ended in the unification of Italy and the fall of the Bourbon monarchy in South Italy brought reform to the museum—albeit in fits and starts. In the 1850s, the new director Domenico Spinelli, the principe di San Giorgio, had started to control access to the "obscene" material even more rigorously, transferring much of it to a couple of rooms on the first floor and barring the door. One British guidebook of 1853 suggests that anyone who wished to visit under these rules needed the express permission of the Minister of the Interior, following a personal recommendation from the British ambassador himself.[8] The collection remained firmly shut until the Italian revolutionary hero Giuseppe Garibaldi visited the museum only a few days after he had taken the city of Naples in 1860 and—in a parade of democratic liberalism that was a mirror image of the intervention of Francis I—insisted that the Cabinet be opened. Stories of how this happened differed wildly according to the political loyalties of those telling them. One version describes the re-opening as glorious liberation of the imprisoned works of art. Another, written by Spinelli himself, tells a rather more pathetic story of the search for a missing key to one of the locks that Garibaldi wanted open.[9] But glorious liberation or not, this opening was not the end of the Secret Cabinet. True, some objects no longer deemed "obscene" were returned to open display in the rest of the Museum, and many more people were allowed to see the obscene material, but it was still a segregated collection. One guidebook in 1862 hailed the fact that it was now "open to all comers;" though the next edition in 1865 stated clearly that it was open "to male visitors alone, among whom youths and persons in holy orders are excluded."[10] Either there had been a speedy re-think, or "all comers" had never been intended to include women and children.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the directors of the museum clamped down again: only scholars and artists were to be admitted, with a formal permit once more required. And in the 1930s archaeological superintendent Amedeo Maiuri—who controlled the museum and excavation through the Fascist era until 1961—tried to put a stop to more or less any visits at all to the pornographic collections in the museum (though he soon granted access to scholars again). More than that, he also attempted to remove from general public view the supposedly obscene paintings that remained in situ at Pompeii itself, by fitting hinged wooden covers over them and opening them up only to appropriate visitors. When I first visited the site in 1974, the famous figure of Priapus weighing his vast phallus against a money bag that had greeted Roman visitors in the porch of the House of the Vettii, still lay behind its wooden cover (fig. 41). A young woman could, however, have it opened by slipping the guard some money, or—more economically—by engaging in a few minutes of flirtatious conversation and quickly moving on after the painting had been revealed. Perhaps it was ever thus.

Similar tactics for gaining unofficial access were clearly used in the museum itself in the years after World War II. While the Secret Cabinet was often closed (as much for lack of funds, short-staffing, and seemingly endless "restorations" as for reasons of propriety, one suspects), the museum guards were making money on the side by offering to take visitors in for a private view. An internal memo of 1954, firmly (but no doubt vainly) forbade the guards from drawing any visitors' attention to the existence of the pornographic collection and attempted to stand by the old rules for access: that is, allowing entry to scholars, now of both sexes; to those with a serious interest in the material; and—with an endearing touch of realism—to foreign visitors who were particularly insistent.[11]

FIG. 41. Fresco depicting Priapus in the Vestibule of the House of the Vettii, ca. 1960.

FIG. 42. The Secret Cabinet today.

By the mid-1960s even this standard had been relaxed to allow any adult in with a clear warning about what they would see. But this shift was more in theory than in practice, thanks to the restorations that kept large parts of the museum, including the pornographic material, more or less permanently shut. It was only in 2000 that public access became a reality, when the collection—showcasing such objects as the Pan and the Goat, wall paintings of every sort of coupling imaginable, and phalluses by the score—was reopened to a great fanfare in the international press. Everything was arranged in a self-conscious mock-up of an early-nineteenth-century environment: this curious faux-historical setting, which was quite unlike how it had ever actually been displayed, was carefully designed to suggest that the Secret Cabinet was now to be seen as "a museum of itself" (fig. 42). Even so, visitors were at first obliged to tour it with a guide. The message (at least when I heard it) was a morally upbeat one: this material, our guide insisted, is not pornographic in the way our benighted ancestors used to think; it simply shows how much less "hung up" about sex the Romans were than we are.

Yet this narrative of some two hundred years of the history of the display of these objects conceals as much as it reveals. It is accurate enough in the broad lines of historical development that it sketches, but it misses much of the complexity and debate that makes the story of the Secret Cabinet and the policing of Pompeii's "dirty secrets" so interesting and important.

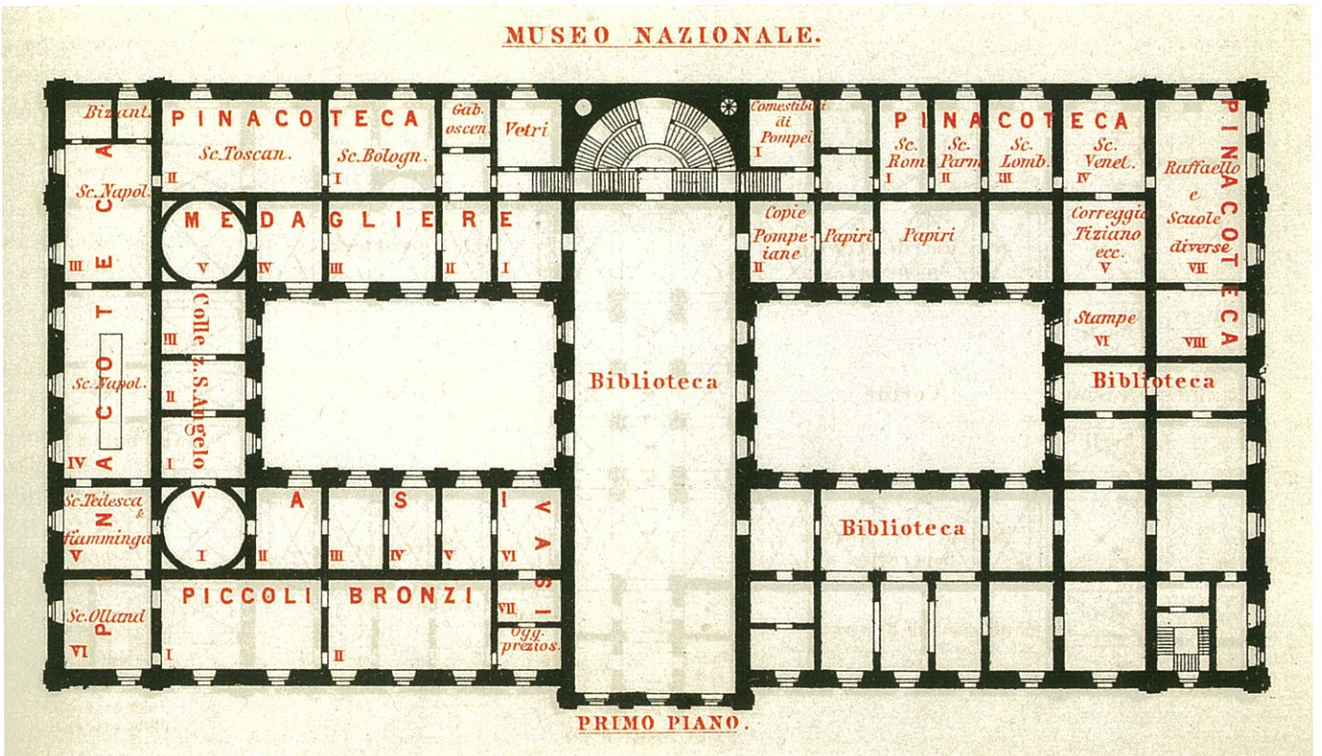
For a start, as the "Traveller's" account of the Venus Room makes clear, there was never a single pornographic collection in the Naples museum: there were collections of different material, kept in different places, to which public access was in some way restricted (figs. 43 and 44). The phallic bric-a-brac and erotic paintings from Pompeii were one thing (and that is what people usually mean when they refer to the Secret Cabinet). The Venuses, barred as they were for a time to female viewers, were another (most of these objects were not from the Vesuvian excavations, but had been moved from among the other ancient sculpture in the museum, notably the great Farnese collection originally from Rome). Also carefully policed for many years in the nineteenth century were a number of modern paintings and sculptures. There was indeed a modern "Secret Cabinet" that included, in pride of place, Titian's wonderfully languorous painting of the myth of Danae being impregnated by a shower

OPPOSITE TOP

FIG. 43. Plan of the upper floor of the Naples museum with an "Obscene Cabinet" (*Gab oscen*) indicated at the back between the Pinacoteca and a gallery of glass (*Vetri*). In Karl Baedeker, *Italie: Manuel du voyageur; Troisième partie: Italie Méridionale, Sicile et Sardaigne, suivies d'excursions à Malte, à Tunis et à Corfou* (Leipzig, 1890), opposite p. 76.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM

FIG. 44. Plan of the ground floor of the Naples museum showing galleries devoted to Venus and satyrs at front left. In Karl Baedeker, *Italie* (see fig. 43), opposite p. 77.


MUSEO NAZIONALE.
PINACOTECA
Bizant.
Sc. Napol.
Sc. Napol.
Sc. Tedesca & Fiamminga
Sc. Olland
PINACOTECA
Sc. Toscan.
Sc. Bologn.
Gab. oscen.
Vetri
MEDAGLIERE
Colle. S. Angelo
VASI
PICCOLI BRONZI
Biblioteca
Comestibili di Pompei
Copie Pompeiane
Papiri
Papiri
PINACOTECA
Sc. Rom.
Sc. Parm.
Sc. Lomb.
Sc. Venet.
Correggio Tiziano ecc.
Stampe
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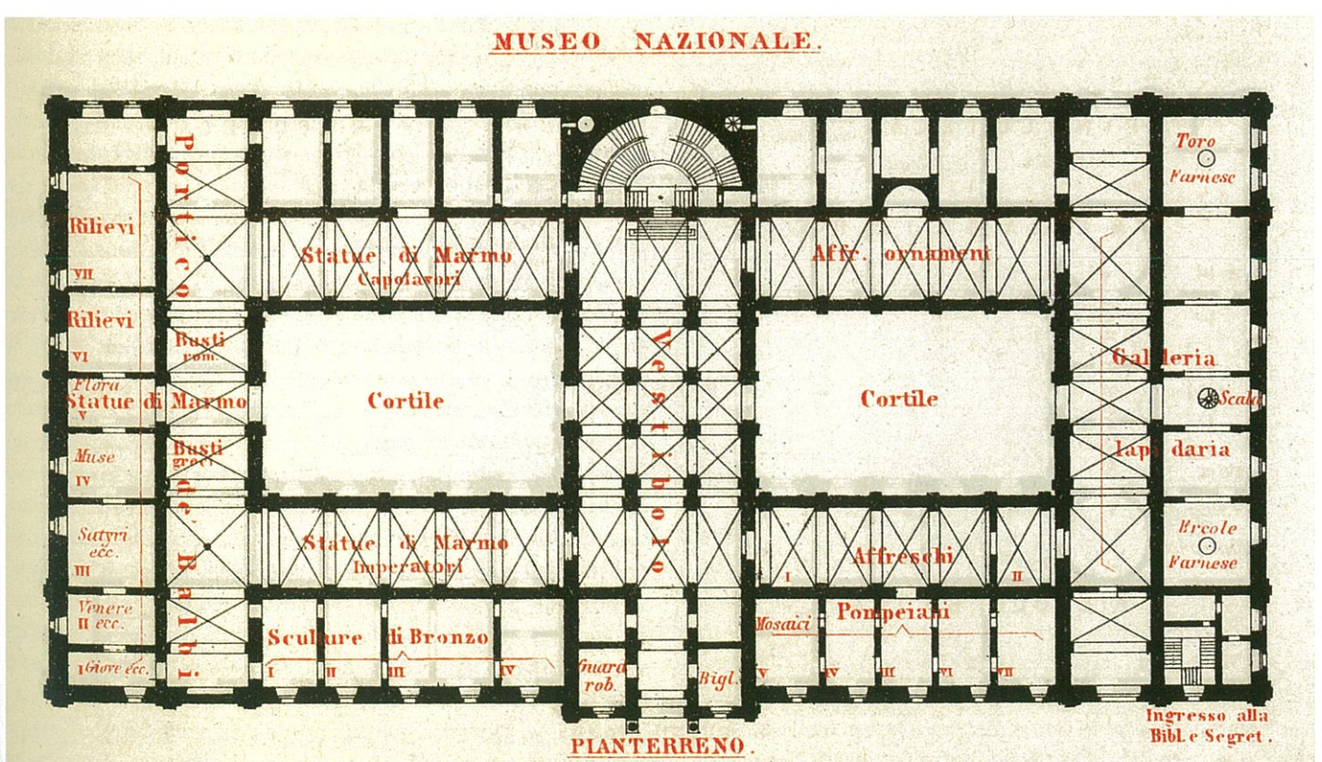
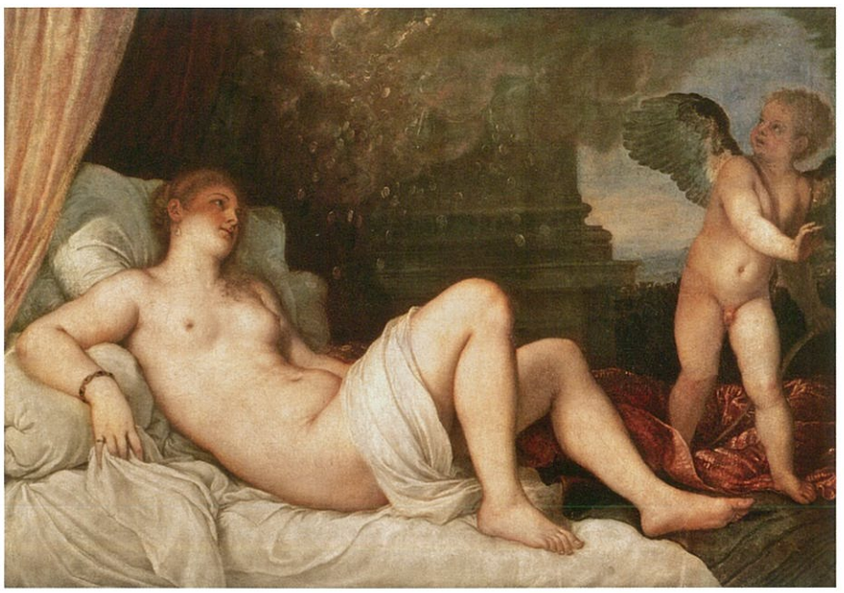
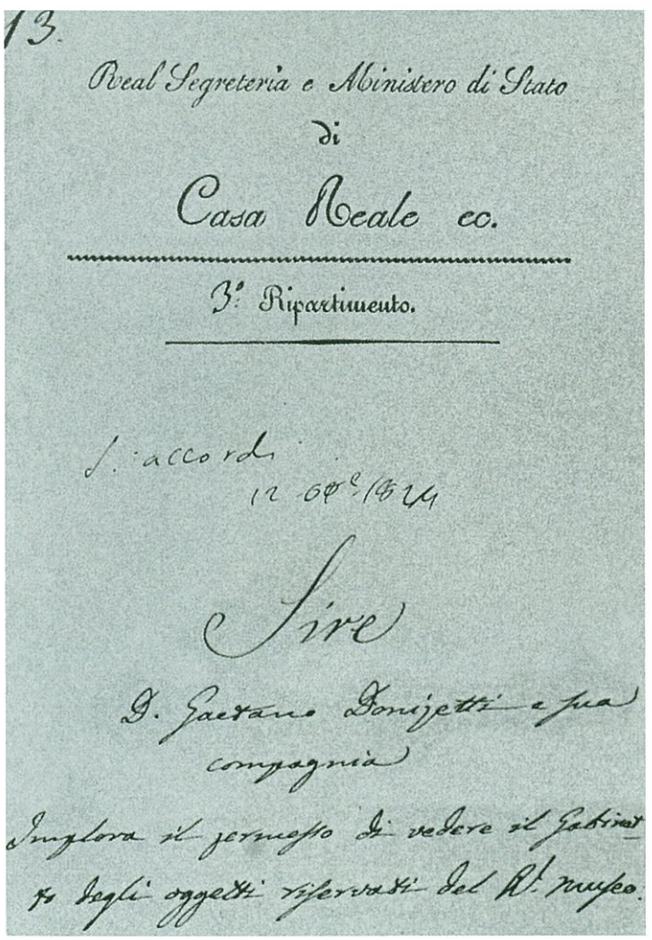
Raffaello e Scuole diverse
VASI
Ogg. prezios.
PRIMO PIANO.


MUSEO NAZIONALE.
Portico
Rilievi
Rilievi
Statue di Marmo
Busti
Statue di Marmo
Busti
Muse
Satyri ecc.
Venere ecc.
Giove ecc.
Statue di Marmo Capolavori
Cortile
Statue di Marmo Imperatori
Sculture di Bronzo
Guard. rob.
Vestiboli
Rigl.
Affr. ornament.
Cortile
Affreschi
Mosaici
Pompeiani
Toro Farnese
Galleria
Scala
Iapidaria
Ercole Farnese
Ingresso alla Bibl. e Segret.
PIANTERRENO.




13.

Real Segreteria e Ministero di Stato

di

Casa Reale ec.

3.° Ripartimento.

L'accordi

12 Ott.e 1824

Sire

D. Gaetano Donizetti e sua compagnia

Implora il permesso di vedere il Gabinet

to degli oggetti riservati del R.l museo.

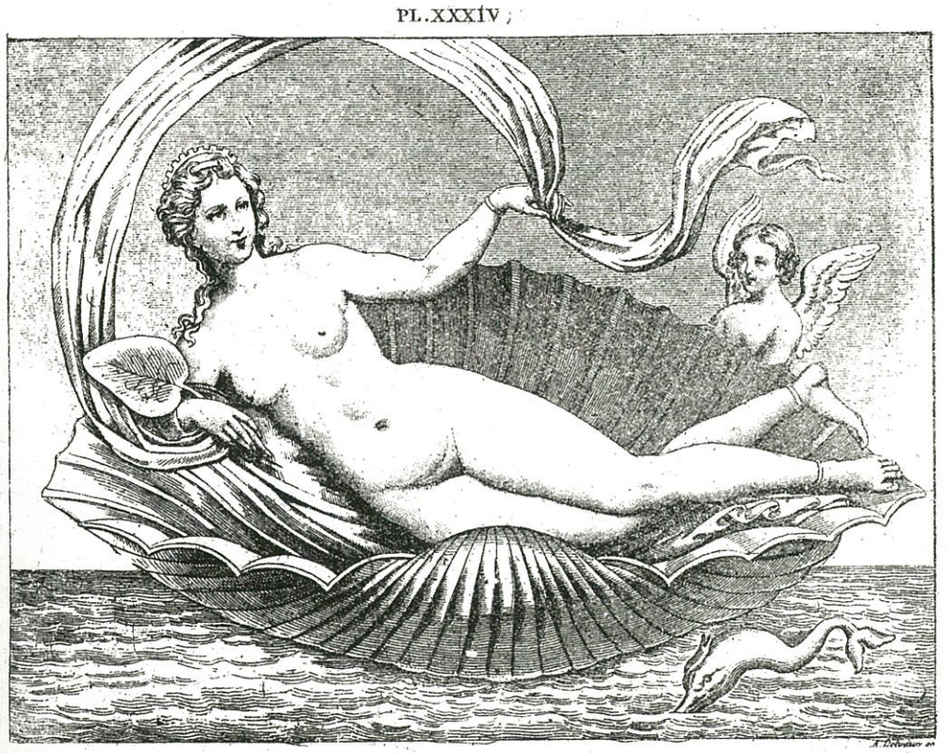
of gold (fig. 45), as well as Luca Cambiaso's *Venus and Adonis* (then thought to be a work of Veronese). Objects seem to have moved between these different collections and were controlled under different regimes of restriction. When Spinelli shut away the archaeological obscenities of the first floor in the 1850s, for example, he very soon put Titian's *Danae* and the *Venus and Adonis* under lock and key too.[12] It is probably not very helpful to think in terms of *the* Secret Cabinet as a single room, with clearly defined contents (as the modern display in Naples tries to imply), but rather as a series of different locations in the museum, under a series of different and changing restrictive regimes. In fact, the Secret Cabinet was almost as much a state of mind as any particular physical location.[13]

The chronology, too, is more complicated than it seems. That is partly because the formal rules governing access to the restricted collections were forever being adjusted in line with the changing views of the museum management and in response to external pressure of all kinds, whether from Bourbon kings or the national government. My summary highlights only the major changes, in what must have been a constantly shifting set of protocols and conflicting policies. At the very moment, for example, that Maiuri was attempting to restrict access more heavily, the relevant government minister in Rome was writing to ask him whether the very existence of a Secret Cabinet "was compatible with the dignity of a great scholarly institution" (should not the stuff either be on public display or in store?).[14] But more to the point, it is very hard to know how strictly the rules were applied or how easily they could be evaded (whether by influence, persuasive talk, or hard cash). It is even harder, in other words, to reconstruct the history of *visiting* these collections than to reconstruct the history of the rule book that claimed to regulate it.

Take, for example, what we know of the 1820s, when for the first time official permits were required in order to see the "reserved objects" in the Naples museum (fig. 46). There was, in the first few years, an enormous and rapid increase in the number of requests for access; in 1822 there were just twenty, by 1824 they had reached three hundred. So far as we know, no request was ever refused. This fact alone hints that the rules had merely a declarative force or that, thanks in part to the inconvenience of the application process, they were self-policing (only those who were confident of being admitted applied) and did not play any directly practical part in exclusion. The recommendation, in the internal memo of 1954, that "particularly insistent" foreign-

FIG. 45. Titian (Italian, ca. 1488–1576), *Danae*, 1545. Oil on canvas, 120 × 127 cm (47¼ × 50 in.). Naples, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, S 83971.

FIG. 46. Permit to visit the Secret Cabinet issued to the composer Gaetano Donizetti, October 21, 1824. Naples, Archivio di Stato (after De Caro, 2000, 15).



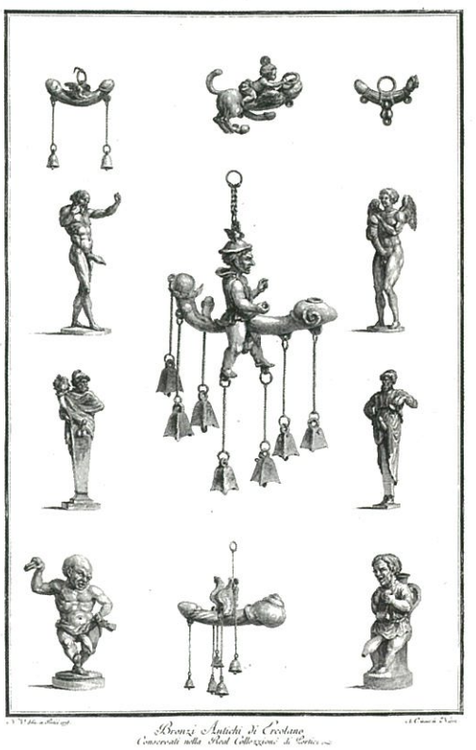


FIG. 47. A. Delvaux, *Venus on the Shell*. Illustration in César Famin, *Musée royal de Naples* (see fig. 40), pl. 34.

FIG. 48. A.C. after N.V. *Ancient Bronzes from Herculaneum in the Royal Collection at Portici*. Illustration in Jean Claude Richard de Saint Non, *Voyage pittoresque, ou, Description des royaumes de Naples et de Sicile* vol. 1, pt. 2 (Paris, 1781–86), opposite p. 52. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 88-B19555.

ers should be allowed in, may perhaps also reflect the standard practice for much of the nineteenth century. We certainly do not hear of a flood of angry exchanges between the museum officials (or those of the government ministry who at some periods handled requests) and people whose applications were refused on the grounds that they were not sufficiently scholarly or respectable. But how do we explain the increase in numbers in those early years? Was this because of greater numbers of tourists? Was it because of a greater interest among visitors for seeing the pornography? Or was it rather that the bureaucratic system was starting to work more efficiently—and determined would-be visitors thought they had little option but to apply to the authorities for a permit? Though the changing rules do tell their own story, it would be dangerous to infer from them how many people actually saw any of this material. The fact that there was at one point a trade in fake permits sold to tourists by the museum guards shows that there were other means of access apart from the official channels.[15]

But there are other intersecting chronologies as well. It is true that the headline concern of the series of rules and restrictions was *who* exactly should be allowed to look at what lay behind locked doors. Often this rested simply on the age, gender, and religion of the individual. Children were universally excluded and, for much of the museum's history, women and clerics too. At some periods, the particular reason a visitor had for viewing the material was also paraded as a key qualification: scholars and artists were admissible, those who merely wanted to glimpse the dirty pictures were not. But another issue was exactly *what* material was thought to be corrupting or dangerous or otherwise unsuitable—and this too changed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Particular objects were sometimes "reserved," sometimes placed on public display. The fresco of the naked Venus lying, pinup style, on a shell (see fig. 42, also fig. 47) also seems to have been one of the objects released to a general audience after Garibaldi's visit to the museum in 1860 (at least it is not among the more than two hundred objects listed in Fiorelli's catalogue of the pornographic collection in 1866).[16] Sometimes whole categories of objects became candidates for reassessment. In 1848, for example, a question was raised about some of the "ithyphallic" material (fig. 48); for if (as Arditi had argued) they were a form of primitive protection against the evil eye, rather than erotic in intention, then these works hardly belonged in a Secret Cabinet. All the same, just a

few years later, they, too, seem to have been among the obscenities locked up even more firmly by Spinelli.[17]

Visitors to the museum discussed the various regimes of restriction with considerable verve. Most nineteenth-century guidebooks and travel memoirs treated the Venus Room as faintly ludicrous (as our "Traveller" did), and they came very close to recognizing some of the curious consequences of this kind of segregation: to group all such statues together, off limits to women, children, and priests, was to increase rather than decrease their erotic charge. For the most part, however, they approved of the restricted access to the erotic paintings and exuberant phallic images from Pompeii. As *Notes on Naples* put it in 1838, "There is, however, another reserved room, at the seal of secrecy put on which none can murmur." Not even the idea that some objects were great art could rescue them. "In the atrocious subjects in the *Camera Oscena* not all the labour of the most accomplished art, and such is lavished upon these, should redeem them from their darkness."[18] Likewise the 1853 edition of Murray's *Handbook to Southern Italy*, while warning readers of the need to get a recommendation from the ambassador in order to make a visit, heartily approved that the obscenity was locked away: "access is, very properly, extremely difficult.... Very few, therefore, have seen the collection; and those who have are said to have no desire to repeat their visit."[19] Only occasionally, until well into the twentieth century, was any voice raised to object to the policing of what was generally seen as pornography. The author of the 1858 guide, who referred to the "false delicacy" that had made admission at that point well-nigh impossible, was far from typical.[20] If anything, we have more records of visitors who wanted a stricter, rather than a looser, regime.

There are probably various reasons why there were few complaints. In part we are dealing with general nineteenth-century ideas of propriety. In part, as I have noted, it seems likely that—except for one or two brief interludes, notably in the 1850s—those men who particularly wanted to see the material were able to do so and were not therefore driven to complain. (What the women felt at their exclusion we can only guess.) But, perhaps even more importantly, you did not actually need to go to Naples to get a sight of many of the most famous "reserved objects"; from the 1830s on, images were widely available from your armchair almost anywhere in Europe or America, thanks to a number of illustrated catalogues of the Secret Cabinet (not to mention several copies of key pieces, such as a small terracotta version of Pan and the Goat from the Townley Collection in the British Museum, traditionally attributed to the sculptor Joseph Nollekens).[21] Two of the best known, Louis Barré's *Musée Secret* and Colonel Famin's *Cabinet Secret*, both published an almost identical set of some sixty images of erotica from Pompeii and Herculaneum (by the artist Henri Roux), though ordered rather differently in each case: Famin starts off with Pan and the Goat (see fig. 40), Barré with a slightly more decorous painting of a "Faun" kissing a naked "Bacchant."[22] In their learned introductions, each author provided readers with plenty of academic alibis for enjoying what was to follow (Barré, for example, suggested to his readers that this material raised philosophical issues about the nature of progress). And each image was accompanied by a self-consciously sober, critical commentary; Famin's short essay on Pan and the Goat started by finding fault with the artistic rendering of the goat and finished by quoting some relevant, but highly respectable ancient texts, including a passage from a little-known, late first/early second-century essay by Plutarch on "Reason in Animals."

Many more people discovered the material in this printed form than ever visited the Naples museum, and these books played an enormous part in standardizing the image of the Secret Cabinet. While the objects moved around the museum in Naples itself, put on or taken off public display, these selections in books stayed the same, from edition to edition, through the nineteenth century—creating yet more chronological paradoxes. Even when the painting of Venus on her shell was freely accessible in the museum, for the armchair reader she was still part of the (textual) Secret Cabinet. The truth is that, in many respects and for most of its history, the Secret Cabinet was as much a book as a shifting collection of obscene, or not-so-obscene, objects.

But there is an intriguing sting in the tail. Almost all recent work on the Secret Cabinet stresses how different that regime of viewing was from the way these works of art were seen in the ancient world. Indeed in the nineteenth century, too, many students of Pompeii puzzled how to make sense of the fact that phalluses were found everywhere from street corner to bread oven. But this did not stop them from projecting their own cultural viewpoint onto the Romans and "discovering" secret cabinets in the ruins of Pompeii itself. One of the most notable of these was the so-called *venereum* in the House of Sallust, apparently isolated from the rest of the house, and decorated with erotic wall paintings. This was vividly brought to life in 1819, in a fictional account, by the great Pompeian scholar François Mazois, of a visit to Rome of a young Gallic prince at the time of Julius Caesar. The background and context for this fictional visit are provided by the houses of Pompeii which Mazois knew so well—including the House of Sallust. Here, in the *venereum*, he replicates closely the idea of the Secret Cabinet, as it was then being established in the Naples museum. The young prince is suitably shocked by the erotic images which confront him, but he and the reader are assured that the ladies of the house are not allowed in to see them.[23]

If the Secret Cabinet in the nineteenth century was in part a state of mind, it was a state of mind that was retrojected onto

the ancient world. This, of course, should make us think about our own engagement with the sexual images of Pompeii. We are partly seeing the preoccupations of the ancient world, but maybe we are seeing our own too.

Notes

1 ["A Traveller"], *Notes on Naples and Its Environs* (London, 1838); quotation from p. v.

2 Ibid., chapter 10, pp. 141–60; quotations pp. 141–42.

3 Ibid., chapter 12, pp. 172–93; quotations, pp. 174, 189–90. Milanese 2009 offers an evocative collection of images of the nineteenth-century museum (including fig. 39 in this volume).

4 This was not just a Neapolitan phenomenon; for the history of the Secret Cabinet in the British Museum, see Catherine Johns, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (London, 1982), 15–31.

5 The best detailed histories of the Secret Cabinet are the "Introduzione," De Caro 2000, 9–23 (this volume usefully reprints original documents and museum memoranda); and Laurentino García y García, "La raccolta pornografica del Gabinetto Segreto nel Museo Borbonico di Napoli," in *Louis Barré, Museo Segreto*, by Laurentino García y García and Luciana Jacobelli (Pompeii, 2001), 17–26. There is a useful critique of the "myth of the secret cabinet" in Kate Fisher and Rebecca Langlands, "The Censorship Myth and the Secret Museum," in Hales and Paul 2011, 301–15. They rightly criticize most earlier scholars (myself included) for simplifying and over-sexualizing the issues of display of Pompeian antiquities—even at the risk of turning a blind eye to the erotic dimensions of the debates. By and large, however, their account is a breath of fresh air, and we have reached broadly similar conclusions by different routes.

6 Michele Arditi, *Il Fascino e l'Amuleto contro del Fascino presso gli antichi* (Naples, 1825), 45–46. Fisher and Langlands 2011 (note 5), 307, are right to point to the anecdotal nature of this story of royal intervention.

7 Mattusch 2005, 155–56; and J. J. Winckelmann, *Letter and Report on the Discoveries at Herculaneum*, introduction, translation, and commentary by Carol C. Mattusch (Los Angeles, 2011), 87.

8 [John Murray], *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Italy* (London, 1853), 189.

9 De Caro 2000, 16–18.

10 [John Murray], *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Italy* (London, 1862), 150; and [John Murray], *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Italy* (London, 1865), 163.

11 De Caro 2000, 22.

12 Ibid., 16; and García y García 2001 (note 5), 20–21.

13 A room known as the Secret Cabinet is often marked on visitors' plans of the museum (commonly as a tiny place at the top of the stairs on the upper floor, as in fig. 44), but this is sometimes incompatible with written documents and descriptions. The modern Secret Cabinet is not in this position. The Venus Room, too, is variously identified—see, for example, fig. 43.

14 De Caro 2000, 20.

15 Ibid., 14.

16 Giuseppe Fiorelli, *Catalogo del Museo Nazionale di Napoli: Raccolta pornografica* (Naples, 1866).

17 De Caro 2000, 16.

18 [A Traveller] 1838 (note 1), 191–92.

19 [Murray] 1853 (note 8), 189.

20 [John Murray], *Handbook for Travellers in Southern Italy* (London, 1858), 137.

21 British Museum, inv. M. 550; a piece of paper stuck to the base reads: "COPY FROM MEMORY OF YE MARBLE GROUPE IN PORTICI MUSEUM."

22 Louis Barré, *Herculanum e Pompéi*, vol. 8, *Musée Secret* (Paris, 1840) (much reprinted; see the facsimile and essays in García y García and Jacobelli [note 5]); and "Colonel Famin," *Musée royal de Naples: Peintures, bronzes et statues érotiques du cabinet secret* (Paris, 1836) (much reprinted).

23 [François Mazois], *Le palais de Scaurus* (Paris, 1819) (first published anonymously, then under the name Mazois in 1822); discussed by Eric M. Moormann, "Fictitious Manuscripts from Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Antiquity," *Cronache Ercolanesi* 40 (2010): 239–49, esp. 247.