

3 | Appearances Can Be Deceiving

The Presentation of Bronzes from Herculaneum and Pompeii

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Introduction

By the end of the fifteenth century, ancient columns, bases, capitals, reliefs, and inscriptions were being dug up around the Bay of Naples at places like Sorrento, Amalfi, and Ravello. Late in the sixteenth century, workmen digging a canal from the Sarno River to the town of Torre Annunziata tunneled through a hill known as La Cività that was bristling with antiquities.

In 1709 a French cavalry commander employed by the Austrians—Emmanuel-Maurice, duc de Lorraine and prince d'Elboeuf—bought property at Granatello, overlooking the Bay of Naples north of Portici. He began to do what many other entrepreneurs were doing, digging outward from the bottom of a well on his property and bringing up antiquities, among them three fine marble statues of draped women, the largest one also veiled. They were all quietly removed from Naples, sent first to Rome for repairs—one of the smaller ones had no head and needed a new one made for her—and then to d'Elboeuf's cousin in Vienna, Prince Eugène of Savoy, and eventually to Augustus III, king of Poland and elector of Saxony, in Dresden.¹

In 1734 the Spanish Bourbons took over Naples and Sicily from the Austrians, and the now independent kingdom had as its first king Charles VII, a son of Philip V of Spain and Elizabeth Farnese of Parma. Charles married Maria Amalia, the daughter of Augustus III, the owner of the three ancient marble statues that came to be known as the Herculaneum Women.

Under Charles VII (r. 1734–59), the city of Naples got the first opera house in Europe, which was built in six months flat, along with a poorhouse some 350 yards in length (the Albergo dei Poveri) and a few new royal palaces in addition to the one in the center of town. One of the new ones, a summer palace at Portici, adjoined d'Elboeuf's former property at Granatello, on the outskirts of the town of Resina. The man who surveyed the property at Portici for Charles VII was a Spanish military engineer named Roque Joaquín de Alcubierre, who began to dig on the site for the king in 1738. That year, digging in the same underground structure from which d'Elboeuf's marble women had come, workers found an inscription identifying the building as the theater of ancient Herculaneum. In this way they learned the name of the ancient city that they had found. Although the site was seventy or more feet underground and was therefore difficult to access,



this remoteness added to the mystery and the drama of the discovery, and fueled the enthusiasm for learning about the ancient world. A world that had previously been known primarily through ancient texts now seemed much more immediate, with the survival of its material remains.

Charles VII owned the finds.

Ten years later, in 1748, Alcubierre surveyed La Cività and began to dig what he thought was the site of ancient Stabiae, but it turned out to be Pompeii, and serious excavation began there in 1755. Pompeii was less than twenty feet underground, and it was quickly uncovered, soon becoming far better known than Herculaneum. But it was during the first twenty years of digging at Herculaneum (that is, of tunneling seventy feet underground) that the vast majority of large bronzes were found—in numbers that have never before or since been equaled at any one site. Most of the bronzes came from Herculaneum's theater, from the region of the so-called Basilica, and from a nearby seaside villa, now known as the Villa dei Papiri. Between 1738 and 1759 many marbles were found as well.

Restoring the Bronzes

What would the Spanish Bourbons do with all the ancient bronzes that were being discovered on their property? The opportunity for publicity was not lost on Charles VII (the legendary collections of antiquities, paintings, and books of his mother's family, the Farnese, would be brought to Naples later in the eighteenth century).² The first move that Charles made, in 1739, was to hire a restorer, a sculptor from Rome named Giuseppe Canart (1713–1791). Canart was responsible for restoring all the marbles and bronzes before they were displayed. Among the bronzes, there were soon nearly forty statues, many statuettes, a four-horse chariot, and thirty-two heads and busts for his workshop to repair. After they were restored in the Royal Foundry at Portici, they were installed in the summer palace there. In 1741 the Farnese collection of antiquities—all marbles—began to arrive from Rome, and Canart worked on them as well as on the finds from Herculaneum.

Given Canart's workload, it is no surprise that his records are brief and not particularly informative. One notation reads, "fifteen marbles and bronzes were restored; they [the bronzes] were arranged symmetrically, along with the marbles, in a gallery on the second floor of the palace, facing the mountain."³ A couple of marbles are still in that wing today, one of them on the landing of the central staircase. As it turned out, the Bourbons had to have a new wing added to the summer palace to house their collection of antiquities.

One decision that Canart had to make quickly as antiquities arrived in Portici was what to keep and what to restore. Bronze heads and whole statues were of course saved, even if they were somewhat squashed or broken in pieces, as was the case with the statues and the chariot group from the theater. Some objects disappeared, and it was widely known that fragments that could

not be pieced together were being reused as scrap metal. One bust whose head was never recovered evidently served as a trial piece to determine how deeply to clean a bronze.⁴ Today the bust (still without an inventory number) is on exhibit, which would have horrified the Spanish Bourbons (fig. 3.1).

The bronze chariot group that had been recovered in pieces from Herculaneum's theater in 1739 was in such poor condition that scholars argued about how many horses there were, and about whether they belonged to a two- or four-horse chariot. Eventually, Canart was charged with restoring a single horse from fragments of four (fig. 3.2). This was at the behest of Camillo Paderni (ca. 1715–1781), the painter from Rome whom King Charles hired in 1751 as director of the Herculaneuse Museum at Portici. Paderni took charge of all the finds as they arrived in Portici, and he was responsible for restoration of the paintings. His drawings of finds, such as his depiction of a bronze head with its curls replaced (fig. 3.3), remind us that as a painter he had his own agenda: the pale, pudgy face looks more like flesh than bronze.⁵ From 1759 to 1763, after Charles returned to Spain (to rule as Charles III), Paderni continued to send him notes about finds along with his drawings of them.



FIGURE 3.1. Acephalous bronze bust of a woman wearing a peplos, from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum, found March 15, 1754, 1st century B.C.–1st century A.D. Life-size. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (without inv. no.)

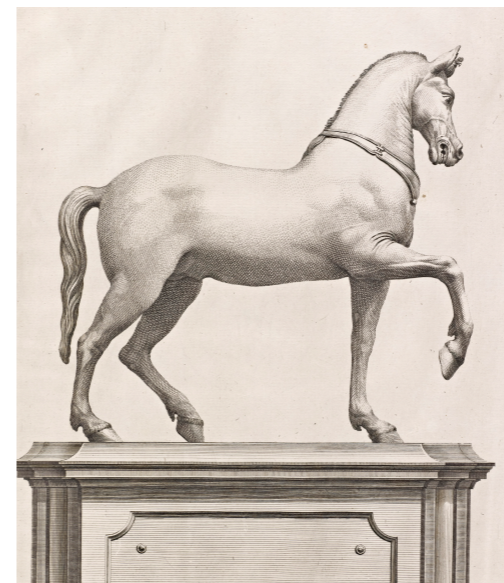


FIGURE 3.2. Reconstructed horse from a quadriga (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 4904), from the theater at Herculaneum, found in May 1739 in the excavations at Resina. Drawing by Giovanni Batista Casanova (Italian, ca. 1735–1795), engraving by Carlo Nolli (Italian, 1710–ca. 1785). From *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (Naples, 1771), p. 257, pl. 66



FIGURE 3.3. Bronze head of a woman with ringlets (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5598), from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum, reported 1759. Drawing by Camillo Paderni (Italian, ca. 1715–1781). From *Monumenti antichi rinvenuti ne reali scavi di Ercolano e Pompej e delineati e spiegati da d. Camillo Paderni romano* (Naples, 2000), pl. IV top

The Publication of *Disegni intagliati*, 1746

The first publication of the artifacts from Herculaneum appeared in 1746, in the form of a large folio volume entitled *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Copper engravings of the ancient paintings discovered in the excavations of Resina), its cover embellished with the Bourbon insignia and coat of arms. By that date, however, the site had been known as Herculaneum for eight years. Furthermore, the title of the book does not reflect the publication therein of bronze and marble statuettes, lamps, and reliefs, interspersed with the paintings. Indeed, it is difficult to tell from the illustrations which are of paintings and which of three-dimensional objects. This first attempt at publication of the Bourbon finds survives in only three copies, and it is uncertain whether any more were produced.⁶

Ten pages of short entries about the items are followed by engravings of approximately one hundred finds, in no particular order. The brief description of each object does not mention findspot, medium, size, or condition. Whether to show the actual condition of a piece or to draw in the missing parts seems to have been left up to the artist. For example, Francesco Sesone (1705–1770) illustrated a small bronze relief, once attached to a chariot, of a cavalryman without a right hand, riding a horse that is missing its tail (fig. 3.4).⁷ The shadow indicates that the pair is three-dimensional. The rider has wide eyes and a sweet smile, and the horse has a wild eye and an open mouth. Those features are absent, however, from the bronze that Sesone was illustrating: the rider in fact wears a helmet with the visor down, and the horse is cursorily rendered. It is interesting that a piece this small—it is less than ten centimeters ($3\frac{7}{8}$ in.) in height—is represented at all, and in some (albeit fanciful) detail, when by 1746 the Bourbon diggers had found eight full-size bronze statues, as well as the quadriga. Those were probably not yet ready for exhibition, and the chariot remains unrestored even today. Sesone did what he could to improve upon the horse and rider, not only adding detail but also providing a grassy ground beneath the horse that might lead one to imagine that the pair is of a substantial size.

Since so few copies exist of the *Disegni intagliati*, an atlas folio of which all three copies are bound in fine red morocco,⁸ it is interesting to speculate why the king was dissatisfied enough with the project that he stopped production. Like the chariot appliqué, the published finds are all small, and must have seemed inconsequential next to the large frescoes that were also being recovered, such as the large mythological groups found in the so-called Basilica at Herculaneum in 1739. The small paintings of individual figures, oscilla, bronze attachments, and bronze statuettes catalogued in the *Disegni intagliati* would also have paled beside the large bronze portrait statues that Canart was beginning to restore. After restoration, these large works were featured in the displays of the Herculaneum Museum at Portici, whereas most of the small early finds were not on view. If in later years illustrations of them appeared in the official publication *Delle antichità di Ercolano* (On the



FIGURE 3.4. Small bronze chariot attachment in the form of a horseman (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5497), from the theater at Herculaneum, reported 1739. Engraving by Francesco Sesone (Italian, 1705–1770). From *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Naples, 1746), no. 35

antiquities of Herculaneum; 1757–92), they were not given full catalogue entries but, as discussed below, were generally redrawn and used as small unnamed headpieces and tailpieces to texts about other artifacts, usually larger ones. Some of the objects, such as a bronze statuette of Hercules (fig. 3.5), were sent to Paris in 1802, to meet one of Napoléon's conditions for the reinstatement of Charles VII's son Ferdinand IV as king of Naples.⁹ Others, such as the small bronze chariot attachments, remain in storage even today, and still others do not appear in the modern comprehensive catalogue of the collections of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples.¹⁰



Winckelmann's Observations

None of the finds recorded in the *Disegni intagliati* is mentioned by Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who appeared in Naples in 1758, on the first of four visits to the city. This was the year in which the Herculaneum Museum at Portici opened officially. Winckelmann's published remarks about what he saw and learned in Portici are scathing, as in this blunt telling of the story of the four-horse chariot from the theater at Herculaneum:

All the pieces were gathered up and loaded onto a wagon, taken to Naples, and unloaded in the courtyard of the palace, where they were thrown on top of one another in a corner. The bronze group lay there like scrap iron for a long time. One piece and then another was taken away, so people decided to do something honorable with the rest of them, but what should it be? A large portion was melted down and cast into two large busts in relief of the king and the queen. I can imagine how these two pieces turned out, without even having seen them. They became invisible, and they were set aside when people began to notice this ignorant and irresponsible blunder. The remaining pieces of the chariot, horses, and figure were finally taken back to Portici and stored in the vaults under the royal palace, entirely out of public view. A long time later, the curator of the museum [Camillo Paderni] proposed putting together at least one horse from the remaining pieces of horses, and this idea was approved, so the bronze workers from Rome [Giuseppe Canart and his colleagues] who were assigned to work on other discoveries turned their hands to this work. The requisite pieces for one whole horse could no longer be found, and they had to cast a few new pieces, eventually putting together a single horse, a handsome one, which is installed in the inner courtyard of the museum.

... In March 1759, while I was there, a heavy rain fell, water ran into the joins, and the horse got dropsy. They tried to conceal this disgrace of restoration with the utmost care: the courtyard of the museum was kept closed for three days until the water had been drained from the horse's belly. Today the horse still stands in this alarming condition, with no further repair.¹¹

FIGURE 3.5. Bronze statuette of Hercules (Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. Br 32), probably from Herculaneum, reported 1739. Engraving by Francesco Sesone (Italian, 1705–1770). From *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Naples, 1746), no. 1



FIGURE 3.6. Bronze statue of seated Hermes (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5625), from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum, reported August 3, 1758. Drawing by Nicola Vanni (Italian, ca. 1720–ca. 1800), engraving by Nicola Fiorillo (Italian, ca. 1730–1805). From *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (Naples, 1771), p. 115, pl. 29

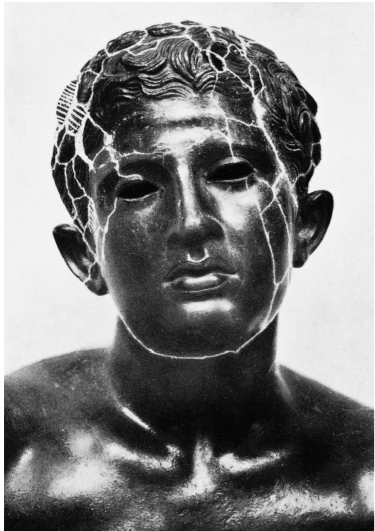


FIGURE 3.7. Head of bronze seated Hermes (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5625) showing breaks. Photograph, with broken pieces outlined and repairs hatched, from Amedeo Maiuri, “Restauri di scultura in bronzo,” *Bollettino d’arte* 1 (1948), fig. 1

Another story that made the rounds concerned the excavators’ discovery of a bronze inscription, also evidently in the theater. As Winckelmann tells it, “Without first recording the inscription, they ripped the letters from the wall, threw them all together into a basket, and showed this mess to His Majesty. The first thought that ought to have come to anyone should have been, ‘What do these letters mean?’ But nobody knew enough to ask that question. For many years, the letters were hung up arbitrarily in the museum, and anyone could have the enjoyment of arranging them into words as he pleased.”¹²

A seated life-size statue of a boyish Hermes with wings on his ankles had been found in 1758, the year Winckelmann first visited Portici. By the following year, the restored statue was on exhibit, and Winckelmann describes it as one of the best surviving antique bronze statues, and the best one in Portici. He reports that the figure was whole when it was found, except for the head, which he was told had been found “smashed into a hundred pieces.”¹³ He also notes that the caduceus is missing. The young Hermes was fully restored before being exhibited, and was published as if it had been found intact (fig. 3.6). Nothing more is reported about damages to the statue until 1948, when Amedeo Maiuri published a short article about new restorations that were needed after World War II. The head of the Hermes had broken off and shattered into approximately forty pieces, probably about the same number in which it had been found during the eighteenth century (fig. 3.7).¹⁴

As to the surface condition of ancient bronzes, Winckelmann notes that “most of the bronzes in the museum must have been subjected to fire during their restoration and repair, and they have thus lost their venerable ancient surface, which consists of a greenish outer layer, or patina in Italian. They [the restorers] have applied a similar color, which differs significantly from the ancient patina, and looks disgusting on some of the heads.”¹⁵ Winckelmann observes: “Even a little new soldering (to make repairs) cracks off the old surface, and it would be a mistake to leave the figures looking shabby. Therefore they are forced to imitate the ancient effect as best they can.”¹⁶ In other words, creating a uniform surface was the goal in restoration. Contrary to popular belief, bronzes that came out of the ground at both Pompeii and Herculaneum had essentially the same surface appearance, but after cleaning they were recolored—those from Herculaneum in brown to black, and those from Pompeii in green. It is difficult now to detect the repairs to the head of the seated Hermes: the hair and flesh are painted black; the lips and modern plaster eyes are painted red (fig. 3.8). Even today, if one buys a reproduction of an ancient statue from the Fonderia Chirrazzi in Naples, the choice of patina is “Pompeii” (green), “Herculaneum” (brown to black), and “Renaissance” (shiny bronze).¹⁷

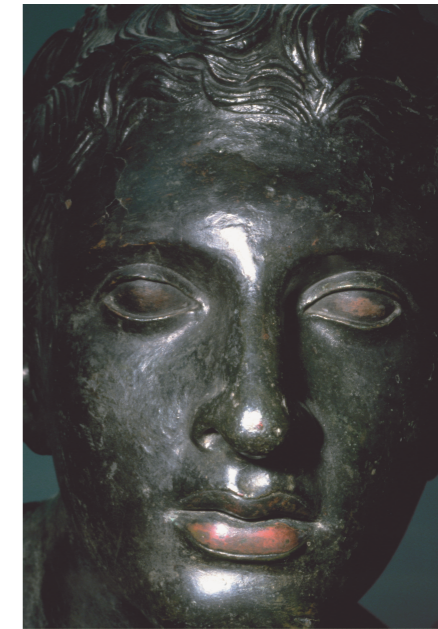


FIGURE 3.8. Head of bronze seated Hermes, 1st century B.C.–1st century A.D., perhaps after a 4th-century B.C. type, restored in 1948. Restored H. (from chin to crown) about 20 cm (7⁷/₈ in.). Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (inv. 5625)

Subsequent Publications of the Royal Collections

Publishing the antiquities in the royal collections was important to Charles VII because of the publicity these finds generated for the Spanish Bourbons and the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. The first attempt at publication, the *Disegni intagliati* of 1746, was titled inaccurately, soon outdated, and organized haphazardly. It contained illustrations of uneven quality and provided no information about measurements, medium, or discovery site. As the digs continued at Herculaneum, larger and more impressive sculptures and paintings were being unearthed, clearly far more deserving of publication than the small early finds. As it turned out, however, publishing this continuing stream of artifacts satisfactorily would consume far more time than preparing them for display. Many of the entries in future publications were lengthy, with extended footnotes, some of which ran to several pages. The seated bronze statue of Hermes discovered in 1758, for example, was given two pages of text and notes and four full-page plates.¹⁸

The Stamperia Reale, the royal publishing house, had been founded in Naples in 1750. It specialized in folio volumes, with the royal coat of arms stamped on leather covers or printed on the title page. In 1752 the prime minister Giovanni Fogliani's cousin Ottavio Antonio Bayardi (1694–1764) produced the Stamperia's first publication, the *Prodromo delle antichità d'Ercolano* (Preface to the antiquities of Herculaneum)—five volumes in which Bayardi told stories about Hercules, in an effort to prove that the city that had been found was Herculaneum—which of course had been known since the discovery of the inscription in 1738. His five volumes contained nothing about the antiquities.

In 1754 Bayardi published a one-volume *Catalogo degli antichi monumenti dissotterrati dalla scoperta città di Ercolano* (Catalogue of the ancient monuments unearthed in the discovered town of Herculaneum), which contained brief descriptions of more than two thousand objects. A typical entry for a painting has a summary account of the subject, and indicates the color of the background and the size of the work. Only when Bayardi catalogued a work that he thought was particularly fine did he write a description long enough to allow a reader to identify it with certainty. None of the entries was illustrated, with the result that the *Catalogo* defeated the purpose of presenting the spectacular and growing collection of Bourbon antiquities.

The *Antichità di Ercolano*

In 1755, King Charles appointed a new prime minister, Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783), who put a stop to Bayardi's plans to publish the royal collection. Charles and Tanucci enlisted fifteen top scholars as members of the Reale Accademia Ercolanese di Archeologia. Their job was to study the finds as a committee and to publish the group's findings. Twenty-five leading artists of the day, including Giovanni Elia Morghen, Carlo Nolli, and Giovanni Battista Casanova, were hired to provide illustrations and engravings. Paderni, the museum's director, was himself an

occasional illustrator; one of his major contributions was his portrait of Charles on the frontispiece for all but the last volume of the *Antichità di Ercolano*.

Bayardi was kept on long enough to edit the first volume of the new series. Eight magnificent folio volumes were published between 1757 and 1792, five on paintings, two on bronzes, and one on lamps and candelabra. The marbles were never published. Prime Minister Tanucci was the driving force behind all eight volumes, chairing the Accademia Ercolanese and controlling both the print run (for volume one, 2,100 copies) and the distribution of the volumes to suitable recipients. (Tanucci also controlled the granting of permits for visitors to the museum at Portici.) The objects in these volumes are not only from Herculaneum, as the title suggests, but also from all the Bourbon excavations around the Bay of Naples.

Depicting the Bronzes

In 1767 volume five of the *Antichità* appeared, on bronze busts, large and small, and in 1771, volume six was printed, on bronze statues and statuettes. Entries either show statuettes at their full size or provide scales in Neapolitan and Roman palms.¹⁹ Most give general findspots, such as Cività (Pompeii), Stabia, Resina, or Portici, the last two referring to different points of entry to ancient Herculaneum. Sometimes an entry specifies which tunnel was being dug when a sculpture was found. The illustrations show all the bronzes mounted for display in the Herculaneum Museum, and all appear to be in perfect condition. Works that were not in good condition when they were found, such as the seated Hermes, had been repaired, and the repairs had been concealed; even empty eye sockets had been filled with colored plaster so as to look like bronze. The Hermes had been badly damaged, but what was ancient and what was modern restoration was not revealed. Although Nicola Vanni's illustration of the Hermes looks true to the overall appearance of the bronze, down to the stump of a caduceus in the left hand (see fig. 3.6), there is no hint that the head, the right arm, and the wings on the feet had been repaired or replaced, and that the statue had been seated on a modern rock. That was common practice. The problem of intrusive shadows in the *Disegni intagliati* had also been overcome. In the case of the Hermes, the rock casts a bit of shadow on the base, but the statue as a whole does not, except for a slender shadow down the right side of the body just behind the right arm.

A number of items that had been featured in the *Disegni intagliati* were redrawn and republished in the *Antichità di Ercolano*. Not all of them, however, warranted individual entries, and were used instead as anonymous headpieces or tailpieces, some more than once. The wide-eyed, smiling rider given a full page in the *Disegni intagliati* (see fig. 3.4) was illustrated as a headpiece in the *Antichità*. In Vincenzo Campana's new drawing, the horse was given a tail and the rider his right hand (fig. 3.9). Campana's illustration was also directed toward the realm of display.

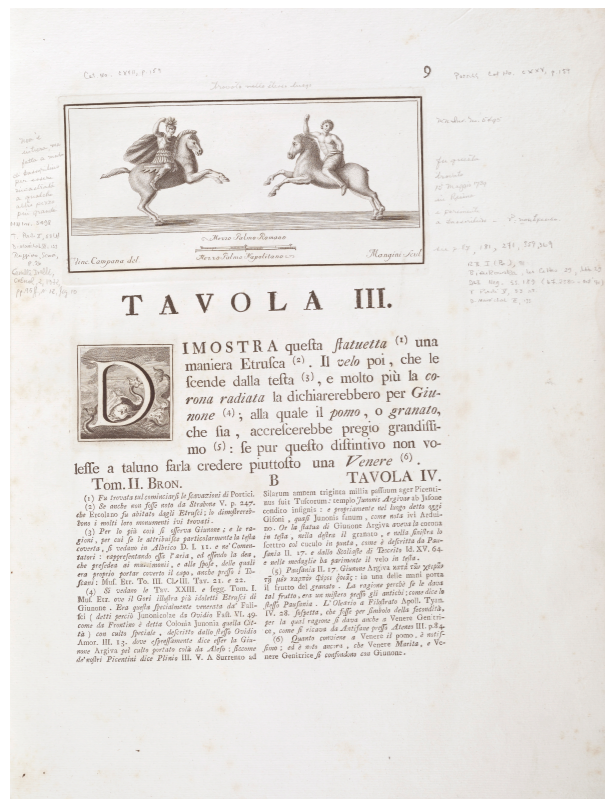


FIGURE 3.9. Top left, bronze chariot attachment in the form of a horseman (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5497), from the theater at Herculaneum, reported 1739. Drawing by Vincenzo Campana (Italian, ca. 1730–after 1806), engraving by Pietro Lorenzo Mangini. From *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (Naples, 1771), p. 9



FIGURE 3.10. Bronze statuette of a man with a sacrificial boar (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5489), from Herculaneum(?). Engraving by Francesco Sesone (Italian, 1705–1770). From *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Naples, 1746), no. 36

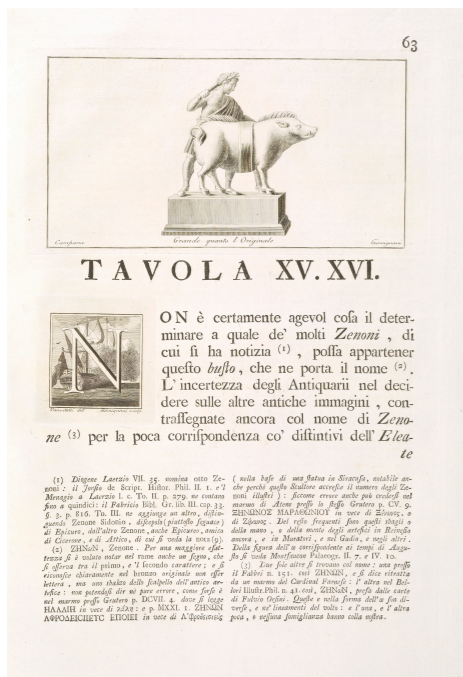


FIGURE 3.11. Bronze statuette of a man with a sacrificial boar (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5489), from Herculaneum(?). Drawing by Vincenzo Campana (Italian, ca. 1730–after 1806), engraving by Francesco Giomignani. From *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 5 (Naples, 1767), p. 63

The rider and his counterpart opposite rest not on an uneven ground of tufts of grass (as in the *Disegni intagliati*) but on a simple flat plane, upon which the horse casts a neat, minimal shadow.²⁰ Oddly, Campana, like Sesone before him, overlooked the faceplate of the helmet, giving the little horseman an actual face instead of a visor.

A sacrificial boar and a handler appeared in the *Disegni intagliati* with large, dark, irregular shadows behind them; they stand on an uneven ground line against a blank backdrop (fig. 3.10). When the two of them reappear as a headpiece in the *Antichità*, they are mounted on a neat rectangular base, indicating that they are a statuette group, and the dark, bulky shadows have been replaced by unobtrusive shading on the front of the base and a little shading on both the boar and the handler (fig. 3.11).²¹ They are thus no longer meant to resemble living creatures; they are now presented as a display. The boar and its handler are among the finds that do not appear in today’s catalogue of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, and are not on display, although they have museum inventory numbers.

One notable exception to the practice of relegating small objects featured in the *Disegni intagliati* to secondary importance in the *Antichità* are the bronze tintinnabula. The longest of the ninety entries in the *Disegni intagliati* is one for a boy with a topknot wielding a knife against a biting dog, an “animale tondo,” with three bells suspended from the boy.²² It was no easy matter to describe formally a dwarf with bells suspended from his elbow, scrotum, and penis doing battle with his penis, whose head is that of a snarling dog (fig. 3.12). It was, however, a fascinating image, and this bronze tintinnabulum was among the first pornographic objects to be uncovered in the early excavations. Although the figure was not republished, a slightly different, dwarfish gladiator, hung with five bells, was given its own entry and two illustrations in the *Antichità*;²³ still another, a dwarflike Mercury riding a ram-headed penis hung with seven bells, appears in César Famin’s *Le Cabinet secret du Musée royal de Naples* (The Gabinetto Segreto of the Royal Museum of Naples; 1857).²⁴ That one, or possibly another Mercury, had previously been part of Ferdinand IV’s gift of Herculanean objects to Napoleon in 1802.²⁵ Tintinnabula have continued to arouse prurient interest, and it is no surprise that this one cannot now be located.

To judge from the brief notes written by Karl Weber, who excavated the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum, when bronze and marble heads were found, the diggers pulled them out, detaching them from the tops of their posts, which were made of brick plastered over to look like marble. The marble herm-heads evidently rested directly on top of these posts with no further attachment, allowing them to be pulled neatly out of the ground. If names had been painted on the plaster covering the brick posts, they were left behind. No one would have noticed names in the rush to get the ancient marble heads out of the ground. Today we still do not know whom most of these portraits represented.



FIGURE 3.12. Bronze tintinnabulum (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 27853), said to be from Resina, reported 1740. Engraving by Francesco Sesone (Italian, 1705–1770). From *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Naples, 1746), no. 18



FIGURE 3.13. Bronze bust of a young man, with eyes in painted plaster, find reported on April 10, 1754. 1st century B.C.–1st century A.D. (head and neck), 18th century (bust and eyes). H. (from chin to crown) 27 cm (10⁵/₈ in.). Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (inv. 5588)



FIGURE 3.14. Bronze herm-head of a “Polykeitan” athlete, found between May 22 and May 27, 1752. 1st century B.C.–1st century A.D., after a 5th-century B.C. type. H. (from chin to crown) 25 cm (9³/₄ in.). Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale (inv. 5610)

The bronze busts from the Villa dei Papiri must have been attached firmly to their mounts: most of them broke off at the neck when they were pulled from the ground. The eighteenth-century restorers who mounted them for display in the Herculaneum Museum made new busts for those that needed them (fig. 3.13), all but one of them draped. The bust they often used as a model for these new busts wore a peplos and had been a female (see fig. 3.1), though no one realized that at the time. In fact, the few male busts that did not break off from the heads during their recovery are nude, not draped.

The urge to complete works and to make them appeal to a contemporary audience went beyond adding drapery to busts, to tilting the heads forward when mounting them, as was commonly done with modern portraits (fig. 3.14). When missing bone-and-stone eyes were restored, they were constituted of modern fill material to resemble bronze, and repairs were made not just for exhibition but also for publication (fig. 3.15).

Apart from missing eyes and busts and mounts, and the need for some reconstruction and repatinating, most of the bronzes from the eighteenth-century excavations were in good shape: many had simply been knocked down during the catastrophe of A.D. 79 and had been buried in soft mud. Because the temperature and humidity remained constant over the years, they were not badly broken and the surface did not heavily corrode. And yet the notes and comments that leaked out provided enough fuel for Winckelmann to accuse the director and the restorers at Portici of irresponsible handling of the ancient bronzes, reckless reconstitution of statuary, and destruction of fragmentary bronzes. These charges, largely accurate, made for good stories, but they were soon forgotten. Modern scholars, too, have considered the reconstructed appearances of these ancient bronzes over their actual condition. Some of the more common misconceptions are that Greek bronzes had inset eyes, whereas Roman bronzes had bronze eyes; that the Pompeian patina is green, the Herculanean patina brown. These and other longstanding notions are being reexamined and corrected now that objective autopsy and analysis are being used to check the validity of scholarly traditions.



FIGURE 3.15. Bronze head of a man, so-called Scipio Africanus (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5634), from the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum, reported 1752. Drawing by Giovanni Elia Morghen (Italian, 1717 or 1721–1807), engraving by Carlo Nolli (Italian, 1710–ca. 1785). From *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 5 (Naples, 1767), p. 141, pl. 39

- 1 See J. Daehner, ed., *The Herculaneum Women: History, Context, Identities* (Los Angeles, 2007).
- 2 On the history and development of the Real Museo Borbonico, see Andrea Milanese in this volume.
- 3 Translation by the author. See L. A. Scatozza Höricht, “Restauro alle collezioni del Museo Ercolanese di Portici alla luce di documenti inediti,” *Atti della Accademia Pontaniana*, n.s., 31 (1982), pp. 495–540.
- 4 See C. C. Mattusch, *The Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum: Life and Afterlife of a Sculpture Collection*, with H. Lie (Los Angeles, 2005), pp. 222–23.
- 5 Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5598. See *Monumenti antichi rinvenuti ne reali scavi di Ercolano e Pompej e delineati e spiegati da d. Camillo Paderni romano*, ed. and transcribed by Ulrico Pannuti (Naples, 2000), pl. IV top; Mattusch, *Villa dei Papiri* (note 4), pp. 230–33.
- 6 The three copies of the *Disegni intagliati* that are currently known are in the Royal Library, Madrid; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. See D. Burlot, “The *Disegni intagliati*: A Forgotten Book Illustrating the First Discoveries at Herculaneum,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 23, no. 1 (2011), pp. 15–28; P. Vazquez-Gestal, “Displaying Art in Eighteenth-Century Naples,” in *Collecting and Dynastic Ambition*, ed. S. Bracken, A. M. Gáldy, and A. Turpin (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 104–5.
- 7 *Disegni intagliati in rame di pitture antiche ritrovate nelle scavazioni di Resina* (Naples, 1746), no. 35: bronze attachment from chariot; Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5497.
- 8 Burlot, “*Disegni*” (note 6), pp. 15–16.
- 9 *Disegni intagliati* (note 7), no. 1; *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (Naples, 1771), pl. XX; now Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. Br 32, H. 62 cm (24 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.). See M. Denoyelle and S. Descamps-Lequime, *The Eye of Josephine: The Antiquities Collection of the Empress in the Musée du Louvre*, with the collaboration of M. Étienne, exh. cat. (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 2007), pp. 90–92, no. 26.
- 10 *Le collezioni del Museo Nazionale di Napoli*, ed. E. Pozzi et al., 2 vols. (Rome, 1989).
- 11 J. J. Winckelmann, “Letter” and “Report” on the Discoveries at Herculaneum: *Antiquities, Archaeology, and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Naples*, trans. C. C. Mattusch (Los Angeles, 2011), pp. 78–79.
- 12 Winckelmann, “Letter” and “Report” (note 11), p. 76.
- 13 Winckelmann, “Letter” and “Report” (note 11), p. 97. Winckelmann acknowledges that “a hundred” should not be taken literally.
- 14 A. Maiuri, “Restauro di sculture in bronzo,” *Bollettino d'arte* 1 (1948), pp. 181–83; Mattusch, *Villa dei Papiri* (note 4), pp. 216–21.
- 15 Winckelmann, “Letter” and “Report” (note 11), p. 97.
- 16 Winckelmann, “Letter” and “Report” (note 11), p. 97.
- 17 On the Fonderia Chiurazzi, see Luisa Fucito in this volume.
- 18 *Antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (note 9), pp. 113–14, pls. XXIX–XXXII.
- 19 The Neapolitan palm was 26.5 cm (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.) in length, the Roman palm 23.3 cm (9 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.).
- 20 *Antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (note 9), p. 9, facing appliqué of another horseman in headpiece to pl. 3.
- 21 *Disegni intagliati* (note 7), no. 36; *Delle antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 5 (Naples, 1767), p. 63, frontis. to pls. 15, 16; Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 5489.
- 22 *Disegni intagliati* (note 7), no. 18.
- 23 *Antichità di Ercolano*, vol. 6 (note 9), p. 387, pl. 95; Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 27853.
- 24 C. Famin, *Le Cabinet secret du Musée royal de Naples: Peintures, bronzes et statues érotiques* (1857; repr., Paris, 1995), pl. 23.
- 25 Denoyelle and Descamps-Lequime, *Eye of Josephine* (note 9), p. 204, no. 126. Compare also the tintinnabulum, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 1098; P. Nitti et al., eds., *Pompéi: Un art de vivre*, exh. cat. (Paris: Musée Maillol, 2011), p. 184, no. 164.

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