The (Re)Shaping of Pompeii in the Early Imperial Period: New insights from the Porta Stabia neighbourhood

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Much is already well known about the urban shape of Pompeii by the time of its destruction in 79 CE. And though good inroads have been made into the various developments over time that brought it to this shape, still not all of these readings benefit from the sub-soil excavations of more recent years that have targeted the episodic growth spurts of the city. This lecture draws on some recent excavations at Pompeii to show the extent to which some of the most pivotal changes to the city occurred in the early Imperial period. These excavations, under the auspices of the University of Cincinnati and the American Academy in Rome, targeted two town blocks of the city, as well as several adjacent, civic structures (the fortification wall and gate, the streets, and the Quadriporticus); the excavations covered more than ten separate building plots (c. 4000m²) made up of shops, houses, and hospitality establishments. This ‘behind-the-scenes’ view of some of the latest excavations at Pompeii opens up an entirely new perspective on the city, with a special focus on the developments that reshaped the city - both socially and structurally - in the early Imperial period.

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