

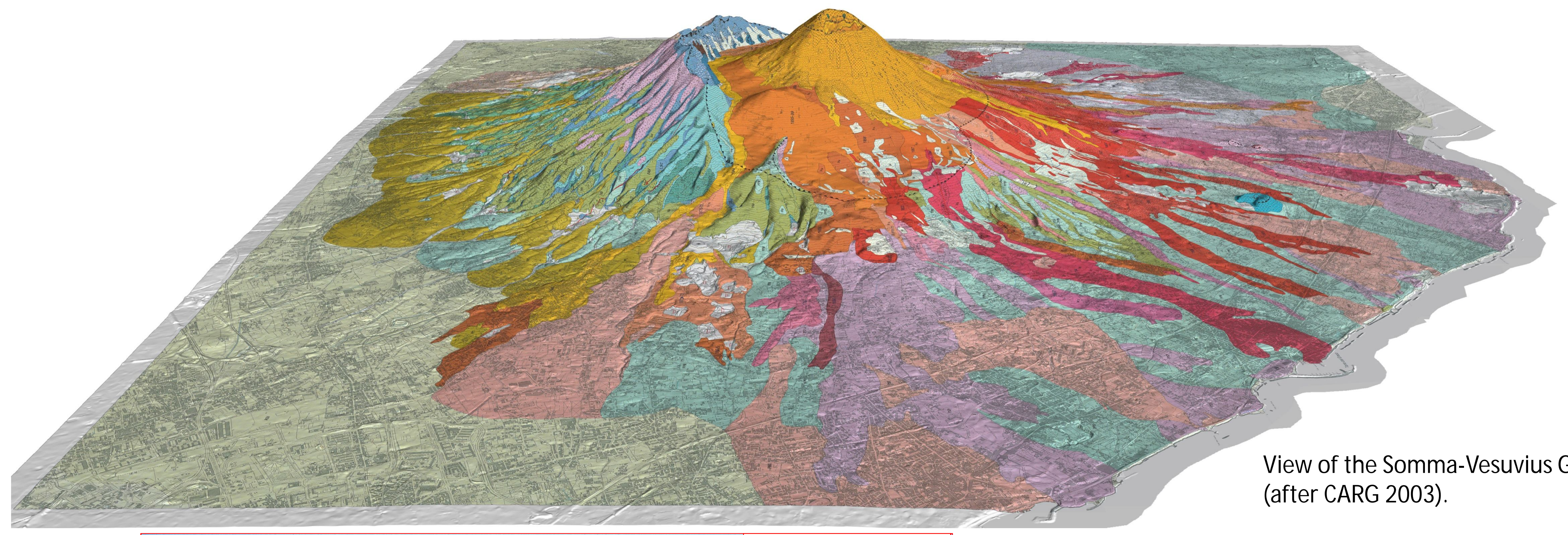
Towards the Vesuvius Geopark: a unique journey throughout a living natural history museum



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The Observatory Museum owns and houses numerous collections, unique in their combination of scientific, historical and artistic importance. In particular, the Geological and Geomorphological Maps and Models collection is privileged to include a geological map by Johnston Lavis (1888), one of the earliest volcanological maps of Vesuvius.



View of the Somma-Vesuvius Geological map (after CARG 2003).

Vesuvius is unique in the world for many aspects, ranging from geology to volcanology, natural sciences and archeology. It includes contexts in which all these disciplines show peculiar aspects even in a single site. It is the place where the modern studies of volcanology began, leading in 1841 to the foundation of the Vesuvius Observatory, the oldest volcanological observatory in the World.

Vesuvius exhibits a wide range of eruption styles that spans from effusive to Plinian eruptions, which produced disastrous effects on the communities that over time inhabited the surrounding areas. The oldest traces of human settlements date back to the Neolithic times, while the most recent were covered by the 1944 eruption deposits. The most famous archaeological remnants are by far those buried by the deposits of the AD 79 eruption of Pompeii. However, not less important are the traces of many past eruptions over ancient plowed fields, prehistoric villages and small rural villages in the Campania plain. All the past traces of life have been sealed repeatedly by eruptions through time, and the stratigraphic record still retains all evidence of both environmental and human resilience.

It is mandatory for us to make this important patrimony accessible to everybody, respecting its high level of fragility, typical of a geologically "young" territory. Presently, despite the very large number of tourists and scientists that visit this volcano and its National Park, only a limited number of sites of great geologic, naturalistic and cultural interest is accessible. One of the main goals of the Vesuvius National Park, acting together with the INGV, is to promote a series of educational and outreach activities aimed at a full and compatible fruition of the park environment as a whole, creating the background for the candidacy of this territory to the European and global network of geoparks.



Vesuvius Observatory



Neolithic blades and arrows



Hut, Early Bronze Age and footprints of people migrating during the eruption of Avellino



Villa Regina (Boscoreale), a rural villa buried by the 79 AD eruption, now the place of a new Museum realized in a cooperation between INGV, EPNV and the Boscoreale Municipality.



Pompeii, A.D. 79 eruption burials



Nola, ploughing traces buried under the A.D. 472 products



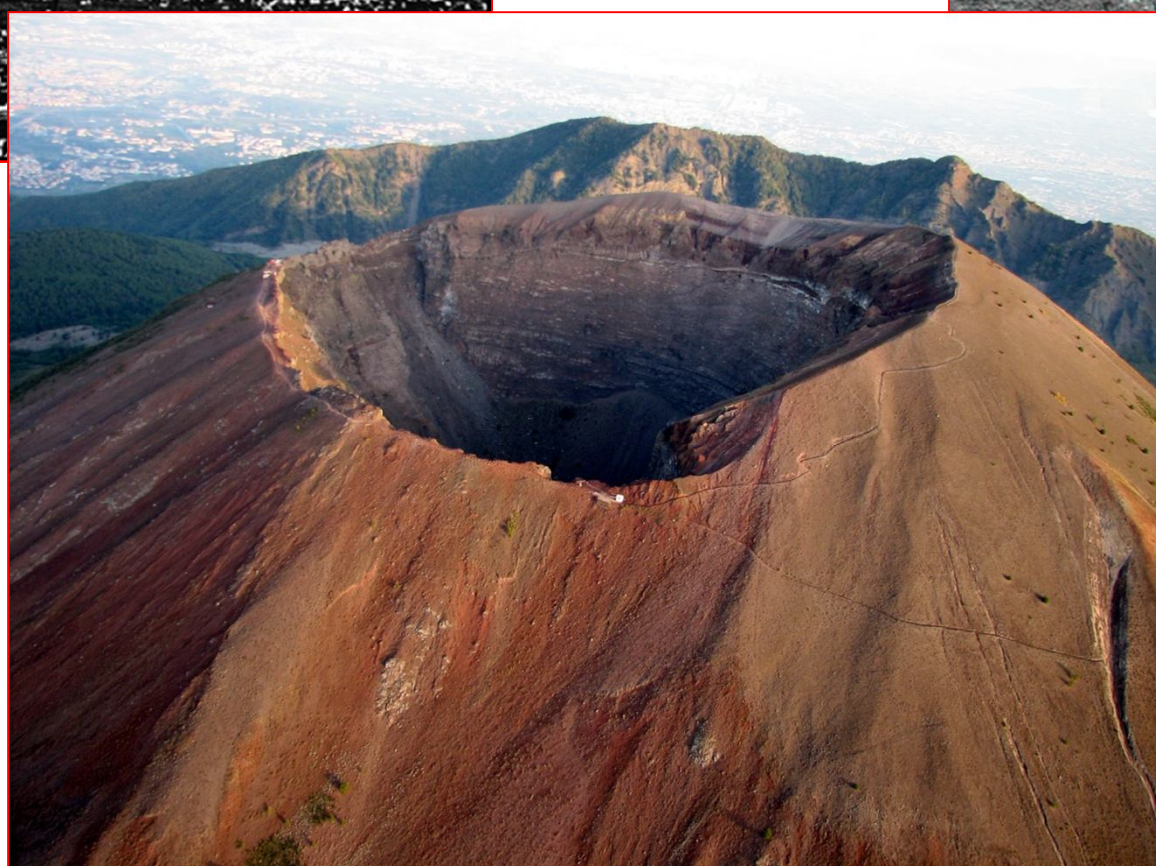
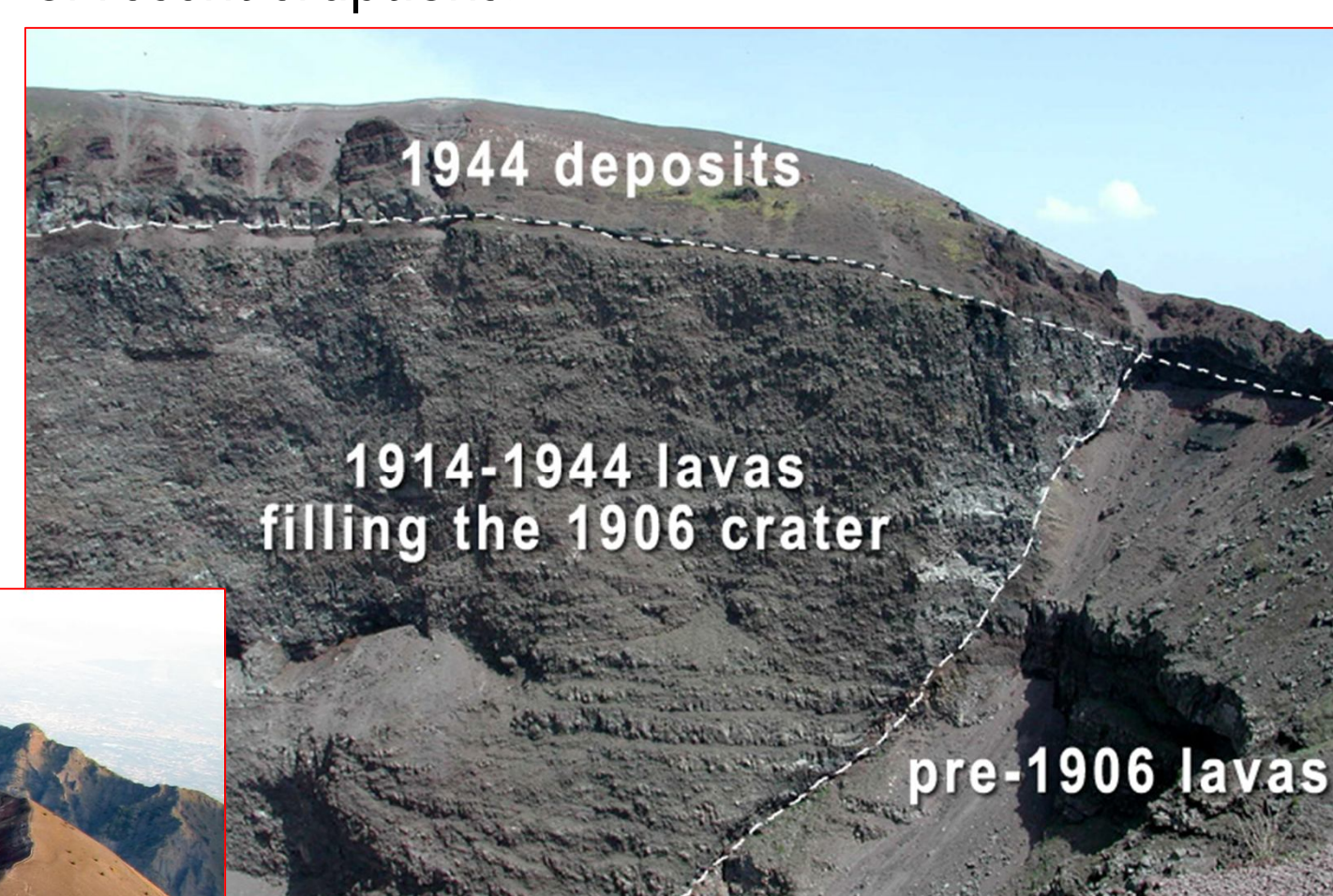
Villa Caius Ampliatus (Ponticelli, Napoli), a rural villa buried by the 79 AD eruption. The site permits to understand the life in the villa and the effects of the eruption in the eastern part of the city on Napoli



Signaculum of the victim



Vesuvius 1944 crater and cone. The sequence of products of recent eruptions.



Terzigno quarry. Ploughing traces near a roman villa rustica e below the 79 AD deposits



Terzigno quarry, >22 ka of dense volcanological history and related human life.