

CONSTRUCTION AND HISTORY OF THE VILLA

Republican age

Construction of the **first nucleus** of the Villa.
The Villa was left in inheritance to Hadrian's wife.

118-121 A.D.

First construction phase

The existing part of the Villa was transformed to host Emperor Hadrian during the first construction phase of the new buildings. The works additionally concerned the **access routes**, essential for the supply of food and construction materials.

121-125 A.D.

Second construction phase

The work was mainly focused on the **expansion of the already built nucleus**. During this phase the Little Baths, the Great Baths and the Pecile were built.

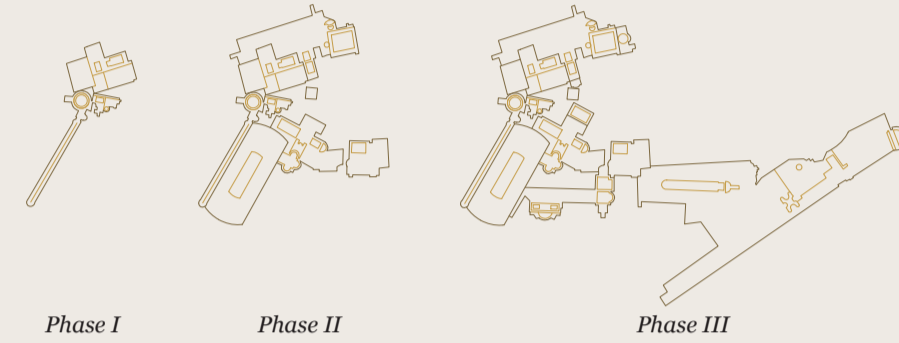
125-138 A.D.

Third construction phase

Conclusion of the construction works.

During this phase the Vestibule, Antinoeion, Canopus, Roccabruna and the homonymous Spianata were completed at South.

The Roman brick stamps testify how the Villa has been kept among the assets of its successors, despite the death of the Emperor. Its use, however, decreased over time until its abandonment.



Exploitation and dispossession of the Villa

Hadrian's Villa was not spared from the frequent practice of the time based on dispossession of buildings. Between 476 and 1450, indeed, the Villa was mistakenly identified as Tivoli Vecchia, therefore it became a **quarry for decorative and building materials**, reused for the construction of new architectures in Tivoli.

During the period of plundering, the artificial esplanades of Roccabruna and the Altura were affected by an **intensive planting of olive trees** and vines following the agricultural exploitation by the Jesuits who settled on the site.

Further acquisition of the Villa: Conte Fede and Cavalier Lolti

In 1730 Conte Fede acquired the area between the Libraries, Imperial Palace, Tempe Valley, Pecile and Little Baths. At North, instead, the property went to Cavalier Lolti. During this period **considerable excavations** were undertaken, bringing to light a large number of statues.

Further acquisition of the Villa: Bulgarini and Braschi-Onesti families

In 1800 most of the land, except for Roccabruna esplanade purchased by the Bulgarini family, went to the Braschi-Onesti family.

Hadrian's Villa and the Italian State

After the birth of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861, most of the land on which Hadrian's Villa stands today was purchased by the new Italian State, allowing visitors to have a more complete and **no longer fractional overview**.

Hadrian's Villa and the new role of the visitors

The State begins to carry out several operations in order to make the **property accessible to visitors**. Among these interventions, the construction of the **Antiquarium** was a significant one.

Pirelli Society and the restoration works on the Villa

In the first half of the Century the **Pirelli Society**, which still today has its headquarters in Tivoli, promoted some **restoration works** on the Maritime Theatre, the Canopus and the Serapeum, in addition to financing the restoration of the original water basins of the Villa. Furthermore, the excavation campaign of that time led to the discovery of **greater artistic value**, accompanied by the sensational **discovery of the underground galleries** which connected all the places and buildings of the Villa.

STUDY AND REPRESENTATION OF THE VILLA

Start of excavation

1461 **Flavio Biondo** is commissioned by Pope Pius II Piccolomini to undertake studies on the architectural complex of the Villa.
At the end of the XV Century **Pope Alessandro VI Borgia** commissioned the **very first campaign of excavations** in the Southern area of the Villa, precisely on the Odeon and on the Academy complex, which revealed numerous marble sculptures and precious marble coverings.
All this generated an **increase in interest in archaeological research** and the production of a considerable number of illustrations of Hadrian's Villa over the centuries.

First thorough study of the Villa by Pirro Ligorio

1550 When Palladio included Hadrian's Villa in the "Guide to the Antiquities of Rome", the research and thirst for knowledge of the site reached its peak. During the **Renaissance**, indeed, the Villa drew the **attention of several architects**, among which Francesco di Giorgio Martini, Giuliano da Sangallo, Bramante and Raffaello.
In this period, **Pirro Ligorio** was commissioned by **Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este** to conduct excavations on the area of the Spianata di Roccabruna and the Academy from which the marbles that still cover Villa d'Este were obtained.

First complete representation of the Villa by Francesco Contini

1668 First writing of the book "Iconographia Villa Tiburtinae Adriani Caesaris", published in 1668, by **Francesco Contini**, based on Ligorio's descriptions of the Villa. The goal was to **realise the first, complete plan of the area**. His major contribution was to **extend the plan** toward the Southern part of the Villa, as well as to be an inspiration for the next representations of the area.

Grand Tour and Giovanni Battista Piranesi

1781 During the XVIII Century both the inclusion in the list of the "Grand Tour" —the traditional training trip of young European aristocrats— and the establishment of the Prix de Rome in France gave further impetus to the interest matured for Hadrian's Villa.
Giovanni Battista Piranesi, for instance, succeeded in showing the **organic relationships** that bind the construction of the site through an unsurpassed technique of **engraving**. In 1781, three years after his death, his son Francesco published the "Pianta delle fabbriche esistenti nella Villa Adriana".

Prix de Rome and Pensionnaires

1800 The contribution of the Pensionnaires was fundamental in the study of the architectural composition of the Villa. Between the end of 1800 and 1963, indeed, the **Pensionnaires** winners of the Prix de Rome went and **explored several archaeological sites**, including the **Villa**. Among them there were Pierre-Jérôme-Honoré Daumet and then Blondel, Girault, Esquié and Sortais, who conducted very thorough research.

Further publications on Hadrian's Villa

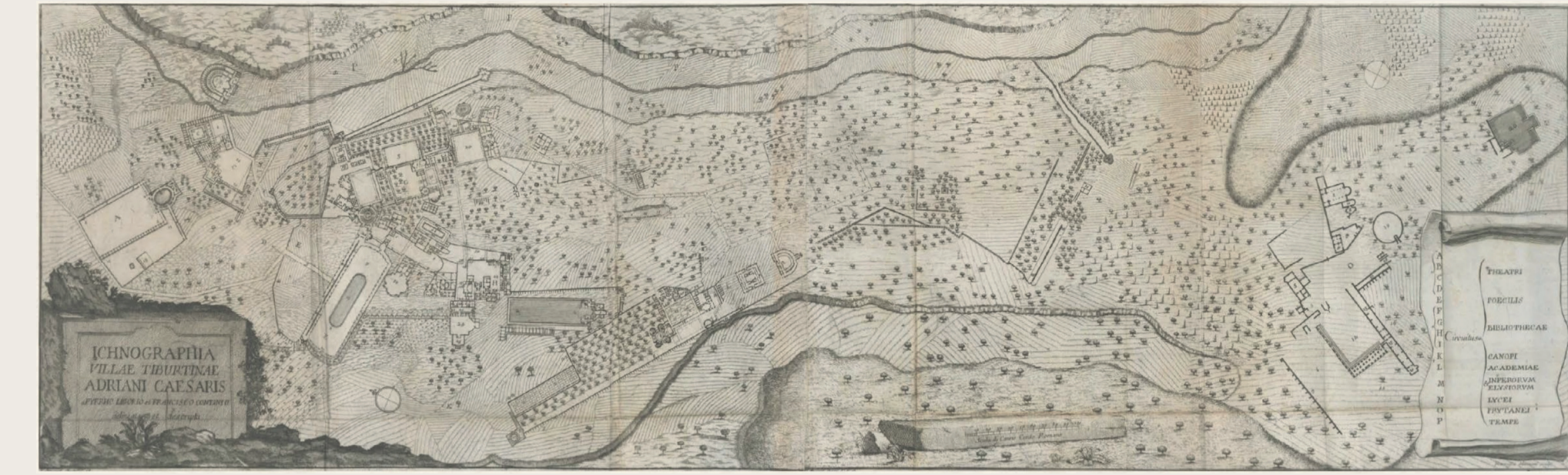
1826-1856 In the XIX Century the attention was devoted toward a **more technical and scientific** research, as well as representation, of the Villa. Among the researchers there were Luigi Rossini, Antonio Nibby, Agostino Penna and Luigi Canina, who resumed the investigation started by Piranesi.
Rossini contributed with a plan of the Villa published in 1826 in "Antichità dei contorni di Roma". Later on, in 1827, **Nibby** published "Descrizione della Villa Adriana", the result of a critical study of previous texts.
The most important contribution, however, is by **Penna** with "Viaggio Pittorico della Villa Adriana", published in 1831. His work was fundamental since his **views** were the **only available representations** of important buildings. Penna was also responsible for **bringing together** the dispersed works of art and the architectural ruins of the Villa.
In 1856, eventually, **Canina** published a work on ancient sites near Rome, including the Villa.

Hadrian's Villa represented by Scuola degli Ingegneri di Roma

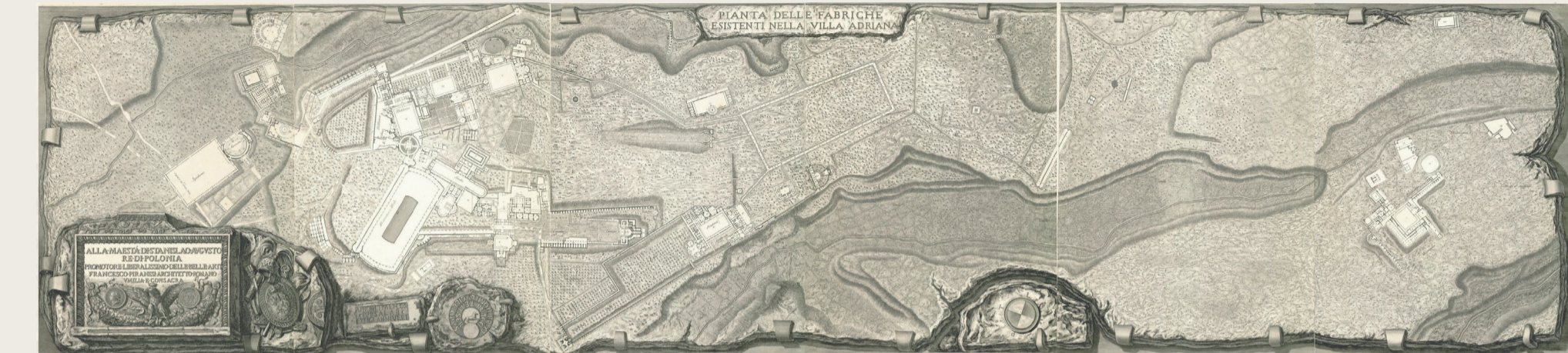
1905 At the beginning of the XX Century, the Scuola degli Ingegneri di Roma printed a new plan of the Villa, published in "La Villa Adriana. Guida e descrizione" by Lanciani.

Hadrian's Villa legacy in the Modern Age

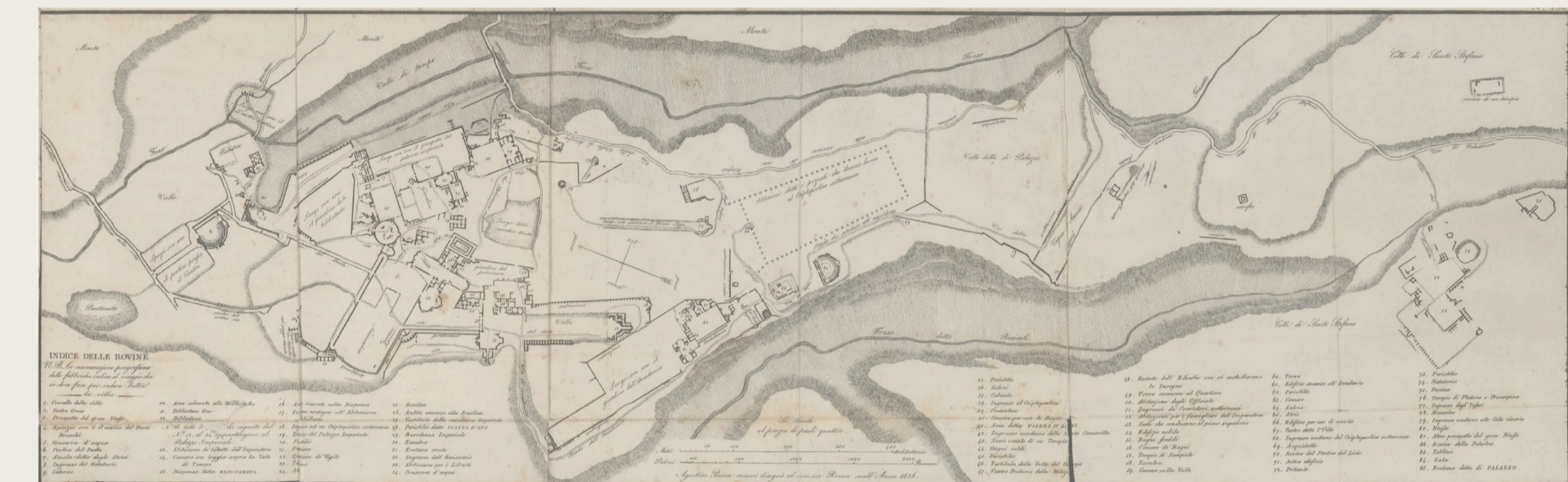
1911 **Louis Kahn** and **Le Corbusier** are among the great architects of the past century who were fascinated by the ideas, principles and architectural solutions of Hadrian's Villa.
Le Corbusier, for instance, visited the Villa in 1911, attracted by the archaeological ruins; he studied its extreme complexity, analysing its forms and underlying language, and was then inspired to evoke them in his projects.



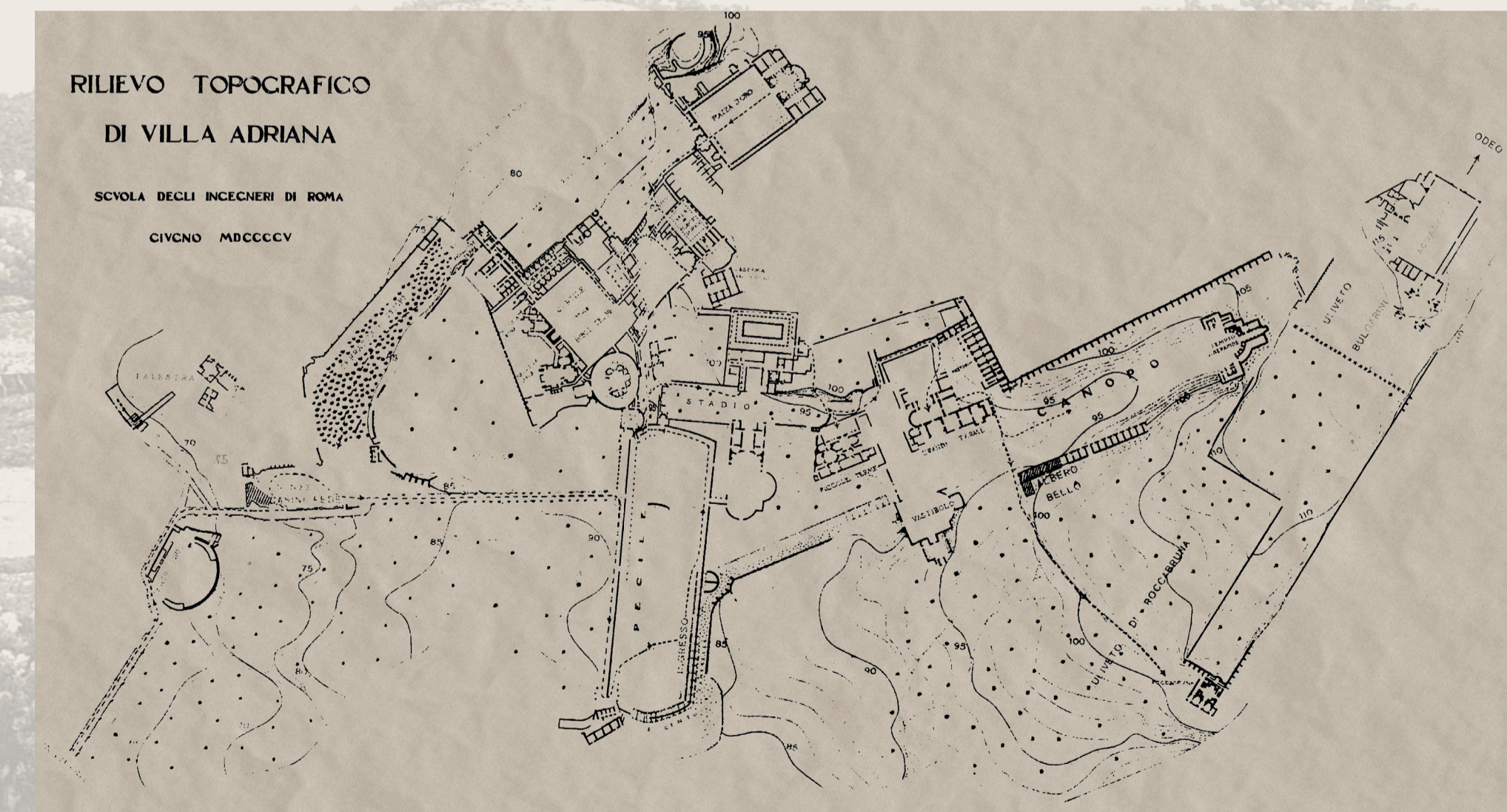
Francesco Contini, "Iconographia Villa Tiburtinae Adriani Caesaris", 1668



Giovanni Battista Piranesi, "Pianta delle fabbriche esistenti nella Villa Adriana", 1781



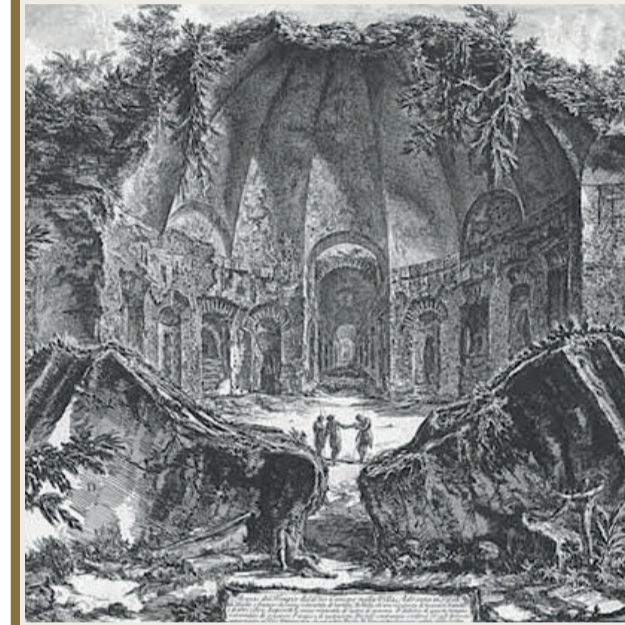
Agostino Penna, "Viaggio pittorico della Villa Adriana", 1831



Scuola degli Ingegneri di Roma, "Rilievo topografico di Villa Adriana", 1905



G.B. Piranesi, "Veduta degli avanzi del castro Pretorio", 1770



G.B. Piranesi, "Avanzi del tempio del dio Canopo", 1770



G.B. Piranesi, "Interni del tempio del dio Canopo", 1770



G.B. Piranesi, "Veduta degli avanzi della Piazza d'Oro", 1770



G.B. Piranesi, "Veduta degli avanzi della Sala dei Filosofi", 1774