

The Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum in 1752–4 remains the only place where an ancient library has been found intact. The damaged state of the rolls has made their contents very difficult to recover. However, the past decade has seen tremendous technical breakthroughs in their recovery, so that we can now reconstruct substantially complete rolls, rather than random, poorly read fragments. Scores of rolls of Greek philosophy await reconstruction; for instance, a book by Epicurus' follower Metrodorus on the invention of civilization is written in a hand of the 3rd century B.C.E., and there are unknown works by Demetrius Laco on music and poetry.

The *Carmen de Bello Actiaco*, more fragments of which were found in 2008, was not the only work of Roman literature in the collection. Knut Kleve has shown that there were copies of Ennius' *Annales* VI, of Caecilius Statius' *Obolostates sive Faenerator* and of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. However, most of the 80 or so Latin papyri, which include documentary texts, have hardly been touched, apparently because most of the scripts look so unlike Latin that they were at first thought to be in Oscan. Some texts in cursive hands certainly contain literary works. For instance, an oration that mentions Sicily and Henna is written in a semi-cursive style that was also used for a copy of Cicero's *Verrines* (this was found in Egypt and is now in Giessen). Basic study of the palaeography still needs to be undertaken, and is certain to lead to important new discoveries.