

Question 8 (10 marks)

To what extent has research since the end of the 1960s changed our understanding of the evidence from the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum?

In your answer, refer to Sources *F* and *G* and your own knowledge.

Research since the 1960's has changed modern understanding of the evidence from Pompeii and Herculaneum through new technologies and changing attitudes according to context.

New technology has allowed a deeper understanding of the Vesuvian people through the study of human remains. The human remains pictured in Source F would be difficult to study, as with the similar remains of the 'Lady of Oplontis' without the introduction of X-ray technology. Estelle Lazer's study of this ~~one~~ skeleton allowed a modern understanding of Pompeii's "healthy and well-nourished population" (Lazzer) as scans showed her age, sex and state of health at the time of the eruption.

Question 8 continues on page 6

Question 8 (continued)

Changing attitudes towards the past since the 1960's from historians has changed the scope of understanding on Pompeii and Herculaneum. It is this vital view that context is essential to study that is evident in Source 6, as Allison notes that the ideal of a Latin term directly translating to a modern equivalent is an "unvalidated assumption". This is evident in housing as, in the context of Pompeii and Herculaneum, ~~may there may have been~~ not have been the "unchanging function" of rooms as society is accustomed to today.

A further technology which changes understanding of evidence is the use of medical imaging to help decipher faded scrolls from the Villa of the Papyri. This use of digital imaging causes the ink to appear in greater contrast to the scroll background such that legibility is improved by up to 60%. The Villa contains vital histories which, once fully documented, will allow a deeper understanding of the ancient societies.

It is the understanding, since the late 1960's, that modern society does not translate directly to the context of the Vesuvian cities, along with the development of new technologies, which allows a deeper understanding of archaeological evidence.

End of Question 8