

## Preface

In recent years garden history has received more interest than ever, particularly since scientists from other fields than those traditionally studying gardens have become involved.

While we know relatively much about garden structures and fashions through the centuries, our knowledge of the plants is much more restricted, and what is known is surprisingly little in use.

Advanced archaeological excavation methods have given valuable new data through the discovered fossils. Botanical studies of old paintings / decorations are further sources, and also old herbarias and herbals give useful insight in the change and development of the garden flora.

Documentation of plants is, as such, a work for specialists in gardening and botany, while the structure and use of gardens is of an interdisciplinary character. Reconstruction and restoration work of ancient gardens is, with some few exceptions, today mostly without real expertise in the ancient assortment of plants. It is easily demonstrated in most of Europe, and improvements are possible and needed.

The PACT-network group of palaeoecology decided to support the idea to stimulate more work within this field in Europe. The international meeting was held in Ravello to celebrate the work of Professor Wilhelmina Jashemski and her colleagues on the gardens of Pompeii and the nearby areas. The main aim of this workshop on ancient gardens plant was 1. to bring together people and associations working with reconstruction and restoration of ancient gardens, to stimulate more interdisciplinary cooperation, and 2. to intensify the scientific study of all aspects of gardening through the centuries, as part of our heritage.

For economical reasons, the number of participants invited to the meeting was limited. However, a much larger group attended the meeting, and during the closing session, the following resolution was made :

1. We thank the Centre at Ravello and the PACT organization for having made this unique symposium/course possible.

2. We strongly recommend that more attention should be paid to the restoration of historic gardens as part of our heritage. More attempts should be made to identify and use the original plants and to keep them in culture instead of using modern cultivars in such gardens.
3. It is important to recognize that garden history is a multidisciplinary science which requires the cooperation of botanists, cultural historians and garden architects.
4. It is necessary to stimulate students to take up such studies and research, and funding should be found to support these activities.
5. We finally express our wish to come back to Ravello not later than in five years time, to see the development of the gardens of Pompei and the Villa Rufolo, and to have further discussions on garden history.

Dagfinn MOE