# AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS OF DOMESTIC *NYMPHAEA* AND *LARARIA* IN POMPEII

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ABSTRACT

The domestic mosaic fountains commonly called *nymphaea* in Pompeii are structurally similar to domestic house shrines known as *lararia*. Like *lararia*, these domestic *nymphaea* often include temple facades and depictions or statues of gods. Despite these similarities, a lack of ritual evidence has made evaluating the possible religious connections of these fountains difficult. In an attempt to find another methodological approach to explore the question of whether or not these fountains are similar to *lararia*, I conduct a relational spatial analysis of thirty Pompeian houses to investigate *nymphaea* as features of domestic cult. By comparing spatial similarities in the placements of both *nymphaea* and *lararia* in Pompeian houses, I am able to conclude that *nymphaea* often occupy spaces that are usually home to domestic shrines. The interchangeability between the placement of domestic *nymphaea* and other house shrines combined with a more detailed reading of the decoration on *nymphaea* suggests that these water features are more than simple ornamentations in wealthy Roman homes. Pompeian *nymphaea* recall the religious sphere through broad associations with divine beneficence in their placement within gardens and through their imitation of natural grotto features, bringing into the house a sacred landscape reminiscent of that seen in "sacral-idyllic" wall paintings. If *nymphaea* indeed possess religious significance, then they serve as conspicuous displays of the homeowner's piety during the period of the early empire, a time when many Romans were redefining their own social identity under a changing government and concern for preserving the old morals of the Republic became a central issue.

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Alexandra Creola earned her B.A. in Classical Archeology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her current research interests include Roman domestic religion, acculturation, and construction of social identity in the ancient world.

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# List of Abbreviations

*AJA - American Journal of Archaeology*

*ILS - Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*

*PHI - Packard Humanities Institute (Greek Inscriptions)*

*PPM - Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici*

# I. INTRODUCTION

The archaeology of religion has transformed significantly in recent years, from an unattainable endeavor to reconstruct ancient religious *beliefs* to a more sociologically grounded examination of ritual *practice*.[1] What happens, however, when a feature whose architecture and ornamentation recalls religious themes lacks evidence of ritual practice?[2] How can archaeologists approach the question of religion outside of ritual? The study of Pompeian mosaic fountains commonly called "*nymphaea*" raises such questions. To this day, these structures are still poorly understood. Despite the striking structural and ornamental similarities between Pompeian *nymphaea* and Roman house shrines known as *lararia*,[3] most research has renounced the idea that these fountains held any religious significance and has focused instead upon the analyses of Pompeian *nymphaea* as pieces of art meant for pleasure, relegating these structures solely to the categories of decoration and objects of ostentatious display.[4] Because there is no direct evidence that *nymphaea* would have been the sites of the same types of ritual activities as *lararia*, another method is required to best examine the question of whether or not *nymphaea* functioned in a similar fashion to Pompeian domestic shrines. Accordingly, this thesis employs a new composite methodology that I have termed *relational spatial analysis*, based on original

[1] For discussions of ritual activity, both sacred and profane, see e.g. Rappaport (1999), Bradley (2005), Gruenwald (2003), and Elsner (2012, 2-13). For a discussion of post-processual archaeology's focus on ritual over religion, see Insoll (2004, 76-84).

[2] Defining ritual activity has been hotly debated in archaeological literature. Scholars such as McCauley and Lawson (2007, 209-254) and Bell (2007, 277-288) argue for ritual to be defined in a strictly religious manner, whereas Kyriakidis (2007, 289-308), Marcus (2007, 43-76), Humphrey and Laidlaw (2007, 255-276), and Renfrew (2007, 109-122) all suggest that ritual can include both secular and religious activities. Evangelos Kyriakidis (2007, 293-294) has defined ritual as "an etic category that refers to set activities with a special (non-normal) intention-in-action, which are specific to a group of people." In attempting to define the idea of ritual, I agree that ritual entails both religious and common practices and should be defined in relation to a particular cultural group of people.

[3] *Lararia* are established religious structures that often contain evidence of ritual practice such as burnt offerings. For textual evidence of the practice of giving offerings to *lares*, see Pl. *Aul*. Prologue, which describes a girl giving offerings of incense, wine, and garlands. See also Note 2 in Riley's translation of Pl. *Epid*. 2.3 for the use of music as part of ritual rites held at *lararia*.

[4] For an argument about *nymphaea* as ornamental decorations without religious implications, see Rogers (2008, 67-68, 90). Jones and Robinson (2005, 695) persuasively demonstrate the use of *nymphaea* as status symbols.

field work conducted at Pompeii, in order to investigate *nymphaea* as features of Roman domestic cult.

In discussing the concept of ancient religion, I focus upon what can be inferred through the material remains. I shall use the term "religious" in a broad sense, characterizing artifacts or features that either participated directly in ritual behavior aimed at deities, or that would have evoked those deities' resulting protection or beneficence toward their worshippers.[5] Colin Renfrew has attempted to define criteria that can archaeologically suggest the presence of religious ritual activity.[6] While evidence of active participation and offerings is absent in Pompeian *nymphaea*, Renfrew's other qualifications of religious space that include signs such as the presence of attention focusing devices, aspects of liminal zones, and symbols of the "transcendent" can still be explored when examining *nymphaea* as possible features of domestic cult.[7] In order to address the question of whether or not *nymphaea* are religious in these terms, I conducted a relational spatial analysis of *lararia* and *nymphaea* in thirty Pompeian houses.[8] A close examination of spatiality--how *nymphaea* relate in position to other house shrines--thus can

[5] The Latin word *religio*, from which we derive the modern word religion, was the idea of being reverent and pious towards the gods. The Romans believed in the idea of *do ut des*, in which mortals gave offerings to the gods in order to receive their protection or to ward off their wrath. Cicero *N.D.* 2.28.72 states that the rites and ceremonies connected to worshipping the gods and asking for their favor were all considered to be part of what constituted the concept of Roman *religio.*

[6] Renfrew 1985.

[7] Renfrew 1985, 22.

[8] Since Renfrew's initial publication in 1985, several critiques of his methodology have emerged. Renfrew (2007, 114-115) has admitted himself in a self-critique of his earlier work that his checklist does not necessarily distinguish between evidence for ritual practice in general and that of specifically religious ritual practice, since it is difficult to discern between religious and secular objects. Insoll (2004, 96-97) has criticized Renfrew and his cognitive processual methodology for attempting to categorize and map religion in terms that are universally applied when religion is not universal nor held to the same standards by all individuals. While I agree with Insoll's argument for the treatment of religion as a non-universal concept, I also agree with Renfrew's attempt to define archaeological markers for the presence of religion. Instead of interpreting Renfrew's methodology on a wholly universal standpoint, his checklist can be utilized and adapted to a particular cultural group based on other data and information known about that particular region's customs and beliefs. Thus, while no attempt to define what constitutes "religion" is perfect, applying some of Renfrew's concepts to a particular region in an attempt to understand how that culture appears to define religion can help archaeologists better interpret and analyze data that is complex by its nature because it encompasses the manifestation of human thoughts about deities and natural forces.

allow archaeologists to question possible religious meaning, even without evidence of ritual activity.

Resolving the question of the possible religious connotations of Pompeian *nymphaea* can, in turn, inform our understanding of the extent to which features of domestic cult both reflected and enabled the political and social changes occurring in Pompeii during the first century A.D. If Pompeian families indeed accorded *nymphaea* religious significance, then these installations may have served as conspicuous displays of not only wealth, but also piety. Such displays of piety reflect ancient attempts at constructing social identity during the beginning of the empire. Piety towards the gods was an essential characteristic of being a good Roman.[9] By portraying themselves as pious individuals, wealthy inhabitants of Pompeii attempted to demonstrate their claim to the legacy of the Roman elite class. I will argue that based on the relational spatial analysis and a study of decoration, Pompeian *nymphaea* recall the religious sphere through broad associations with divine beneficence and through their imitation of natural grotto features, bringing into the house a sacred landscape reminiscent of that seen in sacral-idyllic wall paintings.

Before beginning a detailed examination of the structures themselves and their spatial locations, I first wish to acknowledge the problematic application of the term "*nymphaea*" to the mosaic fountain structures in Pompeii and how the complicated literary history of the term continues to influence the debate about the possible religious nature of these features. The word νυμφαῖον, or the Latin *nymphaeum*, is Greek in origin, and refers to Greek nymph sanctuaries that were characterized as watery grottoes, either artificial or natural.[10] Traditionally, the word

[9] Cic. N.D. 1.116.

[10] The term first appears in a fourth century B.C. Greek inscription in reference to a sanctuary dedicated to the nymphs on Delos. The original inscription appears in IG XI,2,144, A l.91. Pausanias (9.3.9) speaks of a Greek *nymphaeum* still in use in the second century A.D., stating that the story that nymphs gave oracles in the cave of the

*nymphaeum* in the Roman world refers to public monuments with niches and apses related to theater architecture.[11] While Latin literature suggests that nymph cults existed in Italy,[12] the application of the term "*nymphaeum*" to fountains in Pompeii and in other residences in the Roman world is anachronistic.[13] However, the standard decoration of grotto architecture in the form of roughened pumice, the feature of running water, and the cave-like niches that ornament Pompeian *nymphaea* recall Greek nymph sanctuaries, perhaps explaining why later scholars attribute the name *nymphaea* to Pompeian mosaic fountains, despite the fact that there is no specific reference to the naming of these structures as such in antiquity.[14] Unlike Classical

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Cithaeronian nymphs was an old legend that stretched far back in history. For the few instances when the word "*nymphaeum*" appears in Latin literature in reference to possible nymph sanctuaries, see Pomponius Mela's *De Situ Orbis* 2.3 in reference to a nymph sanctuary associated with the goddess Diana in Chersonessus and Pliny (HN 35.43) in a description of a well where a statue was kept in Corinth. Both date to the first century A.D. Additionally, see Brill's New Pauly (2006, 923) for the full origin of the word.

[11] Neuerburg 1960, 10. This type of *nymphaeum* is a public monument that appears as early as the first century A.D. at Ephesus and Miletus in Asia Minor. The Regionary Catalogues list three public monuments in Rome with the name *nymphaeum* (*Notitia de Regionibus*; *Curiosum Urbis*). This monument type becomes quickly found throughout the Roman Empire and is associated also with the Roman *septizodium* on the slopes of the Palatine, a monument that celebrated the deities of the seven days of the week in the form of statues. Although the *septizodium* dates to the Severan period in the third century A.D., Ammianus Marcellinus in his *Rerum Gestarum* 15.7.3 references a *nymphaeum* built by Marcus Aurelius that was once located in the same space as the later *septizodium*. While the short statement is a bit ambiguous, it may imply that the *nymphaeum* became or was used in the construction of the *septizodium*. The terms *nymphaeum* and *septizodium* were first used synonymously in an inscription at Lambaesis (CIL VIII 2657-58) (Platner 1929, 473-475).

[12] The nymph Egeria had two sacred groves and fountains dedicated to her, one which was near Rome, opposite the Porta Capena, and the other in the neighborhood of Aricia. Ovid (Ov. Met. 15.479) describes Egeria in both Rome and in Aricia. He also describes her as a nymph rather than a goddess (see Liv. 1.19) and as Numa's consort. See Strab (5.3.12) for her association with Aricia. Juv. (1.3.17-20) also mentions caves dedicated to her.

[13] There are currently no surviving texts that use the word "*nymphaeum*" in reference to either houses in Pompeii or to rooms in imperial palaces and villas, though it is common in scholarly literature to reference these rooms as such. For example, see Carey (2002), who discusses "imperial grottoes and *nymphaea*" in the Palace of Domitian on the Palatine, in the Villa Hadriana at Tivoli, in the cave in Sperlonga, which is associated with the emperor Tiberius, and in the emperor Claudius' villa at Baiae. See also Kuttner (2003, 103-156) on Tivoli and Sperlonga. None of these imperial "*nymphaea*" functioned in the Classical Greek sense, and ancient authors do not label these areas as "*nymphaea*." For instance, both Suet. *Tib*. 39 and Tac. *Ann* 4.59 write about the rock collapse in the dining cave at Sperlonga without using the word *nymphaeum*. The only example I found of a Latin author using the word *nymphaeum* to describe a structure built by an emperor is in the fourth century text by Ammianus Marcellinus, which describes the emperor Marcus Aurelius erecting a public, ostentatious *nymphaeum* (Amm. 15.7). This structure seems to have been very different from the private structures in the other emperors' houses.

[14] Some scholars, such as Pappalardo and Ciardiello (2012, 197-229) have chosen not to apply the term *nymphaea* to the entire corpus of decorated fountains in Pompeii, instead calling certain forms of these features simply "mosaic fountains." Other scholars such as A.R.A. Van Aken (1951, 272), Salvatore Settis (1973, 687-688), and Pierre Grimal (1969, 305) have argued that the use of the term *nymphaeum* for these domestic structures is not only appropriate, but necessary in describing their function and connection to religious practice.

*nymphaea*, which are recognized archaeologically by votive reliefs, inscriptions, and votive deposits located in public spaces,[15] Pompeian *nymphaea* are found in houses and show no evidence of direct ritual deposition.[16] For the purposes of this paper, I shall refer to the mosaic fountains in Pompeii under question as *domestic nymphaea* in an effort to both distinguish the structures from public fountains and to allude to the possible religious connotations suggested by their architectural style and decoration.[17]

The Pompeian domestic *nymphaea* are unique in form, and can best be defined structurally. Set in garden areas with surrounding porticos, Pompeian *nymphaea* are often separate from the walls. They contain some type of mosaic, either with shells and pebbles or with shells and tesserae. They occur in several different forms, including the *edicola,* or an aedicula *nymphaeum* with a pedimental top, a semi-circular niche, and a water basin; the *camera* type, which allows the *nymphaeum* to be the feature of an entire room, is usually associated with a dining area, and has a semi-circular niche with water stairs leading down into the water basin; and the *facciata nymphaeum* that occurs as three niches in the wall.[18] All *nymphaea* have in common the same identifying spatial locations, mosaic decorative elements, and the element of water.

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[15] Larson 2001, 227. See also Gaifman (2008, 85-103) for a discussion of Attic votives to the nymphs, and her argument that votives did not represent an actual ritual, but a visualized ritual that allowed the idea of the ritual to be an ever present gift for the gods.

[16] There are a few examples of possible public *nymphaea* in the public baths and on public monuments in Pompeii, but the majority of the surviving fountains and the focus of this paper is on the fountains found within homes. Two public *nymphaea* are located in the *Terme Stabiane* and one on the *Arco Onorario*. Rogers (2008, 118) also mentions a public *nymphaeum* in the *Terme Suburbane*. "*Nymphaea*" in the domestic context are first found in villas of the Hellenistic period. For example, the four *nymphaea* of the Villa Hadriana date from the oldest building period of the villa beginning in the early first century B.C., and the two *nymphaea* of the *Villa ad Esedra* near Anguillara date to the time of Sulla in the late second, early first century B.C. (Van Aken 1951, 273). The earliest evidence of domestic *nymphaea* in towns, however, appears in the first century B.C. in the very beginning of the imperial period.

[17] In using the terminology "domestic *nymphaea*," I am not suggesting that the structures should be viewed specifically as shrines dedicated to the nymphs in the Classical sense; rather, I have chosen to keep the term "*nymphaea*" because it suggests an allusion to characteristics of religious space found in Greek nymph sanctuaries. See further discussion of this in pages 22-23.

[18] Rogers 2008, 39-44. Also see Neuerburg (1960, 19-86) for a description of the various types of *nymphaea* found throughout Italy, including those in Pompeii.

Various scholars have attempted to chronologically order the appearance of these structures in Campania based on decoration and architectural styles.[19] The earliest *nymphaea* in Pompeii appear to be placed in enclosures at the ends of long vistas and have designs of triple niches that imitate the three doorways of the *scaenae frons*.[20] Eleanor Leach argues that besides these early forms, the subsequent *nymphaea* are classified by variations on the aedicula shape, with one form being a freestanding apsidal fountain with decoration mostly on the interior surface of the hemicycle, a second form that is a colonnaded aedicula, and lastly a fountain with a flat decorated façade, all of which may or may not include water stairs.[21]

The continuous production of these fountains from the early first century B.C. through the destruction of the city suggests that these features carried social significance for over seventy years. One hurdle in examining these structures in relation to their political and social implications is the uncertainty of dating. The dating of *nymphaea* is dependent upon brickwork, mosaics, and wall painting styles, all of which often change during remodeling of the houses.[22] For example, in the *Casa del bracciale d'oro,* preparatory sketches were found under the mosaics of the *nymphaeum* that are so different from the current mosaic that scholars have argued that these drawings show an earlier phase of decoration.[23] Because specific dates cannot be tied to these structures, it is unknown exactly when the features first were produced and under which emperor they were initially popular. However, the earliest examples may date to the reign of Augustus in the first half of the first century A.D.,[24] when the competitive display of pietas

[19] This type of analysis is frequently employed in the dating of material for Pompeii. Maiuri (1937, 9-10), who was influenced by the ancient writer Vitruvius's work *De Architectura,* was one of the first people to distinguish different dating periods of the houses by materials and construction techniques.
[20] Leach (2010, 67-68) lists examples such as those in the *Casa dell'Ancora Nera, Casa di Apollo*, and the *Casa del Torello*.
[21] Leach 2010, 68.
[22] Rogers 2008, 44. Neuerburg 1960, 102-111.
[23] Pappalardo and Ciardiello 2012, 199.
[24] Rogers 2008, 92.

reached an apex.[25] This would place the initial construction of *nymphaea* during a period when the empire was undergoing religious reforms that continued to pervade the new political system under various emperors. Thus, a study of the relationship between *nymphaea* and *lararia* and why some houses appear to showcase a mosaic fountain where one would expect to find a house shrine can lead to broader questions of how such choices may reflect the construction of social identity during a time of great political change.

The remainder of this thesis is organized into five parts. The first two sections describe the methodology and original fieldwork conducted in Pompeii, including the data from the relational spatial analysis of *nymphaea* and *lararia*. Next, an analysis of the ornamentation and statuary associated with *nymphaea* relates these features to the decoration of *lararia*. The following section on interactions with *nymphaea* and garden spaces explores the role of domestic gardens as liminal spaces where nature and man-made structures blend to allow for both ritual and utilitarian functions. Finally, I return to the question of whether or not *nymphaea* can be examined as possible religious features without the presence of ritual activity in the archaeological record and conclude with a discussion of how the spatial analysis of these features reveals broader social and political changes occurring in the lives of local Pompeians during the shift from the Republican government to the government of empire.

## II. SPATIAL ANALYSIS SURVEY: METHODOLOGY

Techniques of spatial analysis have often been used in archaeology to aid in understanding houses and the social interaction patterns of the inhabitants. Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson first developed the methods for understanding space syntax in two specific contexts: analysis of settlement layouts and the analysis of buildings.[26] Space syntax theory

[25] Zanker 1990, 114-132.
[26] Hillier and Hanson 1984, 82-163.

suggests one can determine the social significance of built space in either a town or in an individual house through analyzing the physical and visual accessibility of those constructed spaces.[27] This methodology has influenced many scholars and spatial analysis methodology has continued to improve with time.

Scholars who study Pompeii have attempted to adopt spatial analysis for their research. Ray Laurence has applied the work of Hillier and Hanson in his examination of the spatial joining of houses and streets in Pompeii from the point of view of a person on the street.[28] Mark Grahame has also drawn from Hillier and Hanson's method in his analysis of how room accessibility affects social patterns in Region VI Pompeian houses.[29] Grahame further modified Hillier and Hanson's work by arguing that the bounded space method is not exclusively reserved for interior buildings and the rule of convexity not exclusively for settlement spaces, but that there should be no distinction between settlement and building space and that both methods can be applied through access analysis.[30] Katherine Von Stackelberg has also used access analysis to examine the relationship of Pompeian gardens within their respective houses and how these gardens were accessible to visitors.[31] Spatial analysis thus has already been applied to Pompeii, but this research has focused on city or house layouts as areas of space in relation to each other, regardless of structures within the houses that may have held social significance.

In one of the more recent works in the field of spatial analysis methodology, Kevin Fisher, in his analysis of the Late Bronze Age site of Enkomi, Cyprus, has built further upon space syntax and access analysis.[32] Like Grahame,[33] Fisher uses syntactic measures of control,

[27] Hillier and Hanson 1984, 82-222. For further explanations of space syntax theory, see Grahame (2000, 25-26), Osborne (2012, 45-46), and Fisher (2009, 440-443).
[28] Laurence 1994, 115.
[29] Grahame 2000.
[30] Grahame 2000, 32.
[31] Von Stackelberg 2009.
[32] Fisher 2009.

integration, and depth to determine significance of space in his access analysis.[34] Fisher progresses these theories by suggesting an "integrative approach" that also considers "fixed-feature elements" such as doorways, walls, benches, wells, and toilets and "semi-fixed features" as forms of nonverbal communication to visitors, and he argues that these features should also be graphed with access analysis.[35] This argument incorporates Amos Rapoport's discussion of fixed and semi-fixed features as architectural elements that convey nonverbal cues to those interacting with these structures.[36] Fisher examines the accessibility of spaces through RRA values in order to identify "probable patterns of movement and encounter in a building," and identifies vision as a means for gathering social information.[37] He thus is interested in both visual and physical accessible space and its relationship to those who interact with those spaces.

James Osborne has argued for modifying Fisher's methodology further by incorporating textual and artistic data into spatial analysis in his study of the display of political power in Kunulua's Bīt-Ḫilāni palace in Patina.[38] Like his predecessors, Osborne's interest lies in which areas of the palace were "socially integrated" and which areas were "spatially controlled" so that their visual and physical accessibility was limited.[39] Osborne's focus on artistic data and Fisher's incorporation of fixed and semi-fixed features have significantly improved spatial analysis methodologies and have opened the doors for better analysis of the structures found within Pompeian houses. However, these methodologies can still further be modified to integrate the examination of features as focal points rather than as additions to the spatial analysis of rooms. Attempting to understand not just one structure in its spatial context, but to compare and contrast

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[33] Grahame 2000, 32-36.
[34] Fisher 2009, 442.
[35] Fisher 2009, 445.
[36] Rapoport 1982, 87-96, 179.
[37] Fisher (2009, 446-449) uses RRA scores classified as high, medium, or low to describe how accessible each space is from the other spaces within a building.
[38] Osborne 2012, 31.
[39] Osborne 2012, 57-58.

two types of fixed features, *nymphaea* and *lararia*, as they occur in Pompeian houses thus requires an alternative form of spatial analysis.

There are other methods of spatial analysis that would allow for a better understanding of how Pompeians would have seen *nymphaea* and *lararia* spatially within their homes. One way is to take a *visibility score*, or "a measure of the number of spaces that can be seen into from a particular space" when the viewer is able to see at least 30% of the room's interior.[40] In my own research, this method has proved to be the most efficient and productive approach because of the expediency it allowed in the field as well as its ability to discern lines of sight. However, I am less concerned with calculating the number of rooms that can be seen from any given space than I am with the relationship of those rooms to one another and how best to read that relationship. Therefore, I modified the approach of the visibility score as defined by Fisher specifically to see if a *nymphaeum* or a *lararium* was visible from any given room in each of the thirty houses that I surveyed and noted the function of that room according to identification by the excavators and other scholars.

For one month, the Superintendent of Naples granted me access to the houses in Pompeii. On average, I was able to visit two to three houses per day and was allowed roughly thirty minutes per house to find the structures, to take notes, measurements, and pictures, and to sketch any plans or corrections. Upon entering each house, I first located the structures in question. I then proceeded to go room to room, entering each room at least three feet inside the doorway and analyzing the visibility from that room into the rest of the spaces in the house. If a *lararium* or *nymphaeum* was visible, I recorded how visible the structures were through photography and detailed notes.

[40] Fisher 2009, 449.

These images and notes thus have provided the data I need to analyze and compare the *lararia* and *nymphaea*. In this attempt, I am modifying the traditional use of the visibility score to explain not just how many rooms can be seen from any given space, but also from how many different spaces the *lararia* and *nymphaea* are visible, and what this indicates about the nature of the shrines and water features in relation to each other. However, as noted by Fisher, visibility scores "cannot convey the qualitative aspects of visual perception," and thus I have taken photographs in order to help aid in recreating what I could see from each view.[41] Moreover, a purely quantitative count of the number of rooms from which a structure is visible tells little in itself about the actual nature of perception of the object.

Kevin Fisher has suggested that the spatial analysis technique using *isovists* can allow a visual representation on a plan that better depicts how a viewer moving through a Roman house would experience views; however, such an approach once again focuses on a single space as the vantage point, and I am interested in a single space as the node of viewership.[42] I have attempted to illustrate my observations with the help of the tables and photos found in the appendices (Table 1). Thus, I have termed my study a *relational spatial analysis*, as my method employs techniques from visibility scores and isovist representations, but focuses instead on two specific features and the visibility of those features in relation to each other and to other areas of the house (Figure 1). I have chosen to include data about the form of the structures as well as visibility in order to suggest that from a distance, *lararia* and *nymphaea* are often interchangeable in their structural presences. Likewise, I have attempted to note also the relation of *nymphaea* to *lararia* in houses where both features are present.

[41] Fisher 2009, 449.
[42] Isovists are "the set of all points visible from a particular vantage point in space" that can be used to study the spatial dimension of environments (Benedikt 1979, 47).

Because of the nature of my research question, my analysis will also contribute to the discussion of private versus public space in Pompeian houses. Scholars have much debated whether or not a distinction between public and private should even be applied to the ancient world.[43] Wallace-Hadrill has argued that scholars should read Vitruvius' description in his *De Architectura* not as a contrast between public and private in our sense of the words, but as a distinction in accessibility between outsiders and family members.[44] Scholars have used Wallace-Hadrill's theory about the atrium house and his views about public versus private space for the past twenty or more years, but more recently Lisa Nevett and Penelope Allison have challenged his and other scholars' heavy reliance on Latin texts and have criticized other scholars' interpretations of the house based on labels from ancient sources that may or may not apply to those rooms.[45] Allison's 2004 study instead uses artifact distribution in order to understand spatial distribution of activities rather than relying more fully upon the texts to discern the social functions of various rooms.[46] In thinking of terms of visibility of *nymphaea* and *lararia* and comparing these patterns of visibility, this study will thus contribute to a re-evaluation of cultic space in the relation to viewership and visibility.

## III. DATA AND ANALYSIS

According to Dylan Rogers, there are twenty-five Pompeian *nymphaea*, of which eighteen are associated with gardens, eleven also with peristyles, and twelve with dining areas.[47] I was granted permission to access eleven houses that had a total of thirteen domestic *nymphaea*. I also surveyed at least three possible public *nymphaea*. In conducting my study, I recognized that the sample was inescapably a judgment sample due to the nature of excavation strategies at

[43] Nevett 2010, 6; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 38-61; Hales 2003, 1-6, 36-39.
[44] Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 44.
[45] Nevett 2010, 93-95. Allison 2004, 11-12; 161-177.
[46] Allison 2004.
[47] Rogers 2008 56-57.

the site. My data set is drawn from houses that archaeologists selected for targeted research due to their wealthy contents and promising states of preservation. In such a situation, there is no clear advantage in attempting a random sampling of the population when the sample was already biased by excavation. Thus, I chose to use in my data sample the thirty properties that had examples of either *lararia* or *nymphaea* that were well preserved and were accessible at the time of the study.[48]

This relational spatial analysis survey confirms that *nymphaea* are often located in areas where they would be most visible to invited guests and clients. Of the thirteen domestic *nymphaea* that I sampled, eight were located in gardens, one in an atrium, two were attached to triclinia, and one was located in a peristyle.[49] With the exception of the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa di Apollo,* all twelve other *nymphaea* were visible from either the front or back business entrances of the properties. Seven were visible from the triclinium, and eight were visible from the atrium.[50] The sample thus affirms the conclusion that Pompeians placed *nymphaea* in spaces that would attract the most attention of visitors.

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[48] I was denied access to several houses and buildings due to restoration efforts currently in progress or due to safety concerns. In addition to those thirty houses, I also analyzed three possible public *nymphaea*. Two were located in the *Terme Stabiane* and the third was on the *Arco Onorario*.

[49] *Nymphaea* are located in the gardens of the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo, Casa della Fontana Grande, Casa della Fontana Piccola, Casa degli Scienziati, Casa dell'Orso, Casa del Granduca di Toscana, Casa di Marco Lucrezio (*IX.iii.5), and the *Villa della Colonne a Mosaico*. The one example of a *nymphaeum* in the atrium is unusual and occurs in the *Casa degli Scienziati*. It is not clear if this structure is actually a *nymphaeum* or just a simple fountain based on the location and minimum marble decoration preserved, but Rogers (2008, 102) and Neuerburg (1960, 232) categorize it as a *nymphaeum* based on descriptions of mosaic and grotto pumice that allegedly decorated the fountain before World War II. The *nymphaeum* in a peristyle is in the *Casa del Torello*. I have chosen this as the only example of a *nymphaeum* in a peristyle because although I define the location of the peristyle only if it is in the area of the walkway and not in the garden interior, this *facciata nymphaeum* spans the entire length of the wall and the side rectangular niches merge with the fake columns coming out of the wall, suggesting that the *nymphaeum* acts as a fourth side of the peristyle rather than a solo feature between the columns. Finally, the *nymphaeum* in *Casa del Centenario* is in its own room attached to the triclinium and the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa di Apollo* may be in a triclinium, though it is difficult to tell where the garden ends and the pavement begins.

[50] *Nymphaea* are visible from the triclinia in the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo, Casa del Torello, Casa di Apollo, Casa della Fontana Grande, Casa degli Scienziati, Casa di Marco Lucrezio* (9.3.5), and the *Casa del Centenario,* and from the atrium in the *Casa del Torello, Casa della Fontana Grande, Casa della Fontana Piccola, Casa degli Scienziati, Casa dell'Orso, Casa del Granduca di Toscana, Casa di Marco Lucrezio* (9.3.5), and the *Casa del Centenario*.

Additionally, garden *lararia* also are visible most often from the entrance of a house and from the dining spaces. Nineteen houses with only *lararia* and no instances of *nymphaea* were sampled. In those nineteen instances, there were a total of twenty-four visibly accessible *lararia*, with examples of multiple *lararia* in the *Casa del Menandro, Casa di Caecilius Iucundus, Casa del Fauno, Casa degli Amorini Dorati, and the Casa dei Capitelli Colorati*. Boyce has recorded even more *lararia* in some of these houses than I was able to observe,[51] but I have included in this study only the *lararia* that I was able to access and analyze myself. It should be noted that there are more examples in these houses alone, yet due to safety restrictions or construction, not all areas of these houses were safe to enter.

Of the twenty-four *lararia* sampled in nineteen houses without *nymphaea*, eight were located in the garden, seven in the atrium or in a room directly off of the atrium, four in peristyles, one in a triclinium, and one in a kitchen. Upon analyzing the *lines of sight* for the eight garden *lararia*, I found overlapping evidence that allowed the garden *lararia* to be viewed from multiple points in the house that would have encountered the traffic of visitors as well as family members: three were visible from the entrance of the home, four were visible from the triclinium, and three were visible from the atrium.[52] These particular three locations are important because they are the spaces in which one would expect non-family members to be present. Like *nymphaea*, *lararia* are often found in areas of more "public" viewership (Tables 2 and 3).

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[51] See Boyce for additional *lararia* that were either inaccessible at the time of this study or no longer exist in the *Casa dell Menandro* (1937, 27-28), in the *Casa del Fabbro* (1937, 29), *Casa del Torello* (1937, 32), *Casa degli Scienziati* (1937, 54), *Casa del Granduca di Toscana* (1937, 66), and the *Villa della Colonne a Mosaico* (1937, 97).

[52] These numbers are only of garden *lararia*, and they do not include the *lararia* that are physically present in the atria. The *Casa Del Principe di Napoli* has a *lararium* visible from the entrance to the house. The *Casa del Sacerdos Amandus* has a *lararium* visible from the atrium. The *Casa del Giardino di Ercole* and *Casa del Principe di Napoli* have *lararia* visible from the triclinium. The *Casa del Poeta Tragico* and House VII.iii.6 have a *lararium* visible from all three: the entrance, triclinium, and atrium. The *Casa del Primo Piano, Casa del Triclinio Estivo,* and *Casa dei Capitelli Figurati* did not have *lararia* that were visible from any of these three viewpoints.

Another important similarity between *lararia* and *nymphaea* pertains to the placement of these structures in relation to one another within a single house. There are numerous examples of houses with multiple known *lararia*.[53] In this study alone, six of the thirty houses sampled had multiple observable *lararia*.[54] Boyce also notes a second *larariu*m in the *Casa del Fabbro* that is no longer visible today, bringing the total to seven houses with multiple *lararia* in this study.[55] In some instances, these *lararia* are visible to each other, such as in the *Casa degli Amorini Dorati*, or are placed directly next to each other, such as in the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo, Casa del Fauno,* and the *Casa del Torello*.[56]

Similarly, many houses with *nymphaea* also have *lararia* in similar spatial relationships. In the case of the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo*, two *nymphaea* face each other in the garden; this close relationship mirrors the houses that have two *lararia* in very close proximity to one another. Additionally, there are instances where a *nymphaeum* is also placed in the same room as the *lararia*, such as in the *Casa del Torello* and the *Casa degli Scienziati*, and/or are visible from the *lararium*, as in the *Casa di Marco Lucrezio*. The *Casa degli Scienziati*, with two supposed examples of *nymphaea*, also provides an example where a person standing at the *nymphaeum* in the atrium is also able to see the *nymphaeum* in the garden. The existence of houses with

[53] See Boyce 1937 for a list of houses with multiple *lararia*. Giacobello (2008, 66-67) argues that kitchen *lararia* are the main *lararia* for Pompeian homes, and that the architectural *lararia* often found in the atria or garden peristyles are "secondary" and reflect prestige and wealth because they adorn the niches with elaborate temple facades.
[54] I observed multiple *lararia* in the *Casa del Menandro, Casa del Triclinio Estivo, Casa del Torello,* and the *Casa di Caecilius Iucundus*, all of which were not recorded during Boyce's 1937 survey. Additionally, I observed multiple *lararia* in the *Casa del Fauno* and the *Casa degli Amorini Dorati*. Boyce (1937, 66) cites multiple *lararia* in the *Casa dei Capitelli Colorati*, but I was unable to access the *lararium* in the cellar due to safety concerns.
[55] Boyce (1937, 29) notes a second *lararium* in the kitchen in addition to the still visible *lararium* in the *oecus.*
[56] The examples of *lararia* in the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo* and the *Casa del Torello* were not identified in Boyce's 1937, Orr's 1973, Frohlich's 1991, nor in Giacobello's studies and thus the identification of these structures as *lararia* are the author's own opinion. One example in the *Casa del Triclinio Estivo* has a recognizable aedicula façade with a lower compartment niche that is commonly associated with storing altars in other known *lararia* and the second *lararium* is a corresponding wall niche near this structure. In the *Casa del Torello,* there is a second niche in the peristyle next to the *lararium* niche identified by Boyce (1937, 32) that may or may not be a second *lararium* based on its location and the fact that the niche is placed on the exact same height as the other *lararium* a few feet away on the same wall.

multiple *lararia* indicates that it is possible for *nymphaea* to coexist in houses with other shrines and still be considered religious features.[57] Moreover, the fact that there are instances of *lararia* either grouped together or spatially visible to one another and that *nymphaea* often mirror these same spatial patterns suggest a strong link between these two structures.

There are several reasons why *lararia* and *nymphaea* would be located in areas of the Roman house that afford high visibility to guests as well as family members. While it is true that the more extravagant the structure, the more impressive the homeowner would appear in wealth, status display is not the only reason for these features to have such high rates of visibility.[58] The fact that the *lararia* are often as visible as the *nymphaea* and are located in similar spaces suggests that there is also an importance for the family to appear pious. Shelley Hales has written about the importance of the rituals dealing with birth, marriage, and death being tied specifically to the Roman *domus* and its architecture as a "manifestation of the *familia's* Roman identity."[59] During the early empire, Augustus implemented a call to return back to the old morals and religiosity of the earlier Republic, affecting not only governing laws, but also the art and architecture of the empire.[60] Wealthy citizens in cities all across the empire participated in Augustus' building program, which strove to rebuild and revive many older temples that had fallen into disarray.[61] Examples of public buildings in Pompeii that were constructed or dedicated during the reign of Augustus by wealthy individuals include the Temple of the *Lares*,

[57] Bodel (2008, 264-265) states that houses often had multiple *lararia* because the *lares*, unlike the *penates*, could be painted or represented in more than one location within a single house. He suggests that the reason that there are often both an architectural *lararium* and other, more humble *lararia* such as paintings or niches found within a single *domus*, may be due to the concept of multiple *familiae* living pragmatically under a single home, where they are part the master family and also their own slave families.
[58] Rogers (2008, 63-67) notes which *nymphaea* are visible from particular Pompeian streets, emphasizing the importance of status and displays of wealth.
[59] Hales 2003, 2-3. For example, an altar to the goddess of childbirth Lucina was set up in the atrium of a house when a Roman was born and the front door was decorated with flowers, signaling to passer-bys the birth of a child for the family (Hales 2003, 2). Also see Dixon (1992, 134-138) and Flower (1996, 200-203) for rituals associated with birth, marriage, and death celebrated in the Roman home.
[60] Gazda 2002, 12.
[61] Zanker 1990, 101-110.

the Building of Eumachia, and the Temple of Fortuna Augusta, all of which were connected to the imperial cult.[62] If wealthy citizens were paying for the construction of temples in Augustus' name, then the socio-political importance of demonstrating one's piety would also be reflected in the grandeur of a family's house shrine. These reforms set the changes for the rest of the first century A.D., and thus displays of piety would be appropriate under future emperors as a continuation of the first emperor's reforms. Additionally, piety was a Roman virtue held in high esteem, and thus the apparent visibility, which both *nymphaea* and *lararia* share, would contribute to a family's appearance as true, traditional Romans, both politically and socially.

The placement of *lararia* and *nymphaea* in areas of the house where social visits were most likely to occur may also suggest a more religious interpretation of these structures. As guardians of the house, the *lares* and *penates* stood in particular areas where they would look over the *pater familias* and his family during business negotiations in the atrium and dinner parties in the garden or in the triclinium. The *penates* were originally the protective *numina* who guarded the family food storage (*penus)*, from which they took their name, but the term was commonly used to refer to all the deities worshiped by the family, and the *lares* may have been originally either deities of the fields or they were connected with the cult of the dead and were spirits of dead ancestors.[63] The *lares* were traditionally shared by all members of the household,

[62] According to Maiuri (1937, 18-21), the Temple of the *Lares* adjoined a true temple to the Imperial cult that was probably dedicated in the time of Augustus and rebuilt and left unfinished under Vespasian. The building of Eumachia was located on the forum next to the imperial cult temple and was dedicated by the priestess Eumachia to the Concordia Augusta and to Pietas (Beard 2008, 214-215; Maiuri 1937, 22). The Temple of the Fortuna Augusta was also dedicated to the imperial cult and was constructed in the year 3 B.C. by Marcus Tulius (Beard 2008, 282-284).

[63] Jashemski 1979b, 118. Also see Bodel (2008, 258) for more on the *lares* and *penates*. For *lares*, see Orr (1976, 6-12). Allison (2004, 145) also speaks about the *lares*. Foss (1997, 198) also suggests that the *lares* were for living members of the family, while the *penates* were for the deceased ancestors. See a discussion of the *lares* connected to the foundation of Rome in Giacobello (2008, 37-40) and associations with the *lares* both in domestic (2008, 40-45) and public cult (2008, 45-49).

and the *penates* were inherited and personal.[64] Any time a visitor entered the home, he or she was watched by the protective spirits and gods of the house. In Latin literature, Propertius (Prop. 4.2.5-6) narrates as the voice of a statue of the god Vertumnus and describes his preference of being placed in the Roman Forum over Etruscan temples of Ivory because of the sight of the Forum and, presumably, the ability to watch people and their interactions. These two brief lines are very interesting for their insight into how Romans during the early empire may have perceived the statues of their gods and their beliefs about the statues watching them.

However, just as statues of the gods in Roman and Greek temples were protected from outside view by the temple buildings and often were accessible only to cult leaders and special followers,[65] there is evidence that the *lares* and *penates* also may have been concealed from sight in their temples. In the *Casa del Menandro*, there is still a cast of the wooden screen that had once concealed the household gods in the *lararium* in the atrium.[66] Such protective measures beg the question of whether Romans did believe that the gods could see through their statues, and if so, perhaps this would explain the need to conceal the gods' vision during times when the homeowner and his family would not want to be seen.[67] It is unknown if all *lararia* would have

[64] Bodel 2008, 248. Also see Foss (1997, 197-218) for a discussion of *lares* in relation specifically with slaves and the preparation of food.

[65] Vernant (1991, 154) describes how the archaic wooden idols in Greece, what Pausanias often calls the *xoanon,* were shut up in chests and guarded, not meant to be seen because "to look at it is to go mad." The *xoanon*, however is meant to be hidden and then shown in connection to rituals (Vernant 1991, 155). Donohue (1988, 9-173) demonstrates that the word *Xoanon* in literature and inscriptions does not seem to refer to the idea of "cult statues" until the Hellenistic period. For the purposes of this study, the archaic idea of *xoana* is less important than later Roman ideas, detailed by Pausanias, of these statues and how Romans considered viewing such images as dangerous.

[66] Boyce 1937, 27-28.

[67] For an example of the destructive and dangerous side to gazing upon statues of the gods, see Platt's discussion of Plutarch's *Life of Aratus*, in which he discusses the procession of the statue of Artemis (Platt 2011, 18-19). Paus. 10.32.18 describes a man dying after gazing upon the face of the statue of Isis. Just as the presence of divine statues was meant to call forth divine beneficence, there is also a suggestion in the literature of the dangers of gazing upon the gods during improper times. Also see the story of Actaeon in Ov. *Met.* 3.131-350 in which Actaeon gazes upon the site of Diana bathing without her permission and is punished by being turned into a stag and having his own dogs rip him apart. Platt (2002, 87-112) further discusses the idea of the danger of the gaze depicted in mythological paintings in Roman houses.

had some form of screen that shielded the sacred images from sight, but the *nymphaea* certainly were not covered. At least in the garden area, much like the statue of the god in Propertius' poem, the statues of any gods would have been treated to beauty and nature, and thus would have had pleasurable viewing experiences. Although there is no definitive answer to the ways in which the Romans would have conceived of the gods of the house and their ability to watch over the house's inhabitants, the question of views from the point of view of the images of the gods has not been properly addressed in the scholarly literature, and is a question that should be considered in examining space and social meaning.[68]

Finally, in a study that examines the spatial relationship of *nymphaea* and *lararia* and their lines of visual axes, it is important to note how these features would have been viewed from a distance and to analyze their similar ornamentation styles. The majority of comparable examples of *nymphaea* and *lararia* are found in the garden. Gardens were typically at the back of the house and were thus viewed at a distance from the atrium and entrance of a house. Most scholars distinguish the two features primarily by associating mosaic ornamentation specifically with *nymphaea* and not *lararia.* Besides a differentiation in mosaic ornamentation, the commonality in the aedicula façades of both *lararia* and *nymphaea* found in domestic gardens links them visually (Figure 2). Additionally, one of the most common motifs in *nymphaea* is the half shell pattern that often decorates the upper, concaved area of the structure (Figure 3). This same pattern is also found on *lararia*, such as in the example of the *lararium* in House VII.iii.6.

[68] Platt (2011, 47) suggests that the public cult statues are meant to "look back," suggesting a more intimate relationship between worshipers and the divine. Elsner (2007, 22) likewise argues that the frontality of many cult statues demands that the viewer recognize that he or she is being viewed by the gods, as well as viewing the gods through the statues. Gell (1998, 118-121) argues that the idea of the statue seeing is a mirror idea, and that it is not necessarily that the statues see, but rather that the viewers see the statue appearing to look at them as they gaze at the statue. This is a very meaningful argument, and it can further be expanded by analyzing the idea of the gods' views from statues and the placement of statues in visually pleasing spaces. This would suggest that the gods were thought to inhabit and view mortal lives from their statues.

In this same *lararium*, excavators discovered a large statue of Venus.[69] The representation of Venus, the position of the structure in the garden, and the shell motif are all components commonly associated with *nymphaea*, and if this exact same structure had any trace of piped water or a mosaic, scholars would consider it a *nymphaeum*, not a *lararium*. Another example of a structure that seems to cross the lines decoratively between *nymphaea* and *lararia* is the *nymphaeum* in House V.III.11. Scholars have suggested that this *nymphaeum* was originally a *lararium* due to its pedimented top and columns and that the feature was only later converted to a *nymphaeum*.[70] Such examples of comparable decoration where the only signs that the feature is a *nymphaeum* and not a *lararium* are the mosaic decoration and the presence of water suggest that these features may not be as different as scholars have previously thought. At a distance, these features stand out for their temple facades and their strong architectural presence, and only upon closer inspection are they considered distinguishable into possible separate categories.

## IV. ELEMENTS OF RELIGION IN THE DECORATION, ORNAMENTATION, AND STATUARY ASSOCIATED WITH *NYMPHAEA*

The terminology often applied to the analysis of Roman statuary, ornamentation, and decoration in the context of religion presents a problematic supposition that directly affects an analysis of domestic *nymphaea*, namely the idea that ancient art is divisible into two categories: "art" and "cult objects."[71] Domestic *nymphaea* and the garden spaces in which they are found often contain various sculptures and paintings of deities, yet it is unclear exactly how ancient Romans conceived of and interacted with these images. Artwork depicting gods is often associated in ancient texts with stories about rituals and religion, indicating that many artworks

[69] Boyce 1937, 63.
[70] Rogers 2008, 40.
[71] Elsner (1996, 518) has written about this dilemma and has argued persuasively that when modern scholars evaluate ancient "art," we should also consider that art as a type of "visual theology" for ancient Romans and Greeks, who thought about and conceived of their gods through their images.

were more than just aesthetically pleasing to view; they were also what Jaś Elsner calls "sacredly charged images."[72] In my examination, I will not attempt to distinguish between examples of art that are purely aesthetic and those that are "cult statues" because such an approach seems antiquated and inaccurate.[73] While evidence of sacrifice in gardens before statues of deities suggests that domestic gardens could be places of worship,[74] an attempt to label these garden deity images specifically as cult images problematizes the ways in which we talk about ancient art.[75] An image of a god does not have to be worshiped in an idolatry manner in order for it to hold religious significance for its viewers, and as I will discuss, the presence of such images in gardens can evoke ideas of sacred landscapes and invoke the depicted gods' beneficence for the house.

From an art historical perspective, the representation of deities in gardens is expected because many Roman gods are described in Latin texts as inhabiting spaces of nature, and thus, according to this school of thought, their presence does not necessarily suggest evidence of religion. For instance, in his examination of Pompeian domestic *nymphaea*, Dylan Rogers argues that even though "deities, like Venus and Neptune, have prominent positions on some of these structures, there are no other indications that the *nymphaea* would have been used for religious practice," but rather that such divinities are instead simply "well-chosen decorative elements that evoke specific themes relevant for *nymphaea* and their surrounding space."[76] Such an argument

[72] See Elsner (1996, 523-526) for a discussion in particular about Pausanias' writings in relation to statuary of the gods in a way that Elsner describes as an early anthropology of religion.
[73] According to Elsner (1996, 517-518), this need to divide art between the secular and religious spheres is a byproduct of the art historical divide between distinguishing Christian religious art from pagan idolatry. See also Donohue's discussion (1997, 31-45) about using the term "cult-image" in reference to Greek sculpture, and how this term is ahistorical as there is no Greek word that captures this modern notion and desire to divide between art and religion.
[74] Jashemski 1979b, 121.
[75] For further discussion about the idea of naming something a "cult image" and issues raised with defining statues in such a category, see Alroth (1992, 9-46), Donohue (1997, 31-45), and Stewart (2007,158-178).
[76] Rogers 2008, 85.

is in line with the basic idea of "décor" or "appropriateness," which suggests that figures that are associated with water or gardens are expected to be depicted in these types of settings.[77] However, if one is to also consider Elsner's argument stated previously that images of gods often are imbued with a type of religious "charge" in addition to their artistic appropriateness,[78] then why are scholars so hesitant to suggest that these statues and images of divine and other worldly beings have more than one meaning? Can these images not convey both a religious message as well as be appropriate figures for themes of gardens and *nymphaea*? The presence of such statues fulfills Renfrew's criteria for presence of the "transcendent," suggesting that these statues may indicate sites filled with religious meaning.[79] Again, even without direct evidence for ritual, the space itself is marked through its ornamentation with images of the divine and nature as a place with possible religious charge. A closer analysis of the decoration and statues associated with *nymphaea* will allow a fuller picture to develop, one which provides greater detail about the ways in which Romans would have perceived domestic *nymphaea*.

The architecture and decoration of domestic *nymphaea* recall elements specific to both Greek and Roman religious spaces, and the domestic *nymphaea* themselves become increasingly more grandiose over time. The earliest examples in the late first century B.C. of domestic *nymphaea* in the Campania area are decorated in the "pebble/shell" tradition, using natural elements such as pumice as decoration (Figure 4).[80] This pumice is meant to bring to mind the image of caves, areas commonly associated with Greek public *nymphaea* in the classical period. Earlier domestic *nymphaea* also appear to have a niche-form that is more reminiscent of the

[77] On a general definition of décor, see Perry (2005, 31-49). For a particular discussion on the importance of décor for statues and their surrounding architecture, see Perry (2005, 50-57).
[78] Elsner (1996, 523-526).
[79] Renfrew 1985, 22.
[80] Leach 2010, 66; Pappalardo and Ciardiello 2012, 197.

Greek, grotto-*nymphaeum* style, such as the case in the *Casa de Marco Lucrezio* at Pompeii.[81] Slightly later *nymphaea* such as those in the *Casa della Fontana Piccola*, *Casa della Fontana Grande*, and *Casa degli Scienziati* dated to the first century A.D. all have glass tesserae mosaics and aedicula-shaped fronts.[82] The aedicula-shaped *nymphaea* mark a movement towards monumentality with small pillars flanking the niches, creating what Van Aken calls a kind of "temple-*nymphaea*" which "show a very close resemblance to many other *lararia* and other *sacella*."[83] The original incorporation of *nymphaea* into domestic spaces in Pompeii reflects an attempt to mimic the more natural design of grottoes, but over time they become more stylized and ornate in a manner that seems to imitate the architectural format of Roman house shrines. Elements such as sea shells and the tesserae, which take the place of the earlier pebbles, continue to be used in an attempt to retain allusions to the original grotto-style of the feature despite the fact that the architectural design of the structure has been changed from a purely circular cave to include also a Roman temple façade.

In conjunction with the water of the fountains, the sea shells help place the viewer in a space that is meant to simulate the watery grottoes where nymph cult was practiced.[84] Many aedicula facades in general incorporate a shell-ceiling motif. The materiality of real sea shells in addition to this ornamentation suggests that the viewer is interacting with true elements of the sea, and thus with spaces where nature is present. The shells evoke the ideas of water and cave

[81] Van Aken 1951, 274.
[82] Pappalardo and Ciardiello 2012, 197; Van Aken 1951, 274. There are also precedents for a few unusual examples of Classical Greek *nymphaea* to be decorated with an artificial temple façade similar to what is normal for domestic *nymphaea*. This seems to occur specifically whenever gods besides the nymphs and Pan are also worshipped at the cave site. For example, see Larson (2001, 227) for a description of the caves at Eleusis, which were part of Demeter's sanctuary, and Iphigeneia's tomb site, which was a cave connected with the sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia; both of these cave sites differ from traditional Greek *nymphaea*, which are completely natural, because the mouths of these caves have been altered into temple facades.
[83] Van Aken 1951, 275.
[84] Penelope Allison (2004, 146) argues that collections of shells found in atria of Pompeian houses may have held religious significance. For further reading on the ritual use of shells in Italy, see Reese 2002. Additional sources for the studies of shells found in Pompeii can be found in Damon 1867, di Monterosato 1872, Tiberi 1879, and Pinto-Guillaume 2007.

grottoes in a very naturalistic way through their physical presence. These decorations, like the pumice-roughened rock meant to imitate grotto architecture, suggest spaces of nature such as grove areas around sacred springs that recall scenes of divine epiphany. These materials also have the potential to be a type of votive offerings sealed into the architectural structure.[85] If the domestic *nymphaea* are themselves constructed pieces of art, then every aspect of the decoration has the potential to be viewed as "charged" [86] objects, imbued with religious or magical power through their connections to the gods.

In addition to the pumice and shells, Pompeian *nymphaea* are decorated with various images of gods and nature. In a study conducted by Rogers, Pompeian *nymphaea* have figural motifs in their mosaic decoration that includes: "erotes; floating heads, with wings; half-human, half-vegetal figures; human figures; Medusa/gorgons; Neptune; Perseus; river gods; Silenus; sphinxes; theatrical masks; tritons; Venus."[87] For example, in the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa della Fontana alle Colonne*, there is a clear mosaic of Venus decorating the top of the *nymphaeum* which is shaped like a half of a sea shell in an apparent birth scene.[88] The birth of Venus would not have been an unusual theme to decorate Roman fountains since she was born from sea foam and has a direct connection to water. The motif of the birth of the goddess may also suggest religious associations between the water in the fountain and the goddess born from the sea.

The goddess Venus appears in other *nymphaeum* mosaics, along with other Roman gods. In the *Casa dell'Orso*, the figure of Neptune is depicted among fish in the register below the mosaic depiction of what appears to be another half nude Venus on a sea shell.[89] Meanwhile, the

[85] Giacobello (2008, 67-68) emphasizes the importance of natural elements in garden shrines, and even states that there are examples of niches with shells as well as garden paintings that are associated with the cult of Venus, such as in the *Casa della Venere in Conchiglia*.
[86] See Elsner's (1996, 527) discussion of votive art being charged with religious and magical properties.
[87] Rogers 2008, 70.
[88] Rogers 2008, 79.
[89] Leach 2010, 70.

mosaic head of the river god Sarno is depicted above the water spout in the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa della Fontana Grande* in such a way that Leach has suggested the figure seems to preside over the fountain.[90] These examples show nature gods and gods related to water as reoccurring images on Pompeian *nymphaea*.

In addition to the mosaic images that are still visible in situ, many statues of divinities were found during excavations with or near *nymphaea*. A marble statue of Mars, who was also considered a god of agriculture by the Romans and the illicit consort of Venus, was found in the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa degli Scienziati*.[91] In the *Casa dell'Efebo*, a statue of either a nymph, of the goddess Venus, or of the goddess Pomona with a shell in her hand was found in the temple-shaped *nymphaeum*.[92] Statues of Silenus appear several times in the material record. Silenus statues were found in the *nymphaea* of the *Casa del Centenario,*[93] *Casa di Marco Lucrezio,*[94] and the *Casa del Granduca di Toscana.*[95] While Silenus is not a god like Mars, Venus, or Pomona, he is associated with the god Dionysus, and scholars have often assumed that while Dionysus himself is not depicted, Dionysus could be evoked as a god of vegetation through the depiction of Silenus and other Dionysian motifs.[96] The garden wall paintings are themselves "wild" and mark liminal spaces that would serve as a believable background for Dionysus and his entourage.[97]

The figure of Silenus, however, may have a more complex role to play in the decoration of *nymphaea* besides simply alluding to Dionysus. In addition to the statues listed above, Silenus

[90] Leach 2010, 70.
[91] Jashemski (1979, 129). Also see Cato the Elder's *De Agricultura* 141, which describes a prayer to Mars to protect the household and to protect the crops of the homeowner.
[92] Van Aken (1951, 277) gives these three possibilities for the identification of the statue. Maiuri (1937, 72), however, believes the statue is Pomona.
[93] Maiuri 1937, 53.
[94] Jashemski 1979b, 42.
[95] Jashemski 1979b, 41.
[96] Rogers 2008, 82-86.
[97] Hales 2003, 154-156.

also decorates the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa di M. Loreio Tiburtino*[98] and again in the *Casa della Fontana Piccola* in the form of a Silenus mask.[99] In all of these instances, the god Dionysus is not represented at all. However, in paintings in other houses in Pompeii that are not related to *nymphaea*, it is true that Silenus is depicted in scenes with Dionysus and other gods, such as in the *Villa dei Misteri* and *Domus M. Holconi Rufi.*[100] Why, then, if Silenus is usually depicted as a member of Dionysus' entourage, is only Silenus found on *nymphaea* and not Dionysus as well? One explanation is that Silenus is depicted on *nymphaea* not as an allusion to Dionysus, but as a symbol for what Silenus himself represents in the Roman world.

Silenus, or Σειληνός, is a satyr who appears fairly consistently in Greek literature as a figure who, if he becomes drunk, can be captured and forced to tell prophesies.[101] He may be the son of Hermes, or of Pan with a nymph or Gaea, and he is generally described as a jovial old man, bald, with a blunt nose, fat, and round with a wine bag.[102] Harry Peck has suggested that based on these stories, Silenus was probably originally a deity presiding over springs and running streams and that the wine-skin which is frequently depicted with him was originally a water-skin.[103] While there is little evidence to support such a claim, there are a few literary references that connect Silenus to specific springs.[104] Whether or not this identification of him

[98] Maiuri 1937, 76.
[99] See Jashemski 1979b, 41. This mask of Silenus is no longer in situ.
[100] Maiuri 1937, 84 and 60 respectively. In the *Villa dei Misteri's* room that is famous for the mystery painting, after a scene of sacrificial ceremony is a scene of old Silenus singing and playing while gazing at Dionysus and Ariadne on the end wall. Then, in another scene, an aged Silenus offers a bowl to a young satyr while another young satyr holds a theatrical mask over his head. In the *Domus M. Holconi Rufi*, the large summer triclinium has a fountain and pictures on walls of Hermaphroditus and Silenus, Bacchus, Pan and Eros, Narcissus, Bacchus and Ariadne.
[101] Herodotus, *The Histories* 8.138; Paus. 1.4.
[102] Peck 1896, 1466.
[103] Peck 1896, 1466.
[104] Leach (2010:152) describes the association of Silenus with the spring in Pyrrhichos and that Silenus was considered to be the founder of the town after he settled there, having come from Malea. See Paus. 3.25.2 who quotes Pind. Fr. 156 for the settlement of Pyrrichos by Silenus, and see Paus. 3.25.3 for the attribution of the spring to Silenus.

with water is based mainly on his connection to nymphs in the lore is uncertain. If this is the case, the appearance of Silenus with water features would not be unusual.

In Latin literature, the belief that Silenus, if found drunk, can be bound and forced to either sing or tell prophesies continues to be portrayed.[105] However, more important for the discussion at hand, Silenus raised and instructed the god Bacchus before becoming one of his entourage according to Latin literature. Ovid (*Met*. 4.25-27) identifies Silenus as one of the attendants of Bacchus in his annual rites,[106] and Horace (*Ars.* 239) states that Silenus was the attendant and servant of the god Dionysus, who was his foster-son, indicating that Silenus raised him.[107] Here, we see the importance of Silenus' relationship to Bacchus as the figure that raised, protected, and taught the young god.

Similarly, the nymphs are known for many of the same characteristics as those prescribed to Silenus. They are often associated with gods of the forests, such as Artemis, Dionysus, Hermes, Pan, and satyrs. Nymphs are often charged with nursing, protecting, and raising important figures, such as Zeus and Dionysus.[108] They are also associated with marriage rites and premarital rites.[109] Moreover, the Greek word νύμφη also means "bride," again indicating

[105] Plutarch *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 27; Verg. *Ecl.* 6.13-86.
[106] Ovid (Met. 4.25-27) does not name Silenus, but he describes the old satyr by the attributes known to him: *bacchae satyrique sequuntur, quique senex ferula titubantes ebrius artussustinet et pando non fortiter haeret asello*.
[107] Horace (*Ars* 239): *an custos famulusque Dei Silenus alumni*.
[108] For the story of Zeus being given to nymphs to be nursed, raised, and protected, see Apollod. *Library* 1.1.6-7. For a similar story of Dionysus being raised by nymphs in their cave at Nysa see HH 26. A third example occurs no in the rearing of Rhesus, son of a Muse and the river god Strymon, by "spring nymphs" (πηγαίαις κόραις) (l.929) in Eur. *Rhe.* 926-931.
[109] According to Walker (1979, 107), the ritual bathing that occurred in Classical Greece as a purification ritual before marriage was closely associated with the cult of the nymphs, as evidenced through votive offerings, depictions on vases used in the ritual, and in literature; however, there is no clear evidence of this practice continuing at nymph sanctuaries in Greece during the imperial period. Also see Thuc. 2.15 for evidence of fountain water used in marriage rites (1973, 687-688). The story of *Daphnis and Chloe* from the second century A.D. also describes the nymphs as protectors of a girl named Chloe who is discovered in one of their sanctuary caves (Longus 1.4-6). The nymphs continue to protect Chloe as she grows up (Longus 2.22-23) and are responsible for helping Daphnis find money for her dowry to wed her (Longus 3.27-28). This story demonstrates how the nymphs are both protectors of children and of young women preparing for marriage.

the close link between the mythical nymphs and young married women. Thus, nymphs are viewed as protectors of marriage and children.

With the exception of the possible statue of a nymph in the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa dell'Efebo*, depictions of nymphs are not found directly in relation with the *nymphaea* in Pompeii. However, nymphs are often depicted in the form of statues with water fountains in gardens.[110] They are also often painted on wall paintings in gardens specifically as statues of themselves holding fountains.[111] Perhaps the lack of portrayal of nymphs on *nymphaea* is due to the fact that it is not necessary to display the bodies of nymphs in order to invoke them. Instead, the architectural pumice that is designed to imitate natural grottoes, sea shells, and sea and vegetal themes are enough to identify these structures as sacred fountains.

Overall, the decoration is intriguing for the fact that nature appears to be the central theme, and it is specifically in areas of nature, not crowded city spaces, where gods and mythical helpers appear for Romans.[112] The presence of water and growing trees and plants creates a sacred space for the gods and the spirits of nature, like nymphs. Unless there is a need to invoke a particular nymph, the generalization of identifying nymphs based on creating the architectural space in which they would frolic allows the homeowner to invite all nymphs. Unlike Silenus, who is a particular satyr associated with specific duties and roles of being the father of satyrs and the protector and teacher of Dionysus, there is no need to identify a particular nymph. Just as in Greece where votive offerings at *nymphaea* and literary tales about sacrifices to nymphs do not specify a particular nymph, neither should Roman *nymphaea* have to specify a space with a

[110] Hill 1981, 90-91. Leach (2010, 72) has suggested that there is one example of a nymph in the mosaic on the *nymphaeum* at the *Villa delle Colonne a Mosaico* clinging to the side of a taurocamp at the summit of the hemicycle on the fountain, although as previously discussed, the more common interpretation is that this is a figure of Venus.
[111] In the *Casa di Lucio Ceius Secundus*, on an exterior wall of a storeroom, there is a garden scene with a nymph holding a fountain and surrounded by plants, flowers, and birds (Jashemski 1979b, 70). In the *Casa di M. Lucrezio Frontone* is a garden painting on the south wall of statues of nymphs holding fountains (Jashemski 1979b, 71).
[112] For a discussion about the Roman idea of nature and how they perceived it, see Beagon (2007, 19-40).

singular representation of a nymph.[113] Instead, the grotto-pumice, shells, and other decorations imply the home of nymphs for Romans, thus generalizing the message that all nymphs should be honored in this space. Thus, the "presence of the transcendent and its symbolic focus"[114] are present in the ornamentation of shells, grotto pumice, and water.

Finally, the last major group of statues that is associated with *nymphaea* is the group of erotes. These figures are found more frequently in the form of statues and mosaics on the *nymphaea* because they are not inherently implied in the construction of the fountains. Due to their association with Venus, it seems understandable why these little flying figures would decorate *nymphaea* alongside the goddess. However, they too inspire more than just a reference to the goddess. Statues of erotes are often found on *nymphaea* without any depiction of Venus, such as in the *Casa di M. Loreio Tiburtino*[115] and *Casa della Fontana Piccola.*[116] Another example of an Eros statue may have been discovered in the *Casa della Fontana alle Colonne*.[117] Erotes, like Venus, are symbols of love and fertility.

Thus, *nymphaea* appear as structures covered in figures of love (Aphrodite and erotes), fecundity (Mars and nymphs), and child-raising (nymphs and Silenus). Similar statue groupings are also located in *lararia* in Pompeii, including an example in House VII.15.3 of a *larārium* with *Lares*, Venus, Hercules, Priapus, Silenus, and Eros, which appears to also emphasize the

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[113] For more on Greek votive offerings at *nymphaea,* see Larson (2001, 227). See Eur. *Ele.* 785-6 for an example of a sacrifice of a bull to the Nymphs: τυγχάνω δὲ βουθυτῶν νύμφαις. Longus 2.20-22 describes Chloe's offerings of garlands, milk, and music to the nymphs. Longus 2.30-31 also describes the sacrifice of a she-goat in gratitude to the nymphs for saving Chloe.

[114] Renfrew 1985, 18.

[115] Jashemski 1979b, 46.

[116] Pappalardo and Ciardiello 2012, 223.

[117] Jashemski (1979, 41) says that a bronze fountain statue of an eros holding a dolphin was originally discovered in the garden of House IX.VII.20. This house contains a *nymphaeum* with a mosaic of Venus in the top arch and, while it is not clear if the statue was found in the area of the *nymphaeum*, there is a statue base in the fountain's basin, and this type of statue is generally associated with *nymphaea*.

importance of fertility for the Roman family.[118] While it could be argued that Silenus alludes to Dionysus and that all these figures are relevant to a garden space because of their representation of fertility in nature, then why not put Dionysus himself in the decoration?[119] Why choose Silenus? Again, the connection of Silenus and the nymphs may goes beyond this basic interpretation. More than just the jovial nature of Dionysus in the garden, the nymphs and Silenus are figures that helped raise Dionysus. They are nurturers, promoters of healthy growth, and protectors of the young. For a Roman family that put great importance on the idea of the family and continuing the family's name, inviting figures into the home who are both the protectors of children as well as celebrated for their connections to nature and fecundity appears to be an important act.

While an analysis of the statuary and ornamentation of *nymphaea* alone is not enough to clearly distinguish these structures as having some form of religious purpose, it is easy to see how *nymphaea* could be viewed as shrines and why Romans would choose to incorporate these structures into their homes. If *lararia*, a type of house shrine which will be discussed in more detail later, were dedicated to the *lares,* or heads and busts assumed to have been ancestral portraits[120] in order to emphasize the importance of family and familial lines,[121] then a shrine dedicated to figures who promote healthy marriages and children would likewise be a suitable addition to a Roman house. Further evidence for the use of *nymphaea* as religious structures in addition to status symbols and pleasure fountains can be found in a brief discussion of the ways in which Romans would have interacted with these structures.

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[118] Frohlich 1991, 31, Note 142.
[119] Interestingly, Bacchus is often prominent on painted *lararia* and in wall paintings in Pompeii, but there is only one single instance of his statue among the large *lararia* assemblages from all of Pompeii, suggesting that he is also not well represented in *lararia* statuary (Bodel 2008,264).
[120] Allison 2004, 145.
[121] Romans gave sacrifices or offerings to *lares* in order to encourage the continuity of the family line, and during occasions that were important for family life, such as births, weddings, rites of passage, and departures or arrivals (Giacobello 2008, 43-45).

## V. INTERACTIONS WITH *NYMPHAEA* AND THE GARDEN

The decoration of *nymphaea* plays with the line between man-made and natural. In Pompeii, *nymphaea* are almost always found in enclosed gardens painted with imitative garden paintings that play on what Eleanor Leach has called the "thematic clash of art and nature."[122] Besides the pumice that is formed to imitate a grotto on the *nymphaeum*, these fountains also contain images of trees, as on the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa del Granduca,* and fish and ducks, like those on the *nymphaea* in the *Casa dell'Orso* and the *Casa dell'Triclinio Estivo.* Here, there is a play between the very real plant and possible animal life around the *nymphaeum*, and the mosaic and painted life on it and surrounding walls. Wilhelmina Jashemski notes this interplay between real and imaginary specifically in wall paintings, stating that "the Pompeians blur the line between the real and the unreal and suggest that the painted garden was a continuation of the planted garden."[123] Likewise, the *nymphaea* hold a very similar role to wall paintings in imagining the natural landscape within a built environment.

The viewer gazing upon these mosaic fountains is aware of the dual nature of *nymphaea*. *Nymphaea* are great achievements of architecture with fanciful mosaics and are equipped with piped water. At the same time, the natural elements of sea shells and pumice suggest that the structure is natural, that the viewer should see the *nymphaeum* surrounded by fantastical garden paintings and real garden plants, and consider it a part of this constructed, living garden.[124] For the garden is "real," in a kind of way. The plants may be real, the water may be real, but everything is constructed within a house, inside walls in a city. Marcel Brion has suggested that

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[122] Leach 2010, 66. See also Kuttner (1999, 7-35) for a discussion of garden paintings and the interplay between nature and artifice.

[123] Jashemski 1979b, 70.

[124] According to Van Aken (1951, 273-274), naturalistic tendencies in art seem to cause a "downright revolution in Roman domestic architecture in Augustan times, more particularly in the garden peristyle," where he argues "the architects try to give an exact reproduction of the sacred character of nature in plantation, wall-decoration, ornamental waters and architectonic garden structures."

the "love of nature" which is prevalent in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. in Pompeian domestic art is due to the desire to escape the crowded, over-populated city.[125] Whether or not this is the case, he points to an important element of Pompeian life. These domestic gardens are spaces within a very busy city, filled with high-rise buildings that stretch up towards the sky, paved roads, and constant sewage and dirty water flowing through the streets. It is an urban environment, and the domestic gardens and the decorations and plants within them all function as part of the illusion of living in the country, when the opposite is reality. Through peristyle gardens and the architectural features within those spaces, Roman artists and architects attempted to create an image of sacred landscape within the Roman house by making sacred groves and pools set in transcendent garden spaces. Through the incorporation of domestic *nymphaea*, they recreated cultic geography[126] in their own houses.

Thus, the fantastical images that occur in these spaces and the ornate decoration do not seem contradictory. Domestic gardens are built environments in Roman homes, and as such, they create liminal spaces where the imagination and reality begin to overlap. Wall paintings[127] such as in the *Casa del Centenario*, which has fantastical images of fish and aquatic animals on one level with the *nymphaeum* and animal fights in a sprawling landscape above, are not out of place, nor are the paintings of a foreign port city around the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa della Fontana Piccola* unusual due to the continuous theme of nature.[128] While garden landscapes are more expectant in creating an area of nature and beauty, these scenes also allow the viewer a similar

[125] Brion 1960, 149.
[126] Alcock (1993, 172) discusses the idea of the "sacred landscape" and points to the fact that often "in the Greco-Roman world especially, attitudes and actions were continually molded by current conceptions of mythic or cultic geography." Although she is talking on a much more broad scale in Greece, one can see how ideas of mythic or cultic geography have likewise affected the art and architecture of Pompeian homes.
[127] Hales (2003, 133-145) has discussed the role of wall painting as art creating transitional spaces, where humans and gods in the divine realm appear to overlap in a kind of fantasy that incorporates various alterations of reality.
[128] Pappalardo and Ciardiello (2012:223) cite Pliny (H.N. 35.117) for crediting "the practice of decorating gardens with this sort of harbor scene," like the one in the *Casa della Fontana Piccola*, to a trend that began with the Roman painter Ludius, who was painting during the reign of Augustus.

sense of escape from the city and a journey into the natural world. The garden and its decoration thus become a space of the *other*,[129] a place that is reminiscent of the country and a life where nature is fantastical in its power and beauty despite being embedded in a crowded city space.

The garden transforms into a place between worlds, inviting the gods and opportunities for epiphanies. With *nymphaea*, fountains of flowing water, and natural vegetation, peristyle gardens become the spaces that are often described in Roman literature as places where one may encounter the gods. Natural wooded areas around water are common spaces where mortals encounter immortals in the literary tradition.[130] Moreover, bodies of water often appear to have received dedications and were occasionally personified in the literature as gods or were associated with beings such as nymphs.[131] Juvenal, who was writing in the late 1st to the early 2nd centuries AD, suggests that there is a later dissatisfaction with the attempt to bring natural areas into the cities, commenting on the loss of traditionally Roman religious fountains and grove areas to foreign religious groups[132] and also lamenting that the divine spirit of the fountains (*numen aquis)* has been removed from nature to be surrounded by marble rather than their native tufa.[133] Such an example demonstrates the importance of the materials used to denote sacred natural spaces for the Romans. In Pompeii, there is an attempt to preserve an illusion of

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[129] Hales 2003, 153-157.

[130] See Ovid's story of Diana and Actaeon (Ov. *Met.* 3.142-153) and Narcissus and Echo (Ov. *Met*. 3.339-510) for stories about a wooded area near a pool or fountain of water that serves as a *locus amoenus* where epiphanies of gods and immortals occur. Also see Vergil's description of pastoral setting with a *locus amoenus* and his specific reference to the woodland gods Pan, Silvanus, and the nymphs (Verg. *G*. 2.458-542). Rogers (2008, 56-62) also suggests that *nymphaea* in domestic gardens contribute to a *locus amoenus*; however, he emphasizes the spaces as areas of pleasurable viewing rather than as spaces for religious epiphany.

[131] See Rives (2007, 16-17) discussion of this, and examples Horace's statement of gratitude to a spring and promise of sacrifice to that water (Hor. *Carm.*3.13) and Lucius Postumius Satullus' dedication of an altar to a divine spring in Spain (*ILS* 3885). See also Kuttner (2003, 108) who suggests that the constant movement of water in nature is one of the reasons that Romans thought that different water features were gods (i.e. river gods, Neptune as the sea, etc.) or associated figures like nymphs with water bodies.

[132] *hic, ubi nocturnae Numa constituebat amicae, nunc sacri fontis nemus et delubra locantur Iudaeis, quorum cophinus faenumque supellex (omnis enim populo mercedem pendere iussa est arbor et eiectis mendicat silva Camenis)* (Juv. 1.3.11-16).

[133] *in vallem Egeriae descendimus et speluncas dissimiles veris. quanto praesentius esset numen aquis, viridi si margine clauderet undas herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tofum* (Juv. 1.3.17-20).

authenticity, with the pumice and shells encrusted into the domestic *nymphaea*, as if these were natural formations rather than constructions of men. Such attempts at illusion are important for retaining the sacred idea of the grove or grotto, a theme that permeates the literature about epiphanies.

However, as rooms within Roman houses, interior gardens also were used for various domestic activities by those who inhabited the household. These spaces were not viewed as sacred in an exclusive sense, where actions of religious devotion were the only appropriate activities to be carried out within those areas, but rather Romans interacted with and inhabited these natural spaces. There is evidence that gardens were the places where dinner parties with music and entertainment occurred, where families ate meals together, where women wove, and where children played.[134] In many instances, triclinia, or dining rooms, are associated with the garden spaces or are even located in the gardens. It is also a space with fresh plants and water, and ideal area for people to want to spend their time playing or working compared to the other, darker rooms of the house. Moreover, there is also evidence that gardens were lit after dark, though whether for dinner parties or other purposes is unknown.[135] Thus, gardens can be seen not just as a space of luxury and wealth, but also as a functional room that would be utilized by all members of the family.

There is also archaeological evidence that domestic gardens in Pompeii were spaces where religion was practiced. Wilhelmina Jashemski has written on the subject of religious rituals and practices in domestic gardens in Pompeii,[136] suggesting evidence for the worship of

[134] Jashemski 1979b, 89-102; For evidence of weaving, see Jashemski's statement that she found loom weights in every garden that she has excavated in Pompeii (Jashemski 1979b, 102). Also see Dunbabin (2003, 13) for Roman banquets as social and political meals that showcased a family's wealth and prestige.
[135] It has been suggested that the two masks on the *nymphaeum* in the *Casa della Fontana Grande* with open mouths may have held lamps, which would have given light to dinner party guests as well as provided quite an astounding visual to see the *nymphaeum* lit up at night (Jashemski 1979b, 113).
[136] Jashemski 1979b, 115-140.

Hercules, Venus, Sabazius, Sacred Trees, and some scanty evidence for the worship of Dionysus.[137] Pierre Grimal has argued that the garden is a sacred space to Dionysus for the Romans,[138] but other scholars have been wary to make such a claim, stating that there is no real evidence for Dionysus himself being worshipped and that the presence of Dionysian themes is simply decoration.[139] It is certainly possible that Dionysus could have been worshiped in some gardens, and it seems likely that he would have been because of his role as a god of festivity and abundance. However, unlike the other deities previously listed with numerous examples of statues, paintings, and/or votive offerings, it is difficult to prove that there was any specific worship of Dionysus in Pompeian domestic gardens with only one *lararium* painting in the *Casa del Centenario* and no larger statues that can clearly be connected to a shrine, altar, or cult activity in the garden. One could imagine the offerings of wine libations to the god, but even if such occurrences existed, they would not have left a mark in the archaeological record.

The most convincing form of evidence for the practice of religious worship in the garden comes from the *lararia*, or domestic shrines that are found in these spaces. The presence of these features has allowed statues, statuettes, and paintings of the gods previously discussed to be considered religious rather than purely decorative. According to Grimal, *lararia* in the gardens unite sacred landscape with traditional Roman religion.[140] The *lararia* traditionally are shrines

[137] According to Jashemski (1979, 121-122) evidence for the worship of Hercules in the garden has been found in House II.viii.6 where there is a masonry altar before an aedicula shrine built against the east wall of the large garden that housed a statue of Hercules, in House II.i.9 and house VII.iv.26 with paintings of Hercules on the *Lararia*, and a possible statue of Hercules found in a niche in the south garden wall at shop IX.iii.2. Statuettes of Venus from possible garden *lararia* have been found in houses I.ii.17, VII.xii.23, VII.iii.6, IX.i.20 (Jashemski 1979b, 125). Worship of Sabazius is evident from cult items found in the garden of II.i.12 (Jashemski 1979b, 135). Jashemski (1979, 134) has argued that sacred trees may have been worshipped in the gardens in houses VII.vi.28 and VII.x.14. Jashemski (1979:123-124) cites the *lararium* painting in the *Casa del Centenario* and a small statuette of Dionysus found in a garden niche in house IX.vii.25.

[138] Grimal (1969, 317-330) explores the role of Dionysus being worshiped in the gardens, but he does suggest that the common statues of nymphs and satyrs in the gardens may be symbols of Dionysus that are ornamental rather than necessarily religious.

[139] Jashemski 1979b, 124; Rogers 2008, 91.

[140] Grimal 1969, 308.

dedicated to the household gods referred to collectively as the *lares* and the *penates*. Additionally, Olympian gods could be represented and worshiped in both private and public cults and rituals and are often located in the *lararia* of houses.[141] Another figure often represented in *lararia* is the *genius*, or the guardian spirit representing the head of the household during acts of religious rituals.[142] *Lararia* have been studied over the years, including George Boyce's 1937 work entitled "Corpus of the *Lararia* in Pompeii," which is vital for documenting *lararia* that did not survive WWII, David G. Orr's 1972 dissertation, which added excavated *lararia* after WWII, Thomas Fröhlich's 1991 work on painted *lararia* in Pompeii, and Giacobello's 2008 analysis of *lararia* and the social function of domestic cult in Pompeii.[143]

Boyce defines the two parameters for *lararia*: the first is the representation of images of gods to be worshipped, fulfilled either by having small images or through the painting of their figures on walls, and the second is the need for a way to sacrifice to them, either through a masonry or portable altar set up before the shrine.[144] There are three main types of *lararia* in Pompeii: the simple niche, the aedicula, and the wall painting.[145] Boyce names a fourth type of *lararium*, which he calls the *sacellum*, or "a room set apart for the service of the domestic cult and especially equipped for that purpose;" however, these are more rare, and Boyce has only

[141] Bodel 2008, 255.
[142] Bodel 2008, 156. According to Foss (1997, 199), the *genius* is also the "procreative force" of the family, often represented by the *pater familias*.
[143] Boyce's 1937 study is cited by most modern scholars. For a study that has attempted to publish *lararia* that were excavated after Boyce's publication, see Orr (1972, 152-198). For a specific study of *lararia* paintings, see Fröhlich (1991, 249-301). Also see Giacobello (2008, 132-233) for a more recent study of Pompeian *lararia*.
[144] Boyce 1937, 10.
[145] According to Boyce (1937, 9-11), the simple niche may or may not be decorated with an aedicula façade. The aedicula form of *lararium* occurs as a three dimensional little temple with a gable roof with pediment, supported by columns, and a special podium. The pseudo-aedicula structure is also considered an aedicula *lararium*, with a podium that does not have columns and a temple form, but instead a niche hollowed out of the masonry or formed by walls built on top of the podium and supporting a roof above them. Boyce defines a "*lararium* painting" as "a painting representing the figures of the gods (including the serpents) which forms all or part of a *lararium*" (Boyce 1937, 9).

identified six examples devoted to the worship of domestic gods.[146] At least all of the three main forms of lararia have been found in various gardens at Pompeii, and of the 505 lararia published in Boyce's 1937 publication of lararia, fifty were in gardens, fifty-nine in peristyles, and five were in villa peristyles.[147] Of the sixty-six Pompeian lararia subsequently studied in David G. Orr's 1972 dissertation from the University of Maryland, eighteen were in gardens, and two were in peristyle gardens.[148] While statistically this seems like a small number of lararia to appear in gardens when compared with the larger corpus, it should be taken into account that most lararia are found in the kitchen, and Pompeian houses often had more than one *lararium*.[149] Of the one hundred and fifty six lararia not located in kitchens in Giacobello's 2008 study, eighty-six (approximately fifty-five percent of non-kitchen shrines) were located in either peristyles or gardens, suggesting that peristyle garden areas are secondary only to kitchens in location for household cult activities.[150]

The incorporation of *lararia* into domestic gardens is the most definitive evidence for religious practice in garden spaces. There are practical reasons for locating a shrine in the open-air garden areas, such as the ventilation of smoke and unwanted smells.[151] Likewise, various

[146] Boyce (1937, 18) argues there is evidence of *sacella* in houses VI.i.1, VI.xv.18, IX.viii.3., IX.viii.6, IX.ix.6, and the Villa of the Mosaic Columns.
[147] Cited by Jashemski 1979b, 115.
[148] Orr 1972, 152-172.
[149] Lipka (2006, 327-358) has argued unconvincingly against the idea favored by modern scholarship that different shrines within one household served the needs of different groups in that household and that painted murals in or next to shrines received worship the same as the actual shrine statues. Instead, he argues that there was a single Roman household cult run by the head of the family and that only one shrine could serve as a shrine at any given time. He believes that other shrines located in public areas that do not contain statues must be for decorative purposes only. However, this argument does not match the archaeological evidence, and it is recognized that many statues and household cult figures were removed in antiquity by those fleeing the city, so his argument that the absence of statues to be worshiped is thus the absence of cult activity is not convincing.
[150] Giacobello (2008, 66-67). Giacobello suggests that the reason *lararia* were so prominent in kitchens is in relation to the idea that household cult is related to the hearth.
[151] Lipka 2006, 329.

offerings to the gods were plants and things that would be found in the garden.[152] Thus, the similar placing of both *lararia* and domestic *nymphaea* in gardens suggests that the space itself may give insight into the role of *nymphaea* as features within a kind of sacred landscape.

## VIII. CONCLUSION: IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Spatial analysis is a tool that should be employed more often when attempting to answer questions about cultural interactions and social identity. While spatial analysis has often been utilized in studies of domestic space, there has been a lack of regard for structural features in the methodology. Whether that pertains to the lack of complete buildings in most archaeological sites or simply to a disregard of the features as ornamentation, a spatial analysis of structural features like *lararia* and *nymphaea* in relation to their locations in the home can reveal information not only about the function of the spaces in which they are found, which is the most common use of spatial analysis, but also information about the political and social implications that viewership holds.

There continues to be a divide in the use of the word *nymphaea* to describe Pompeian mosaic fountains. As has been demonstrated by the literary and archaeological sources currently in publication, there is no indication of these features as *nymphaea* in the traditional Greek sense, nor are they fully recognized in the later, Roman definition of public structures. Their aedicula facades, grotto shaped pumice decoration, and the inclusion of shells and mosaic decorations that allude to sea themes indicate that these structures evoke the association of earlier Greek public sanctuaries to the nymphs, yet the placement of these structures in Roman houses during the first

[152] According to Jashemski (1979, 118-120), garlands played an important part in religious worship, and the most common domestic offerings were a few cereals and salt (*mola salsa*), wine, little cakes (*strues*) or the oblation cake (*fertum*) and incense. Also, figs, dates, almonds, pine cones, and eggs are all painted on *lararia* as offerings. For evidence of garlands specifically covering the household hearth on Kalends, Ides, nones, and all other feast days, see Cato *RR* 143. Tibullus 2.1.59-60 describes a young boy draping his *lares* with a wreath of flowers. For further indication of garland use, see Pl. *Trin.* 1.2.1. For evidence of burnt offerings excavated in the domestic gardens of the *Casa di Amarantus* (I.ix.11) and the *Casa del Postumii* (VIII.iv.4), see Robinson (2002, 93-99).

century A.D. separates them as distinctly Roman.[153] Although scholars have noted the structural similarities between domestic *nymphaea* and *lararia*,[154] there has been no clear method for attempting to analyze them beyond observable decorative qualities. Due to the ostentatious ornamentation of these structures and a lack of ritual evidence, most scholars have shied away from an interpretation of these features as religious structures. Thus, a spatial analysis provides the opportunity to examine *nymphaea* in relation to other domestic shrines.

Current spatial analysis techniques have relied on space syntax, which focuses more on accessibility and ignores the actual shape of the area and any features in that area, and on axis analysis. However, neither of these approaches is completely satisfactory when examining features in situ. Instead, I have opted to approach spatial analysis through two lenses: one being the factor of visibility in the home in order to determine who would have had visual access to the features, and the second factor being a comparison of spatial relationships between *nymphaea* and attested house shrines. This methodology allows for an examination of *nymphaea* in relation to *lararia* in order to better understand the social implications of these two types of structures.

In returning to the question of public versus private space and how this issue relates to cult practices, there is no apparent distinction in the usage of garden spaces, where *lararia* and *nymphaea* are often located, as private or public. Archaeological excavations have discovered

[153] Moreover, the examples preserved from the first century A.D. in Pompeii appear to be unique even when compared to preserved "*nymphaea*" from other Roman towns that continued to a later date. In later imperial times, there is a change in the construction of "*nymphaea*" in houses of the empire, most notably in Ostia. Unlike the earlier Pompeian *nymphaea*, the *nymphaea* in the town of Ostia have hardly any relations to garden and are simply open air (Van Aken 1951, 282). However, Glaser (2000, 453-466) says that there are aedicula fountains in gardens attested in the fourth century A.D. in several houses in Ostia. See also Neuerburg (1960, 345-384) for a list of public and private *nymphaea* in Ostia. However, there is a much clearer presence of later public *nymphaea* in the town of Ostia than in Pompeii. See Jansen (2002, 145) for a study of the public *nymphaea* in Ostia and the argument that these fountains were built and maintained by the government.

[154] Van Aken 1951, 275.

utilitarian objects in house gardens,[155] yet such evidence does not negate that gardens were also spaces for dinners, parties, and religious rituals. Instead, this evidence suggests that the nature of a given area can change based on who is interacting with or viewing that space at any particular time. Pompeians may have used their gardens for private purposes at some points, and for public interactions at other times. Lisa Nevett has argued for the "flexibility in the use of space at Pompeii," citing the "occurrence of artefacts and/or architectural features used for two or more different activities in the same physical area," the fact that "evidence for the same activity is sometimes found in two or more different areas," and finally the "apparent incompatibility in the activities suggested by the architecture and decoration of a space, and the objects found there."[156] It is clear from the archaeological evidence that public sanctuaries in the Greek and Roman world held a variety of functions, including serving as areas of entertainment, social exchange, and areas of social competition.[157] Why should domestic space not also be able to hold multiple functions? By taking this methodological approach, one is able to consider the various types of social interaction that involved these structures and the types of people who would have come into visual contact with them.

Archaeologically, *nymphaea* fulfill many of the criteria proposed by Renfrew for identification of sites of religious ritual activity.[158] The relational spatial analysis suggests that they were specifically positioned in areas that would be centers of focus in the home. Images of gods, figures such as Silenus, and the symbolic ornamentation that recalls homes of the nymphs

[155] Jashemski (1979, 102) found loom weights in every garden she excavated. Allison (2004, 87-90) discusses the various domestic material found in chests in the ambulatories of gardens, such as evidence for utilitarian objects and vessels for cooking or food preparation. Allison concludes that the gardens in her 2004 study shows evidence that they were used for various functions, including "formal entertainment, religious activities, agricultural production, and storage, as well as utilitarian household activities" (Allison 2004, 90).
[156] Nevett 2010, 98-113.
[157] Alcock 1993, 172-173. Bradley (2005, 35) has likewise argued for further evidence in Prehistoric Europe of evidence of specialized activity of ritual that also contains artifacts associated with daily life.
[158] Renfrew 1985, 11-26.

demonstrate an attempt to represent the presence of the transcendent. Evidence of participation and offering are not preserved in the archaeological record, but it is easy to conceive how the ancient Romans could have interacted and possibly actively participated in offerings near or in these structures. Several of the *nymphaea* are located next to or are connected to dining rooms or outdoor triclinia. Feasting, eating, and drinking are signs of participation and offering.[159] One could imagine the *pater familias* pouring a libation into the fountain in an act of giving thanks before eating. Indeed, the fountain itself could have served as a symbol for constant libations to the gods and mythical figures that protected the garden and the home. Water, continuously flowing as if by magic, in honor of the guardians and figures represented in the statues and decoration of the *nymphaea* could have served as its own form of offering. Shells could have been placed in, on, or near the *nymphaea* as offerings after meals. The lack of documented material remains partly due to the lack of interest in shell deposits during early excavations of the houses makes such conjectures impossible to validate, yet it is not inconceivable, given other shell deposits found within atria of other homes that shells could have been used as a type of offering that may not have left an easily recognizable pattern in the archaeological record. Shells decorate the *nymphaea*, even to this day, offering symbolic representation of possible offerings and of the sea from which they came.

Even without direct evidence of ritual activity, *nymphaea* are still religious in a way that is reminiscent of the manner in which sacral-idyllic wall painting[160] can be considered religious. In particular, the depiction of the "sacred grove," which Bettina Bergmann defines as "a sacred

[159] Renfrew 1985, 18-19. See also Foss (1997, 197-218) on rituals of cooking and eating in Roman houses. Robinson (2002, 93-99) also identified many burnt animal bones and food substances buried in gardens presumably as offerings.

[160] According to Silberberg-Peirce (1980, 242), sacral-idyllic landscape painting includes four main components: architecture, sacred implements and sculpture, figures of participants, and landscape and nature. Most contain some form of man-made feature like an altar, shrine, columns, tables with offerings, etc., but the presiding deity is not always identified. For more on sacral-idyllic painting, see also Leach (1988), Von Stackelberg (2009, 33) and Bergmann (1992), who talks about pastoral painting with religious scenes.

space in nature where one or more trees, distinctive earth forms such as caves and boulders, and water in springs or brooks are designated--by a structure, by various votive objects, and by attendant figures--for veneration," is very reminiscent of what is created through the placement of both *lararia* and *nymphaea* in domestic garden settings.[161] Bergmann suggests that in sacral-idyllic paintings of sacred groves, the conflict does not exist between nature and the artifice of the buildings, but between barriers and entrances to the sacred place.[162] In what Jaś Elsner calls "ritual-centered visuality," there exists an association of architecture and depictions of architecture used in religious rites, such as altars, with the idea that these features denote a "continuing site for the execution of traditional religion."[163] *Lararia* and *nymphaea* are architectural features that recreate sacred groves within domestic spaces. Surrounded by nature, these structures are similar to the structures in sacral-idyllic paintings that denote an area as sacred and create a visible cue to any visitors of the garden that the space should be viewed in a transcendent manner. Just as Bergmann argues that the "message of the painted groves does not concern a god but the human acts and gestures of piety toward the *numen*, or wilderness, of nature,"[164] so too does the construction of the *lararia* and *nymphaea* in domestic gardens represent an action of piety towards nature, often in a way that is unspecific to any one god, but rather to a variety of protective figures of the forest and sea.

Just as images of gods, temples, sacred groves, and religious items decorate the walls of Pompeian buildings in a fashion that brings the presence of the sacred into the homes, so too do

[161] Bergmann 1992, 23.
[162] Bergmann 1992, 24.
[163] Elsner 2007, 16.
[164] Bergmann 1992, 28. Kuttner (1999, 28-29) argues similarly that in the garden painting of Livia in the Primaporta room, there is an aspect of religion based on the garden room possessing a "numinous aura." However, Kuttner does not believe that divine epiphany is always the intent of garden rooms due to a lack of sculpture of gods in the paintings. However, I do not think that a lack of statues depicted on the walls suggests that there is a lack of desire for an epiphany. In the cases in Pompeii, garden paintings often surround real garden areas and an abundance of statues depicting various gods and mythical figures.

*nymphaea* make viewers think about spaces of religious rites. Although there is no evidence nor is it likely that Romans prayed to or made dedications to the images of gods in wall paintings, the act of having such sacred images painted upon the walls of their houses must have fulfilled some sort of protective need. Just as the symbol of the evil eye, images of Buddha, or the Christian cross are hung in modern homes as evocations of protection for the homeowners, sacral-idyllic wall painting and *nymphaea* may have held similar functions in acting as protective features that invoked the beneficence of nature and the gods.

The decoration of *nymphaea* also affected the ways in which individuals would have perceived these structures. The inclusion of the grotto-cave motif, marine themes, and even the aedicula façade are all indicative allusions to Greek public sanctuaries to the nymphs. Thus, the question of why Romans would have wanted to include elements of Greek public architecture in their homes arises. There are several possible social and political messages in this act of adapting Greek religious structures into Roman domestic contexts. Elaine Gazda has already addressed the question of the reception and copying of Greek forms in Roman art and sculpture, and she has argued persuasively that the Romans viewed the adoption of forms of earlier Greek art as a means to provide avenues for learning from the past to create "new inventions."[165] Similarly, other anthropological studies have shown that in times of political change, local elites often adopt forms of monumental architecture that reflect not only current trends, but also incorporate structural elements that allude to earlier, local traditions in an attempt to form their own sense of cultural identity.[166] Pompeii is a town with a history of various occupants, including traditional

[165] Gazda 2002, 14.

[166] For a similar study, see Stek (2005:148-149), who writes about how the Samnites Pentri adopted monumental architecture for the sacred sites in the third century in a more typically "Hellenistic" style and again at the end of the second century in a more typically "Roman" style temple that had previously been sites of open-air cults. Because the temples were built in a square plan that echoes Pentrian traditions and were placed in Pentrian sacred locations, Stek argues convincingly that they were meeting local needs and were reflections of the patrons and architects trying to recall the Samnite tradition as they reconstructed their Pentrian identity.

Italic tribes and Greek settlers.[167] Because *nymphaea* first occur specifically during the beginning of the Empire when new politics and religious reforms are taking effect,[168] the incorporation of older, Greek and Hellenistic models of religious space into existing forms of traditional Roman *lararia* suggests that the elite class was attempting to form its own cultural identity in the display of these fountains.

Another possibility is that these do not allude to the Greek sanctuaries specifically, but rather to the notion of the Roman sacred grove, recalling these past areas that were important to Roman Republican religion. Bergmann makes a similar argument about the pastoral wall paintings of sacred groves when she suggests that these images were a way to connect with sacred sites of the earlier Republic period during the transition from the late Republic and into the period of the early empire.[169] The positioning of *nymphaea* and garden *lararia* specifically within spaces of constructed nature recall the scenes found in sacral-idyllic wall paintings. Whether the *nymphaea* are meant to evoke specifically Roman sacred groves, Greek *nymphaea*, or, more likely, a combination of both, these water fountains seem to denote a sacred space like the architecture in many sacral-idyllic paintings and in a similar fashion to *lararia*, based on both their spatial positioning within the homes and their decorative materials.

Just as *nymphaea* change structurally over time and appear to incorporate both Greek and Roman religious architecture, the houses of Pompeii underwent various alterations in design. The

[167] During the Hellenistic period, there is evidence for Oscans, Romans, and Greeks all cohabiting in the city of Pompeii (Wallace-Hadrill 2010, 422).
[168] Leach (1988, 203) has discussed a similar phenomenon in painting and sculpture, stating that during the late Republic, Romans began incorporating "Hellenistic refinements that betokened the cultural self-consciousness of the powerful aristocracy blended with indigenous realism to produce a new artistic vocabulary of cosmopolitan individualism," and that this borrowing of Hellenistic models of art continued more strongly during the Augustan period as a form of visual propaganda for the new regime. Augustan temples especially contained forms of earlier Greek and Hellenistic art and architecture. Similarly, *nymphaea* are affected by this incorporation of Hellenistic and Classical forms in the emergence of new identity for the Romans living during the reign of emperors.
[169] Bergmann 1992, 32-34.

architecture of Pompeian houses is not "purely Roman,"[170] to the extent that such a homogenizing concept has any direct influence on cultural experience. The city of Pompeii has been home to Oscans, Etruscans, Greeks,[171] Samnites, and Romans through the centuries, a variety of collectives that each introduced to Pompeii their own practices, beliefs, and architectural changes.[172] Because of this history, Pompeian houses reflect these various social and political shifts in their architecture.

During the end of the first century B.C. and into the beginning of the first century A.D., Rome and all of its colonies were experiencing extreme political and social revolutions.[173] As the age of the Republic turned into one of the empire, the substance of what it meant to be Roman changed. Not only were the Romans undergoing a shift in government, but they were experiencing changes socially in their concepts of art, literature, and religion. The cultures of the territories they had conquered came, in turn, to affect Roman society in Italy. Moreover, a diversity of other cultural groups lived in Roman towns. By the destruction of the town in 79 A.D., Pompeian residents appear to have been composed of the old patrician class of Samnite

[170] In recent years, many scholars have been reevaluating the concepts of "Romanness" and "*Romanitas,*" which suggests that there are visual signs that "through the apparent embodiment of Roman culture in its art and architecture (made explicit through the practice of Roman ritual in the domestic sphere), would immediately spark recognition in the Roman viewer" (Hales 2003, 5). Hales thinks Romans did not live in worlds with such black and white definitions, and while Romans didn't appear to strictly define themselves in Latin literature, the literary heroes proved themselves to be Roman through exhibiting the *mores* defined by tradition, which included the importance of the Roman *familia* and participation in public rituals and activities (2003, 5,11-17). Also see the discussion of "Romanness" by Wallace-Hadrill (2008, 78-105) and Revell (2009, ix-9).

[171] Wallace-Hadrill (2010, 416-417) argues that Pompeii was never a Greek colony, but instead under Etruscan influence. Maiuri (1937) argues the opposite due to the deposition of Greek pottery with Etruscan goods and the layouts of the "Greek" temples (Wallace-Hadrill 2010, 417). Regardless of whether it was the Etruscans or Oscans ruling Pompeii specifically, it is unlikely that the two groups were mutually exclusive in their influence (Wallace-Hadrill 2010, 417). Both groups interacted with the people in that area, leaving behind material evidence suggestive of both of their cultures.

[172] According to a history of Pompeii by both Maiuri (1937, 3-4) and Beard (2008, 35-43), the city was originally founded by the Oscans, who made an alliance with the Greeks ruling Naples in the sixth century B.C. in order to defend themselves against the Etruscans. In the fifth century B.C., the Samnites conquered Pompeii and held the area until the Samnite Wars against Rome, beginning in 310 B.C., during which time the Romans appear to have occupied the city. Pompeii revolted against Rome in 89 B.C., and in 80 B.C., the Roman general Sulla reconquered Pompeii and made it an official Roman colony, leaving behind many war veterans specifically to populate the town and to enforce Roman culture.

[173] Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 35-37, 208-210.

descent and the Roman families who had settled in Pompeii from the time of Sullan conquest onwards, as well as merchants and freedmen of Campanian, Greek and Asiatic origins.[174] This suggests that people of multiple backgrounds, statuses, and identities were attempting to identify themselves as Romans at a time when the idea of "Roman" was being redefined.[175]

The architecture preserved within Pompeian houses reflects the inhabitants' attempts to define themselves socially. Evidence for the repair and reconstruction of *nymphaea* over time speaks to their importance as prominent features in Pompeian homes. Dylan Rogers has made the compelling case that because ten of the twenty-five known examples of *nymphaea* date to the last years of the city (62-79 A.D.), when the earthquake had already caused plumbing issues and water was even more difficult to procure, the construction of *nymphaea* during these years indicates the importance of the structures.[176] The fact that they were either being built or rebuilt attests to their significance, as there is evidence in other houses with plumbing that once the water system stopped working, people often removed, rather than repaired, the pipes in their houses.[177] Some religious temples in the city, such as the Temple of Isis, were among the few buildings to have been repaired immediately after the earthquake, indicating that restorations and repairs were given priority to religious structures, while other structures that were functionally important, such as branches of the aqueduct lines, remained uncorrected.[178] The conscious choice to keep, adopt, or change elements of a house reflect the social and political changes of a society at a given time. When that society changes and redefines itself, the material record holds

[174] Maiuri 1937, 14.
[175] Even in modern scholarship, Louise Revell (2009, ix-9), Shelley Hales (2003, 5-17), and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (2008, 3-32) have discussed the problem in current archaeological practice with terms such as "Roman" and "Romanization" that presuppose a homogeneous culture without local variation or an account of specific time.
[176] Rogers 2008, 92.
[177] See Jones and Robinson (2005, 703-704) for examples of the bath complexes where the pipes were purposefully removed and the old bathing areas were turned into other types rooms in the *Casa del Menandro* and the *Casa delle Vestali* after the earthquake destroyed the plumbing.
[178] Laurence 1994, 35-36.

evidence of individuals attempting to either accept or reject the new modes of collective identification.[179]

Specifically, ritual activity and religion are key aspects of cultural identity in the ancient world. Several scholars have focused on ritual and religious centers as places of political and social gathering that reinforce and produce a particular type of identity for those who participate in the gatherings.[180] Scholars such as Susan Alcock and Tesse Stek have advocated for spatial analysis of cult sanctuaries and their geographic distributions in order to better understand larger questions about identity.[181] Although the context of the present study is on a smaller scale than either of these studies and deals specifically with the domestic sphere, the methodological approach of utilizing spatial analysis to examine evidence of social and political change can likewise be applied to domestic shrines.[182]

Thus, a spatial analysis of domestic *nymphaea* and *lararia* shows how both features held social and religious messages that were important to Roman culture. Just like the *lararia*, which held family gods to whom the parents prayed for the conception of children, the growth of sons into manhood, and the marriage of daughters,[183] *nymphaea* can also be perceived as possible shrines that invoked the protective nature of nymphs and Silenus, figures who were in charge of the safeguarding of brides, fertility, and the rearing of children. In this manner, *nymphaea* appear to have a similar religious meaning to *lararia*.

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[179] Tesse Stek (2005,147) has persuasively argued that archaeologists should attempt to examine ideas about how people form their identities "by studying, on the one hand, the appropriation, instrumentalisation or rejection of new elements and, on the other, the assertion, re-invention or abandonment of 'traditional' elements, all within the order to study perceptions of a changed world."

[180] Alcock 1993; Stek 2005. Also see the articles in the volume edited by Wescoat and Ousterhout 2012 that address specifically architecture as part of sacred space and analyze how architecture affects and creates spaces of ritual.

[181] Alcock 1993, 173; Stek 2005, 148.

[182] For studies that deal specifically with domestic Roman religions, see Bodel 2008 and Barrett (forthcoming) for domestic rituals in Greco-Roman Egypt.

[183] Jashemski 1979b, 119.

The incorporation of religious features that were originally found only in nature into domestic cult also holds a message about the power of the homeowner.[184] In the garden, humans reproduced the landscape of the gods. Libations would have overflowed to the gods as the mosaic fountains spill their water onto the ground. In molding the space of their homes to reflect their new identities under a government ruled by emperors, homeowners sought to bring together the historical ties to nature that were emphasized during the Republican period with the growing urbanism of the empire.

As the architecture of Pompeii grew more grandiose and baroque over time, modest house shrines morphed into larger structures, and the *nymphaea* grew larger and more elaborate as well. In Pompeii, the base of domestic religion that was inherently tied with Roman political beliefs thus took on new forms as the political situation of Italy changed. In the foundation of the empire, Augustus gave local populations the opportunity to reassert their Republican Roman-ness by being pious and demonstrating their piety specifically through public building programs which he and various other wealthy members of society financed around the empire.

In the domestic sphere, aristocrats attempted to reinforce their traditional Roman views of piety in this new affirmation of religious devotion and monumentalized their *lararia* and *nymphaea*, reflecting the monumentalization and public temple remodeling occurring under the new era of political and religious reform. While Augustus may have spoken against *otium* and opted for *negotium*, he also lived directly next to the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine,[185] and the expense given to shrines of gods did not appear to be a sign of *otium* in his eyes. The

[184] Hales (2003, 158) suggests that the Roman peristyle is an attempt to show control over nature; however, her argument that all the garden paintings suggest a desire of the homeowner to represent himself as master over nature and the mysteries of the divine in that space (2003, 158-160) seems a bit of a stretch. Rather, I would argue that an invitation of nature and the divine to protect and enter the home is reflected in such melding of man-made and elements of the natural.

[185] Hales 2003, 64. Suet. *Aug.* 29.3. Augustus also had the fire of Vesta relocated here from the Forum; see Hales (2003, 64) and Ov. *Fasti.* 4.951-4.

example that he set by having his house connected to the Temple to Apollo may also suggest that displays of wealth in the name of piety were encouraged, and therefore that the monumentalization of house shrines was a point of pride. As future emperors came into power, this trend of monumentalization continued. This allowed wealthy individuals to show both prosperity and status under the guise of religion; this, however, does not detract from the fact that features such as *lararia* and domestic *nymphaea* in Pompeii would have retained their religious nature, as evidenced by the examples of votive and burnt offerings found in garden *lararia* and garden altars. Through a relational spatial analysis, it is possible thus to examine the role of *nymphaea* as structures related to *lararia* and the social and political implications of their religious nature.

# APPENDIX

Table 1: Raw Data From Sample of *Lararia* and *Nymphaea* in Pompeii

| House Number | House Name | *Nymphaea* or *Lararia* | Location in house | Visible from the street? | Painted or Structural or Niche | Additional References |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.7.7 | *Casa del Sacerdos Amandus* | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Niche | *PPM* I 1990, 586-618; Boyce 1937, 25. |
| 1.8.17 | *Casa del quattro stili* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No (niche is visible from entryway, but not positioned so that one can tell it's a *lararium*) | Niche | *PPM* I 1990, 847-913; Giacobello 2008, 232. |
| 1.10.4 | *Casa del Menandro* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* II 1990, 240-397; Boyce 1937, 27-28; Giacobello 2008, 232. |
| | | *Lararium* | Room connected to peristyle | No | Structural | *PPM* II 1990, 240-397; Boyce 1937, 28. |
| | | *Lararium* | In small room under stairs off of atrium in N.W. corner of Atrium | No | Niche | *PPM* II 1990, 240-397; Boyce 1937, 28. |
| 1.10.7 | *Casa del Fabbro* | *Lararium* | Triclinium | No | Niche | *PPM* II 1990, 398-420; Boyce 1937, 29. |
| 1.11.15 | *Casa del Primo Piano* | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Painted | *PPM* II 1990, 614-653. |
| 2.8.6 | *Casa del Giardino di Ercole* | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 325-328; Jashemski 1979a, 403-411. |

Table 1 (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.9.5 | *Casa del Triclinio Estivo* | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 329-337; Jashemski 1979b, 41,176-177, 239. |
| | | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Niche | *PPM* III 1990, 329-337; Jashemski 1979b, 41,176-177, 239. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | yes (back entrance) | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 329-337; Neuerburg 1960, 217; Jashemski 1979b, 41,176-177, 239; Rogers 2008, 97-98. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | yes (back entrance) | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 329-337; Neuerburg 1960, 217; Jashemski 1979b, 41,176-177, 239; Rogers 2008, 97-98. |
| 5.1.7 | *Casa del Torello* | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Niche | *PPM* III 1990, 481-532; Boyce 1937, 32. |
| | | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Niche | *PPM* III 1990, 481-532. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Peristyle | Yes | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 481-532; Neuerburg 1960, 218-219; Rogers 2008, 98. |

Table 1 (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1.26 | *Casa di Caecilius Iucundus* | *Lararium* | Room connected to peristyle | Yes | Niche | *PPM* III 1990, 574-620. |
| | | *Lararium*? | Atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* III 1990, 574-620. Boyce 1937, 33. |
| 6.6.1 | *Casa del Pansa* | *Lararium* | Kitchen | No | Niche | *PPM* IV 1990, 357-361; Boyce 1937, 46-47; Fröhlich 1991, 276. |
| 6.7.23 | *Casa di Apollo* | *Lararium* | room southeast of vestibule leading to garden (Kitchen?) | No | Niche | *PPM* IV 1990, 470-524; Boyce 1937, 48; Fröhlich 1991, 277. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Triclinium? | No | Structural | *PPM* IV 1990, 470-524; Rogers 2008, 99. |
| 6.8.5/3 | *Casa del Poeta Tragico* | *Lararium* | Garden with peristyle | Yes (both entrances) | Structural | *PPM* IV 1990, 527-603; Boyce 1937, 48-49. |
| 6.8.22 | *Casa della Fontana Grande* | *Nymphaeum* | Garden with peristyle | Yes | Structural | *PPM* IV 1990, 613-620; Neuerburg 1960, 222-224; Rogers 2008, 99-100. |
| 6.8.23 | *Casa della Fontana Piccola* | *Nymphaeum* | Garden with peristyle | Yes | Structural | *PPM* IV 1990, 621-659; Neuerburg 1960, 225-226; Rogers 2008, 100-101. |

Table 1 (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.12.2,5,7 | *Casa del Fauno* | *Lararium* | peristyle | No | Niche | *PPM* V 1990, 80-141; Boyce 1937, 51-52. |
| | | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Niche | *PPM* V 1990, 80-141; Boyce 1937, 51-52. |
| | | *Lararium* | Kitchen | No | Niche | *PPM* V 1990, 80-141; Boyce 1937, 52. |
| 6.14.43 | *Casa degli Scienziati* | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Niche | *PPM* V 1990, 426-467; Boyce 1937, 54; Fröhlich 1991, 279. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | Yes | Structural | *PPM* V 1990, 426-467; Neuerburg 1960, 230-231; Rogers 2008, 101-102. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Atrium | Yes | Structural | *PPM* V 1990, 426-467; Neuerburg 1960, 232; Rogers 2008, 102. |
| 6.15.8 | *Casa del Principe di Napoli* | *Lararium* | Garden | Yes (from second entrance that looks at garden, not entrance into atrium) | Structural | *PPM* V 1990, 647-679; Boyce 1937, 55. |

Table 1 (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.16.7 | *Casa degli Amorini Dorati* | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Structural | *PPM* V 1990, 714-846; Boyce 1937, 57-58. |
| | | *Lararium* | Peristyle | No | Painted | *PPM* V 1990, 714-846; Boyce 1937, 56-57; Fröhlich 1991, 281. |
| 6.16.15 | *Casa della Ara Massima* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No | Niche | *PPM* V 1990, 847-886; Boyce 1937, 58-59; Fröhlich 1991, 281-282. |
| 7.2.45 | *Casa dell'Orso* | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | Yes | Structural | *PPM* VI 1990, 742-785; Neuerburg 1960, 235-236; Rogers 2008, 103-104. |
| 7.3.6 | | *Lararium* | Garden? | Yes | Structural | *PPM* VI 1990, 838-845; Boyce 1937, 63. |
| 7.4.31 | *Casa dei Capitelli Colorati* | *Lararium* | Room off of atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* VI 1990, 996-1107. |
| | | *Lararium*? | Cellar | No | Painted | *PPM* VI 1990, 996-1107; Fröhlich 1991, 287. |
| 7.4.56 | *Casa del Granduca di Toscana* | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | Yes | Structural | *PPM* VII 1990, 44-62; Neuerburg 1960, 237-238; Rogers 2008, 104. |

Table 1 (Continued)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7.4.57 | *Casa dei Capitelli Figurati* | *Lararium* | Garden | No | Structural | *PPM* VII 1990, 63-92; Boyce 1937, 66. |
| 9.1.20 | *Casa del Diadumeni* | *Lararium* | Room off atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* VIII 1990, 916-955. |
| 9.1.22 | *Casa di Epidius Sabinus* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* VIII 1990, 956-1044; Boyce 1937, 80. |
| 9.3.5 | *Casa di Marco Lucrezio* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* IX 1990, 141-313; Boyce 1937, 83. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Garden | Yes | Structural | *PPM* IX 1990, 141-313; Neuerburg 1960, 242-243; Rogers 2008, 106. |
| 9.8.3/6 | *Casa del Centenario* | *Lararium* | Room thought to be in servants quarters area, southwest of peristyle (function unknown) | yes (from back entrance, not main entrance) | Structural | *PPM* IX 1990, 903-1104; Boyce 1937, 89-90; Fröhlich 1991, 297. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Room connected to triclinium (room devoted to the *nymphaeum*) | Yes | Structural | *PPM* IX 1990, 903-1104; Neuerburg 1960, 247-248; |
| 9.14.2,4 | *Casa di M. Obellius Firmus* | *Lararium* | Atrium | No | Structural | *PPM* X 1990, 361-500. |
| *Villa Ercolano* | *Villa della Colonne a Mosaico* | *Lararium* | Room with unknown function opposite of north entrance | No | Structural/Niche | Boyce 1937, 97; Fröhlich 1991, 300. |
| | | *Nymphaeum* | Garden? | Yes | Structural | Neuerburg 1960, 249-250; Rogers 2008, 108. |

Table 2: Garden *Nymphaea* and *Lararia* Lines of Sight for Atria, Dining Areas, and House Entrances

| **Can be seen from the** | **Garden *Nymphaea* (total:8)** | **Garden *Lararia* (total: 8)** |
|---|---|---|
| House Entrance, Dining Area, and Atrium | *Casa della Fontana Grande, Casa degli Scienziati, Casa di Marco Lucrezio* | *Casa del Poeta Tragico* and *Casa VII.iii.6* |
| House Entrance only | *Villa della Colonne a Mosaico* | |
| Dining Area and House Entrance | *Casa del Triclinio Estivo* | *Casa del Principe di Napoli* |
| Dining Area only | | *Casa del Giardino di Ercole* |
| House Entrance and Atrium | *Casa della Fontana Piccola, Casa dell Granduca di Toscana, Casa dell'Orso* | |
| Atrium only | | *Casa del Sacerdos Amandus* |
| None of the Above | | *Casa del Primo Piano, Casa del Triclinio Estivo, Casa dei Capitelli Figurati* |

Table 3: Garden *Nymphaea* and *Lararia* Lines of Sight Ratios for "Public" Areas

| **Visible from:** | **Garden *Nymphaea*** | **Garden *Lararia*** |
|---|---|---|
| House Entrance | 8 out of 8 | 3 out of 8 |
| Dining Area | 4 out of 8 | 4 out of 8 |
| Atrium | 6 out of 8 | 3 out of 8 |
| None of the Above | 0 out of 8 | 3 out of 8 |


Figure 1: Example of Relational Spatial Analysis Views from Rooms in the *Casa degli Scienziati* (Plan after *PPM* V 1990, 426; Photos by author)

Figure 2: Structural *Nymphaeum* in the *Casa della Fontana Piccola* (Left) and Structural *Lararium* in the *Casa del Poeta Tragico* (Right) with similar aedicula facades (Photos by author)

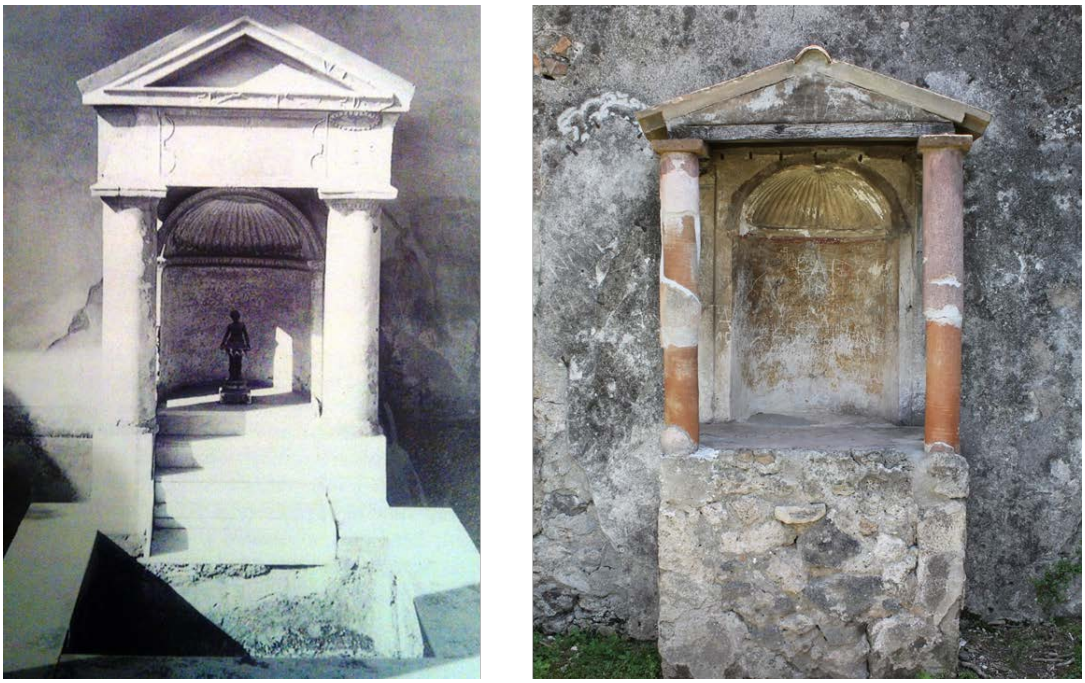

Figure 3: Decorative Shell Motif on the *Nymphaeum* in the *Casa di Efebo* (Left, from Jashemski 1993, 93) and the *Lararium* in *Casa VII.iii.6* (Right, photo by author)

Figure 4: Grotto Pumice Decoration in the *Nymphaeum* in the *Casa del Granduca di Toscana* (Photo by author)

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