Contested Spaces

Edited by
DAVID L. BALCH and
ANNETTE WEISSENRIEDER

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament
285

Mohr Siebeck

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament

285

Contested Spaces

Houses and Temples in Roman Antiquity and the New Testament

Edited by
David L. Balch and
Annette Weissenrieder

Mohr Siebeck

David L. Balch, born 1942, Professor of New Testament, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary/Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley; Ph.D. Yale University. He has just been given a Festschrift: Aliou Cissé Niang and Carolyn Osiek, eds., *Text, Image, and Christians in the Graeco-Roman World: A Festschrift in Honor of David Lee Balch* (Princeton Theological Monograph; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012) with three sections: 9 articles on house churches, 6 on constructions of the "other," and 6 on constructions of visual worlds.

Annette Weissenrieder, born 1967; Ph.D. at the University of Heidelberg; currently working as Associate Professor of New Testament at San Francisco Theological Seminary/Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley; Affiliate Member of Doctoral Faculty at the Center of Jewish Studies at Berkeley.

eISBN 978-3-16-152026-6
ISBN 978-3-16-151026-7
ISSN 0512-1604 (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament)

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at *http://dnb.d-nb.de*.

The book was typeset by Martin Fischer in Tübingen, printed by Gulde-Druck in Tübingen on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Spinner in Ottersweier.

Printed in Germany.

Preface

At first it may seem trite to observe that every society organizes its social, political, and religious spaces in a manner that corresponds to its own unique fundamental values. This is the case for house types in antiquity, as also for pagan temples, trade associations, and religious groups. The correlation of types of space – including, for example, their furniture and ancient art – with particular communities gives information about self-understanding and internal communal relationships, and is, therefore, the object of numerous archaeological studies. Even when most New Testament research does not work explicitly with archaeology, nevertheless, many such studies make assumptions about the types of space connected with the social histories they reconstruct, assumptions that are, however, seldom consciously articulated.

Three examples suffice. Decisions about kinds of space influence New Testament scholars' understanding of conflict around the Lord's Supper in Corinth. Is the conflict grounded in the lack of space in "private" houses, so that the poor are relegated to atria at the entrance, while the rich recline in elite *triclinia* deeper inside the house? What types of houses were there in Greece and Rome? To what extent were individual rooms and their functions fixed? To what extent were religious values and experiences reflected in the art and architecture of these houses? A second example: Luke's narrative expresses central theological topoi through characters at meals. To what extent are ancient seating/reclining customs reflected in this gospel? Did women customarily recline with the men? Where did women sit or recline, and what behavior was expected of them? Finally, New Testament scholars have generally polarized understandings of certain architectural forms, *domus* and *insulae*, the former characterized as residences of the wealthy structured hierarchically and the latter located in urban slums where residents experienced equality. This particular understanding of polarized domestic spaces yields related reconstructions of congregational sizes, ethics, and leadership. Might further study of these domestic spaces alter our reconstructions of Roman congregations, both in the capital and in Roman colonies like Corinth and Philippi?

Through this volume we hope to stimulate increased dialogue between New Testament and patristics scholars, on the one hand, and Italian (Umberto Pappalardo, Rosaria Ciardiello, Mario Grimaldi, Ivan Varriale, Maria

Paola Guidobaldi, and Fabrizio Pesando), Austrian (Hilke Thür and Ulrike Muss), English (Janet DeLaine), German (Monika Bernett), and American (Eleanor Winsor Leach, John R. Clarke, Tina Najbjerg, Laura Salah Nasrallah and L. Michael White) historians of Roman art and archaeology, on the other.

These few questions suggest that particular types of spaces are decisive for the interpretation of New Testament texts and urban congregations. Nevertheless, scholars have neglected space and focused on time, until the nineteen nineties brought the so-called "spatial turn." This is the case not only for New Testament hermeneutics, but also for Ancient History in general. Fundamental is not only the classical differentiation between physical space, on the one hand, and social space, on the other,[1] but also the tension between an "absolute," passive understanding of space, a typology designating space for particular social events, and a relational, active understanding of space, in which actors generate their own spaces. The consequences of this second distinction are fundamental: the focus of research shifts from examining words and texts to questions of the physicality of space: walls, windows, doors, stairs, columns, frescoes, mosaics, and furniture. Space becomes the formal condition, the *conditio sine qua non*, as Simmel[2] can write. Such research focuses on the interrelationship between space and society. Typologies of space affect and condition actions. These relationships "are embedded in cultural paradigms open to change,"[3] with the consequence that spaces have different functions and meanings. Contemporary social scientific theories have therefore changed, given the recognition that spaces go through evolutionary development. Expressed differently, the ordering of space represents social order, or with Pierre Bourdieu, "habits make houses."[4] This book, however, does not thematize contemporary discussions about space; the following chapters rather assume this discourse.

Three concerns are expressed in the title, *Contested Spaces*: the first is archaeological, which aims to give specific insights into Roman domestic and sacred spaces. We examine these spaces in diverse geographies (e.g. Pompeii, Ostia, Ephesus, Corinth). What was a Roman domus (Ivan Varriale, Mario Grimaldi,[5] Hilke Thür), a villa (Umberto Pappalardo, Rosaria Ciardiello,

---

[1] M. Schroer, *Räume, Orte, Grenzen. Auf dem Weg zu einer Soziologie des Raums* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2006), 174–176.

[2] G. Simmel, *Soziologie. Untersuchung über die Formen der Gesellschaftung* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1908 = Gesamtausgabe Vol. 11; Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1999).

[3] A. Janson, "Institut für Grundlagen der Gestaltung," in *Fakultät für Architektur der Universität Karlsruhe (TH)* (Tübingen, 1999), 41.

[4] P. Bourdieu, "Physischer, sozialer und angeeigneter physischer Raum," in *Stadträume* (ed. M. Wentz; Frankfurt a.M./New York: Campus, 1991), 25–34, here 32.

[5] This volume contains articles explicating domus, insulae, and villae; to which category does Grimaldi's article belong? The Casa di Fabius Rufus illustrates the problems of defin-

Monika Bernett), an insula (Maria Paola Guidobaldi, Janet DeLaine)? Concepts of space include connections between outside and inside by colonnaded halls, the aesthetics of self-representation by upper or lower class symbols in both the materials and techniques of construction, as well as frescoes with nature visually represented, which dissolves oppositions between inside and outside; in the Augustan age all this expressed a completely new world. In the textual world we see this renewal and Romanization in Vitruvius' ten volumes of comprehensive architectural theory. Each of the chapters below assumes that actions and events, either individual or collective, are related to architectural and social space. To reach a wider audience, we have had some Italian and German contributions translated into English.

The second concern is to examine interrelationships between architecture and the experience of space, on the one hand, with social and religious experiences on the other. Several essays address the religious character of certain spaces (David Balch, Irene Bragantini, Tina Najbjerg, Annette Weissenrieder, Monika Bernett, Laura Salah Nasrallah, and L. Michael White).

A third concern is theological: this volume has its origin in a conference *Celebrating the Centenary of the Pontifical Biblical Institute* at the Pontifical Gregorian University, which was held in Rome in July, 2009. We express our gratitude to Prof. Frederick E. Brenk, S.J., who has assisted us over the years in Rome and who also helped arrange this particular seminar. The editors have requested some additional essays by scholars who could not attend the conference. We intend to make available an initial survey of religious spaces in the Imperial period that goes beyond contemporary national borders, and at the same time to bring different scholarly disciplines into conversation with each other. Both internationally known as well as a newer generation of scholars offered contributions at the conference, scholars from specialties in archaeology, ancient art, architecture, ancient history, and theology (New Testament), in order to give aspects of an archaeological survey of ancient spaces relevant to our leading questions. In some instances individual chapters go deeper, especially when new excavations are presented.

The production of this collection of essays is the result of close cooperative research between disciplines, especially in relation to visual materials. We

---

ing domestic space: it is one of fifteen luxurious domus in the Western Insula of Pompeii, built as a unit in the first century B.C.E, totaling c. 15,000 square meters; most of these domus have three or four floors, gardens, and terraces with panoramic views of the Mediterranean, the latter typical of coastal villae. See U. Pappalardo and M. Aoyagi, "L'insula occidentalis. una sintesi delle conoscenze," *Pompei (Regiones VI-VII) Insula Occidentalis* (eds. M. Aoyagi and U. Pappalardo; University of Tokyo Center for Research of Pictorial Cultural Resources; Naples: Valtend, 2006), 17–31, at 17.

thank especially the doctoral student Thomas Soden and Prof. Dr. Polly Coote for their consistent assistance, including the translation of the essay by PD Dr. Monika Bernett. We offer our gratitude also to Mohr Siebeck for their financial support of the translation of several essays from Italian into English. We are grateful to Dr. Jason T. Lamoreaux for the first two indices. We thank Jana Trispel and Dr. Henning Ziebritzki, the editors of the series, and especially Prof. Dr. Jörg Frey, for their competent guiding of this work to publication, their trust in the result, and their readiness to publish an unusual volume with a CD. Please accept our deepest gratitude!

July 2011

David L. Balch
Annette Weissenrieder

Table of Contents

This book contains a CD with pictures./The eBooks contains all pictures from the CD. Please go to "Pictures".

A. Interpretive Issues

Representations of Worship at Rome, Pompeii, Heraculaneum, and Ostia in the Imperial Period

A Model of Production and Consumption

John R. Clarke

Visual representations, like textual representations, do not record or document religious practices. Each of them is unique. A given representation of worship has a specific purpose. Operating as we are at a distance of two millennia, we can only partially understand the meanings encoded in any representation. Over the years scholars of ancient Roman visual culture have adopted various strategies to decode representations of worship. The least successful of these, to my mind, are approaches that take an image as prima facie evidence. I call this the approach of the "omniscient scholar-viewer."[1] The image of a ceremony of the cult of Isis, found in an unknown space at Herculaneum in the eighteenth century, might tempt the omniscient scholar to scour the ancient literature for references to Isis (fig. 1). She might decide that the painting fits with a description of the cult of Isis embedded in the *Golden Ass*, even though Apuleius wrote it about 100 years after the painting was covered by the eruption of Vesuvius.

Looking for resemblances between literary images and visual images, in fact, is standard practice. Never mind that Apuleius is writing a novel meant for a literate, elite public, and that the painter who created this image was decorating a wall with a picture. We don't even know whether this wall was in a temple or a private house, and we don't know what else the artist included in the decorative ensemble. Was it one of a kind or were there other pictures with it? In this case a second picture, also in the collection of the Naples Archaeological Museum, was found with it, but we have no information about the physical space.[2] We don't know who would have seen the picture or what a viewer might have known about the image.

---

[1] J. Clarke, *Looking at Laughter: Humor, Power, and Transgression in Roman Visual Culture, 100 B.C.–A.D. 250* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 109–20.

[2] V. Gasparini, "Iside a Ercolano: il culto pubblico," in *Egittomania: Iside e il mistero. Exh. Cat. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Oct. 12, 2006–Feb. 26, 2007* (ed. S. De

But our omniscient scholar is in a different position from an ancient Roman viewer. He has the entire preserved corpus of ancient texts referring to Isis, a huge series of volumes on oriental religions called *Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain (LESPROM)*, numerous other monographs on Isis, and the *corpora* of Greek and Roman inscriptions. He has at his disposal photographic archives organized by subject matter. Working from within this rich plenum of possibilities, a scholar might be inclined to decide on a meaning and come up with an interpretation of the image that flies up into the interpretative stratosphere, and few will take him to task for it. After all, the bibliographic references are all there. What can a scholar do in the face of interpretative practices that take visual representations on face value and assume that we can, at will, use all the ammunition in our scholarly arsenal?

The best chance to fix this problem is to work from a model that looks at production and consumption of visual imagery (fig. 2). This model, which I proposed in 2003, asks a series of questions that emphasize context understood in its broadest sense.[3] I begin with the questions of identity. Who is the patron? Who is the artist? Who is the viewer? These questions immediately focus on social status and gender, as do the other boxed elements questioning literacy and profession. My model also focuses on the circumstances of production and consumption. There are at least two actors in the production side: the person who paid for it (the patron) and the person who made it (the artist). On the consumption side there are many potential viewers, and each brings to the viewing different kinds of information, or cultural baggage if you will. What is more, these viewers will look at that visual representation under differing circumstances conditioned by variables of time and place.

Since this is a complicated model, in what follows I take it apart by asking one question at a time, with a special focus on visual representation with religious content.

Caro; Milan: Electa, 2006), 123–24 hypothesizes a continuity of action between inv. 8924 and inv. 8919. Both paintings well-illustrated in *Rosso Pompeiano: La decorazione pittorica nelle collezioni del Museo di Napoli e a Pompei. Roma, Museo Nazionale, Romano Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, 20 dicembre 2007–31 marzo 2008* (eds. M. Nava, R. Paris, and R. Friggeri; Milan: Electa, 2007), 151–52.

[3] J. Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.–A.D. 315* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 9–13.

1. Who paid for it?

We have sufficient textual information to be quite clear about who paid for two roughly contemporaneous altars at Rome: the well-known, much-studied Altar of Augustan Peace and a humble altar commissioned by four magistrates who were former slaves (fig. 3).

Scholars agree that the ultimate patron of the Ara Pacis is Augustus himself, although the Senate voted its construction. We might characterize the patron of the Ara Pacis as the Roman Senate controlled by Augustus. Paul Zanker focuses on its imagery as the quintessential expression of the emperor's program of cultural renewal.[4] So, we have an elite patron, male in gender identification, seeking to use visual representation for specific aims. A far from complete list of these aims includes: representing his *pietas* by emphasizing his role as *pontifex maximus*; establishing his divine parentage by representing his ancestor, Aeneas, sacrificing at Lavinium; and demonstrating the effects of Peace in two ways: in the hybrid representation of Venus/Tellus/Italia/Pax/Ceres and in the representation of the exuberant growth of nature in the remarkably fecund acanthus decorations on the outside of the altar and the garlands with the fruits of all seasons on the interior of the altar.[5] Augustus presents dual proof of his legitimacy as ruler by showing his blood-line family following him to the altar's inauguration on one of the long enclosure walls with the political family of the senators on the opposite wall. Scholars have remarked on these and many more features of the Altar that remind us that Augustus was the patron and that he and his dynasty were the prime beneficiaries of its tendentious messages.[6]

It is interesting that the actual representation of the sacrifices that took place at the Ara Pacis appears not on the precinct wall but on the altar itself, in a small frieze running around its upper border. If we ask who are the principal viewers of this frieze, we would have to answer that they are the priests and Vestal Virgins in charge of the annual sacrifices, although the fact that the precinct wall had doors opening to reveal both the back and front of the altar made it possible for people to see more of the interior imagery than they could with just one door. People could have glimpses, perhaps, of the garlands decorating the precinct wall and the small sacrificial friezes on the altar itself. But on ordinary days these doors were closed, and the curious would have had to be content with views of the exterior.

---

[4] P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 167–83.

[5] D. Castriota, *The Ara Pacis Augustae and the Imagery of Abundance in Later Greek and Early Roman Imperial Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[6] Especially useful summary in K. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 141–55.

If we step back from this analysis of visual representation of worship and look at the big picture, we realize that the altar and its precinct constitute both the representation of worship and the place where one worshipped. But that place extends into meanings that go beyond thanking the gods for Augustus' safe return from war on July 4, 13 B.C.E. The altar is but one of a group of monuments that articulates the virtues of Augustus and the founding of his dynasty (fig. 4). Since Augustus is patron not only of the Ara Pacis but of the entire complex, we can expect all of these monuments to articulate one or more aspects of his imagery of legitimation.

Although my main question here is: Who paid for it? I can not resist asking: Who is the viewer? I can imagine a host of hypothetical Roman viewers. An elite woman, say, the wife of a Senator portrayed processing along the west precinct wall, would probably be able to identify not only her husband but the other Senators. (But not of course today, since the heads are modern restorations). She could also probably figure out who was who in the frieze of Augustus and his family – even though the frieze was high up: the enclosure wall rose to a height of 19 feet above the paving of the plaza. The unusual inclusion of children would have struck home as well, since Augustus had actually enacted legislation to encourage childbearing.

A very different kind of viewer, a freeborn woman, wife of a freeborn working man, might have understood why Augustus included children in the processional friezes, but it is unlikely she could have recognized (like our Senator's wife or omniscient scholar viewer) the members of the dynasty other than Augustus himself, whose images were everywhere. Her children, innocent of propaganda, would most likely have focused on all the creatures in the acanthus scrolls. What a viewer understands in an image depends on the variables: here social class, gender, age, and prior experience of the visual representation.

Back to the question: Who paid for it? – but this time with patrons who are definitely non-elite. The four freedmen who paid for the little altar found 25 feet beneath the modern Via Arenula were ward-captains, called *vicomagistri*; they kept watch over traffic, crimes, and fires (fig. 5). It is a monument to street-corner religion: the cult of the *Lares*, or protector deities not of the home but of the city ward, or vicus, named on the altar. It is the Vicus Aesculetus, one of 265 wards established by Augustus in 8 B.C.E.[7] But their most prestigious activity and the one represented on the altar was sacrificing to the Lares and to the *Genius* of Augustus. In the office of vicomagister, religion and civic duty merged.

[7] Pisani Sartorio, "Compitum Vici Aesc(u)leti," *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* 1 (1988): 316.

Who are these unlikely patrons? Imagery and inscriptions together provide clues to their identity. The four figures wear togas, indicating that they are citizens, either freeborn or freedmen. Since they are in the act of sacrificing, they have drawn an edge of the toga over their heads. This was a powerful image for the contemporary viewer, since it signified the virtue of *pietas* that Augustus promoted: Romans everywhere could see images of the emperor togate and *capite velato* throughout the city and the empire. That is how he appears on the Ara Pacis. The vicomagistri also wear laurel crowns, a central motif in Augustus's visual representations and the attribute that distinguishes the Lares depicted on each the altar's two sides from ordinary domestic Lares who instead carry a pail.

Yet our patrons are not senators or equestrians belonging to the elite priestly colleges like those represented on the Ara Pacis. The inscriptions inform us. An "L" appears in two of the names, meaning that the men are the *libertini* (former slaves) of their masters.[8] In return for their work of watching over their neighborhood's security, these men won the privilege of parading their status before their neighbors, accompanied by two lictors. In the relief the artist had space to show just one lictor, carved in low relief at the altar's left edge. Lictors also appear on the Ara Pacis, identified by the *fasces* (elm or birch rods bound together). The player of the *tibia*, or double oboe, occupies the center between our four vicomagistri.

Clearly this modest relief crows a bit in its imitation of important state religious ceremonies, considering that the vicomagistri's duties were local and discrete. Our patrons instructed the artist to give them the greatest prominence and to make them equal. The artist arranged them symmetrically on either side of the altar, their arms all outstretched to sacrifice. One wonders whether this is actually how they carried out the sacrifice. The man on the left holds a patera or offering plate, but did the man behind him hold a patera as well? Similarly, if the man in the front on the right is holding a grain of incense, did the man behind him repeat that offering? If the surfaces were less damaged, we could see whether the artist created a portrait likeness for each man, but otherwise the image is one of solidarity and equality in sharing their duties.

These unlikely patrons also instructed the artist to show a special aspect of this sacrifice: the offering of a bull to the Genius (or guardian spirit) of Augustus. Pigs are the proper offering to the Lares, as is well attested in other settings. A viewer would immediately identify the bull in the relief with the emperor.[9] So, the sacrifice carried out by our vicomagistri was

[8] Clarke, *Ordinary Romans*, 84, esp. n. 27.

[9] I. Scott Ryberg, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art*, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* (Bergamo: Istituto d'arti grafiche, 1955), 60.

much more complex and expensive than one a *paterfamilias* officiated over in his home.[10] We can imagine a crowd of people from the vicus watching the proceedings and eagerly anticipating a feast with abundant roasted meat. Note also that to accommodate the animals and the men who killed them the artist has had to make them smaller than our patrons.

Sometimes the ward officials were slaves. A case in point is the modest altar from the vicus Statae Matris, found on the Caelian hill in 1906. It commemorates the sixth year of the establishment of the cult, and bears the names of the four officials called *ministri* rather than *magistri*. The four vicomagistri were Felix, Florus, Eudoxsus, and Polyclitus. They record their names according to the usage for slaves of the Augustan period: their master's names follow their own in the genitive case. The year and date of the erection of the altar is 18 September 2 B.C.E., under the consuls named on the monument: L. Caninius Gallus and C. Fufius Geminus. It was a more economical monument than the Altar of the Vicus Aesculetus. Rather than a scene of sacrifice with figures, simple decorative emblems appear. The *corona civica* (oak leaf crown) appears on the front, where it encircles the names of the four slaves.[11] There is a patera on the back, and laurel branches substitute for the laurel-carrying Lares on the sides.[12] The fact of their slavery demonstrates how important it was to Augustus to enlist the piety and loyalty of the slaves in Rome.

What have we learned by asking the question: Who paid for it? For one thing, we see that self-representation as a pious individual is a value shared by the Emperor and the elites as well as former slaves and slaves. Public priesthoods are also important to these men. But if there is anxiety concerning the patrons' identity in non-elite altars, there is no trace of it in the Ara Pacis. Everyone knows who Augustus is, but even so he piles on references to his priestly office, his family, and his "extended family" – the senators who survived his bloody accession to power. On the little altar from the Vicus Aesculetus, the four former slaves vie for center stage, so much so as to crowd the relief, whereas the poorest commission, the Altar of the Vicus Statae Matris, deftly substitutes symbols (corona civica, patera, laurel branches) for narrative scenes even while emphasizing the patrons' names.

---

[10] T. Fröhlich, *Lararien- und Fassadenbilder in den Vesuvstädten: Untersuchungen zur "volkstümlichen" pompejanischen Malerei* (Römische Mitteilungen, Supplement; Mainz: von Zabern, 1991), 21–61.

[11] In 27 B.C. the senate honored Augustus with the *corona civica* and the *clipeus virtutis* for his *virtus*, *clementia*, *iustitia*, and *pietas*; they also gave him the right to hang laurel branches over the door to his house and honored him with laurel trees flanking his doorway: Augustus, *Res Gestae* 34.

[12] On slaves as magistri and ministri of the Genius of Augustus, see Y. Thébert, "The Slave," in *The Romans* (ed. A. Giardina, trans. L. Cochrane; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 163.

In the domestic sphere we find many lararia, most of them quite standard in their imagery. But several are unique and offer new insights into the question of patronage. Unique paintings in a house at Pompeii (I 13,2) identified as belonging to a certain Sutoria Primigenia add to our investigation of patronage the question of gender: does a woman patron represent worship differently from a male patron?[13] It seems she does (fig. 6). It is a relatively modest house, and the paintings in the kitchen, executed in the 60s or 70s C.E., provide a particularly eloquent testimony to the importance of religious observance in the household (figs. 7 and 8). Someone entering the kitchen (17 on the plan) would see a representation of the whole household, or *familia*, attending a sacrifice. Large figures of the Lares frame the scene. Next in size are the figures of Genius of the *paterfamilias* or head of the household – perhaps Sutoria's dead husband or other male relative – accompanied by the *Juno*, or guardian spirit of the woman of the house: Sutoria's guardian spirit. Both stand at an altar at the left. Just to the left of the altar are the tibicens playing the tibia. Only the Genius wears the toga, and of course since he is sacrificing, he has pulled its edge over his head. The Juno wears the proper garment of the Roman matron, the *stola*. All thirteen persons to the right face outwards in frontal pose and wear white tunics with short sleeves. And all hold their arms and hands in the same attitude. They hold the right arm to the chest while the left rests at the waist. An exception is the first person at left in the front row standing near the Genius, who must be the *camillus* or attendant. Beneath is a landscape genre scene, and around the niche for the lararium proper the artist has painted foodstuffs. At the bottom is the serpent, one of the good demons or *agathodaemones* that invariably appear approaching representations of altars in domestic lararia.

The patronage of Sutoria seems to account for the non-standard features of this lararium painting. She wanted to represent the *familia* at worship. Did she want to encourage piety among the slaves who would have gathered daily in this space to offer sacrifice to the Lares and the Genius of the household? Or did it constitute wishful thinking, since the kitchen is scarcely large enough to accommodate such a large gathering? Perhaps the scene records a special sacrifice of thanksgiving or celebration. Although it is impossible to determine the patron's purpose in representing the assembled familia in such a humble space, both its specificity and its elaborateness distinguish it from standard lararium paintings found throughout Pompeii.

Before we leave the question: Who is the patron? let us return briefly to the imperial sphere to see what happens as the persona of the emperor

[13] O. Bardelli Mondini, "I 13,2: Casa di Sutoria Primigenia," in *Pompei: Pitture e mosaici*, vol. 2 (ed. Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli, Rome: Treccani, 1990), 860–80; Fröhlich, *Lararien- und Fassadenbilder*, 261, L 29.

begins to change over time. The patron of the Column of Trajan is – as in the case of the Ara Pacis – the Emperor and Senate. But uniquely and exceptionally, the Column is also Trajan's tomb. Leaving aside the repetitions of Trajan's name, honors, and statues throughout the forum, the imagery of the helical frieze with some 2,500 figures and 154 recognizable scenes is not symbolic or allegorical. It presents itself as realistic and documentary: a history of the two campaigns of the Dacian wars (101–102 and 105–106). Or so it seems, but as scholars have long recognized, this putative narrative really consists of variations on six stock scenes.[14] The army journeys, then builds, then the emperor prepares for battle by sacrificing, then he addresses the troops. The army engages in battle. The sixth stock scene focuses on the enemy rather than on the Romans and their work: we see Dacian barbarians, brought as prisoners or coming as ambassadors to Trajan.

Most scenes of sacrifice all portray the *lustrum,* the cleansing of the camp and the army, a ceremony that challenged artists who had to represent both the circumambulation of the camp and the emperor's sacrifice of a pig, a sheep, and a bull, the *suovetaurelia*. In contrast to the Altar of Peace, where the representation of sacrifice is confined to the altar itself so that Augustus can foreground – through symbolic and historical representations – other ideological claims, the artist gives completely even treatment to the six stock scenes. He wants to show Trajan as the perfect military man, performing all the virtues of the perfect Roman. If the representations of worship show his pietas, his address to the army shows his *virtus* (manly virtue); his reception of the barbarians his clemency (*clementia*), and so on. And although they propel the story along, and the representations of worship are realistic, they contribute to the profile of the ideal emperor, always honoring the gods, and honored as a god and interred at the base of this very column: a fitting memorial for the emperor after his death.

2. How Does the Visual Representation Address the Viewer?

A slew of variables arise when we ask how an image addresses a viewer. Viewer address includes the questions of both place and time. Investigation of the location of a visual representation is fundamental to understanding its temporal dimensions, that is, when and under what circumstances a viewer might see it.

[14] K. Lehmann-Hartleben, *Die Trajanssäule: Ein römisches Kunstwerk zu Beginn der Spätantike,* vol. 1 (Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926).

It is archaeology that tells us about the location of the visual representation. If we are lucky, the image is still in situ and we can go see it for ourselves. Luck is on our side as well if when the excavator removed the visual representation and put it in a museum, like the Altar from the Vicus Aesculetus, he also left us a detailed report of where he or she found it and what else was around it. However, most objects removed from their context carry little information about their original location; in the case of the looted objects that fill our museums, we have no information at all.

A particularly good example of the importance of location in determining the meanings of representations of worship for ancient is a painting that, although badly damaged, is still in situ along the Street of Abundance at Pompeii, found in 1912 on the facade of a shop (fig. 9).[15] Although excavators were unable to explore the spaces behind the facade, what they found was remarkable: an ensemble of paintings that included: the four planetary gods (Sun, Jupiter, Mercury, and Moon); Pompeian Venus; and a detailed representation of a procession honoring the Great Mother of the Gods, Cybele. There was also an archaizing bust of Dionysus inserted into a niche to the right of the doorway.

Looking at this ensemble, the one element that tells us most about viewer address is the procession of Cybele because it shows human beings in cult activity (figs. 10–11). If the planetary deities set up a kind of cosmic architrave, it is to frame Jupiter, father of the gods, and Mercury, protector of commerce, between the sun and the moon. The painting of the heavily draped, corpulent Venus with Cupid at her side must represent the cult statue in the Temple of Venus near the Forum.[16] When Sulla conquered the Pompeii of the Samnites and made it a Roman colony in 80 B.C.E., he dedicated the city to Venus.

It is the remarkable representation of a second statue of a maternal deity that forms the focus of the painting on the right of the entrance. It is a wooden statue used in processions, still resting on its bier or *ferculum* – not a Roman goddess but an import from Phrygia in Asia: Cybele, also known as Magna Mater Deum. The four bearers have just set the ferculum down.

The statue is about twice life-size, set off by a green backdrop covered with red stars. Cybele wears a dress of deep purple and a mantle, with a crown in the shape of city walls to symbolize her role as protector of the city. In her left hand she holds a long golden branch with thin leaves at the top and a golden patera in her right. In the crook made by her left arm is a tambourine; there are two little lions at her feet. Today the painting has suf-

[15] V. Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce degli scavi nuovi di via dell'Abbondanza (anni 1910–1923)*, vol. 1 (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1953), 213–242, figs. 144, 145, 241, 242; G. De Petra, "Pompei: Scavi di antichità," *Notizie degli Scavi* (1912): 110, fig. 7; 138, fig. 1.

[16] Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce*, 1, figs. 216–17.

fered much damage, so that the net of prophecy covering her lap is no longer visible. It is an attribute Cybele shares with oracular divinities including Dionysus, Apollo, and Artemis-Hecate.[17]

In fact, the artist included one of these oracular divinities, Dionysus, in a novel way by inserting a marble bust of the god in a niche at the left. Between these two representations of cult images we find all of the devotees save the two musicians to the left of Dionysus represented in a smaller size than the others because of their lesser importance. To the right we see the four bearers who have just set down the ferculum (figs. 13–16). All wear long white tunics partly covered by long red bibs that hang from shoulders to knees.[18] They still hold the canes they used to help bear the statue's weight.[19]

In the front row are the three principal actors, all wearing ample white tunics decorated with red stripes. The officiating priest (11) holds out both hands. In his right hand he holds a little green twig and an object that may be an oil lamp or flask, and in his left a gold patera. The man to his left who turns to him must be his assistant, for he carries a *cista,* the reliquary containing the objects sacred to Cybele's cult on his left shoulder. To his left is the tibicen (6) turning his instrument toward the bust of Dionysus in the niche at far left.

Immediately behind the celebrant are two women who stand out a bit from the others: one wears a vegetal crown and a robe the color of Cybele's and she carries special attributes: a branch in her right hand and a patera in her left (12). One scholar identifies her as the first priestess of Cybele.[20] Her companion (10), on the other side of the celebrant and wearing a green dress, looks intently at the cista; she may be the second priestess of the Pompeian cult.[21] Interesting for our question of how the painting addressed the viewer is the fact that so many of the assembled devotees play musical instruments: tambourines, cymbals, the pan pipes, and the double oboes. As far back as Plato we find mention of the powerful effect of the "Phrygian harmony" on those who heard it.[22] We can practically hear the sound of the proces-

[17] Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce*, 1, figs. 216–17; A. and M. de Vos, *Pompei Ercolano Stabia*, Guide archeologiche Laterza (Rome: Laterza, 1982), 111.

[18] Also seen in the dress of Persians in the painting in oecus *g*, west wall, west part, of the House of Octavius Quartio: Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce*, 1, figs. 262–63.

[19] For a fragment of a relief from Capua with Cybele's ferculum bearers using canes, see Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce*, 1, fig. 261.

[20] Spinazzola, *Pompei alla luce*, 1, figs. 234–35; at nearby Beneventum there was a priestess (*sacerdos*) and an assistant priestess (*consacerdos*), *CIL* 10, 1542, 1541.

[21] For the complex hierarchy of priests and priestesses in the cult of Cybele, see H. Graillot, *Le culte de Cybèle, mère des dieux à Rome et dans l'Empire Romain* (Biblothèque des Écoles françaiseses d'Athènes et de Rome ; Paris, 1912), 226–61; he provides a long list of priestesses from preserved inscriptions, 248–49, n. 1.

[22] Plato *Republic* 3.399–399c.

sion that has just ended here, as the bearers have set the statue down and, it seems, the high priest prepares to carry out the rites of Magna Mater. If we remember the rocky history of this cult, from the time the Roman Senate invited Cybele to Rome in 204 B.C.E. to the various suppressions of the cult until the emperor Claudius officially permitted citizens to become priests in C.E. 50, we can imagine a range of reactions to this painting on Main Street. Elite citizens – senators and lawyers – repeatedly call for bans on cult practices, such as the noisy, exuberant, and licentious dancing and music that accompanied Cybele's processions and rites, and above all the practice of self-castration by priests of the cult, the *Galli*.[23] The Galli entered Rome along with the sacred meteorite from Pessinus; their self-castration imitated that of the goddess's beloved, Attis, who made himself a eunuch in devotion to Cybele.[24] It took Rome several hundred years to accept priests who compromised their legal identity as men by becoming eunuchs. Epigraphic evidence shows that even the head priests, the *Archigalli*, were ex-slaves well into the third century C.E.[25]

Equally difficult for elite Roman men was the attraction that Cybele's cult had for women. Traditional state religion allowed women only minimal roles: elite women could become Vestals; at Pompeii we have two priestesses of Venus, Eumachia and Mamia. So our humble street-front painting is an important indicator of non-elite women's participation in the very public, showy, and noisy cult of Cybele. The patron instructed the artist to represent six women – two of them possibly priestesses – among the entourage of sixteen. What is more, the artist set up the painting to emphasize Cybele's alliance with two Roman deities who were important to women: Dionysus and the local maternal deity, Venus Pompeiana.

The location of this painting on a busy public street beautifully complicates the answer to the question: Who is the viewer? One of Pompeii's elite citizens might think: These crazy people, can't they be content with the state deities? And they're so noisy and undignified. A female devotee of Cybele would get up close to see if she could make out the features of the priest and, above all, the priestesses, hoping that some day she could enter the inner circle of the cult. The actor, Gaius Norbanus Sorex, might think this tiny painting on the crowded street insignificant – nothing to compare

[23] Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* 2.600–28; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 2.19.3–5; Juvenal, *Satires* 6.511–21.

[24] Catullus 63; A. Nock, *Essays on Religion in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 1, figs. 7–12; E. Simon, "Menander in Centuripe," *Sitzungsberichte der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main* 25, 2 (1989): 60–61.

[25] M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1, 261, n. 49.

with the recently restored temple of Isis where his own bronze portrait was displayed along with an inscription recording his achievements.[26]

A painting found in 1827 on the facade of a shop on the Street of Mercury, and removed soon after its discovery to the Naples Museum, provides an image of a ferculum with six bearers (fig. 12). It demonstrates the need for the question: "Seen with what other images?"[27] Unlike the shop of the procession of Cybele, where we can still locate all the images that accompanied it through on-site investigation supplemented by archival photographs, we only have vague written descriptions of the original location of the Naples painting on the facade of the building. This remarkable painting shows the bearers dressed in their carpenters' tunics, carrying a ferculum with a statue of their patron goddess Minerva (only partially preserved at the left), a tableau of carpenters at work, and a representation of the male patron, Daedalus, standing over the body of Perdix. What is fascinating about this representation is its specific connection of worship to work. If the representations on the shop of the procession of Cybele made the excavator believe that it was not a shop but rather the entrance to a sanctuary of the goddess, there is no mistake that this was a carpenters' shop (fig. 13). Written accounts of the long-gone paintings remind us that representations of deities also functioned as good-luck charms. We read, for example, that in the doorway at 9 a viewer would have seen Mercury and Fortuna facing each other on the door jambs. The patron wanted to balance the god of commerce with Lady Luck.

Written accounts of the now-lost paintings also remind us that the painting program repeated images of the two patron deities of the carpenters and their craft. To the left of doorway 9 a viewer saw an Image of Minerva, armed, like the Minerva on the ferculum, with shield and spear. The excavator tells us that the artist depicted Minerva offering a libation on the altar assisted by a young girl. And just opposite the procession image Daedalus appeared a second time, in the act of making his most famous wonder, the wooden cow that Pasiphae ordered. Perhaps it looked like the painting of the subject from the north wall of oecus *p* of the House of the Vettii at Pompeii.

Although the details are impossible to check today, this ensemble has a different flavor from the shop of the procession of Cybele, with its clear appeal to religious syncretism: planetary deities, the local Venus, Dionysus, and a representation of the worship of Cybele. The mixture of images on the facade of the carpenters' shop only makes sense if we consider the

[26] A. Mau, *Pompeii: Its Life and Art* (rev. ed. F. Kelsey; London: Macmillan, 1902), 176.

[27] Bibliography in Fröhlich, *Lararien- und Fassadenbilder*, 320–21; see also I. Bragantini, "VI 7,8.12: Bottega del Profumiere," in *Pompei: Pitture e mosaici*, vol. 4 (Rome: Treccani, 1993), 389–98.

owner's profession. What emerges is a fascinating profile of how religious belief, coupled with a concern to ensure protection from harm, merged in the workplace. The owner wanted to proclaim his identity as a carpenter even while invoking the deities who protected his craft.

3. What Does the Viewer Know about the Representation?

Although there are many books and articles that have tried to crack the code of the Second-Style megalographic frieze in the Villa of Mysteries at Pompeii, the mysteries of Dionysus remain just that.[28] Rather than rehearsing the various attempts to pin down its meaning, I wish, instead, to focus on the distinction between what an initiate knows and what a non-initiate knows about the cult of Dionysus. I believe, along with many other scholars, that the patron and the artist were drawing from sources that presented the public pageants and tableaux of the cult.[29] What we see on the walls of this remarkable room would have been known to viewers who were non-initiates, but would have had special meaning for the initiates of the cult.

The frieze is, first and foremost, a decoration tailored to the space: a large entertainment room with two prized views out of it toward the Bay of Naples (fig. 14). For someone entering the room, the frieze encourages two viewing patterns: a fixed, timeless focus on the central image of Dionysus reclining on Ariadne's lap and a sequence (and therefore a narrative) that runs clockwise around the room (fig. 15). These two kinds of viewing – from the room's axis and clockwise – are the painter's solutions to fitting imagery to space. No matter how astounding the images are in themselves, this was the decoration of a U-shaped room with a major entryway from the portico, a minor doorway in its northwest corner where the clockwise sequence begins, and a large window interrupting the south wall.

Scholars who have assumed that the frieze is a copy have proposed various compositional schemes for the "original." However, if we look at the corners, we see how the artist designed the composition specifically for this space. How else can we explain the startled woman and the old Silenus with two Pans, the winged flagellator and her victim, and the bride at her toilet and the cupid? Reinhard Herbig's diagram of the figures' gazes illustrates the complex interactions among the figures themselves and between the

[28] For a variety of thought-provoking essays on the subject, see *Roman Art in the Private Sphere: New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa, and Insula* (ed. E. Gazda; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991).

[29] J. Clarke, *Houses of Roman Italy, 100 B.C.–A.D. 250: Ritual, Space, and Decoration*, 96–105.

figures and the viewer (fig. 16).[30] The meanings of the Mysteries Frieze must arise from the interrelationships expressed by these gazes; it must reside in the reciprocity established between these gazes, represented within the painting, and the individual viewer's gaze, whether he or she is an initiate or non-initiate.

Someone entering the room would have immediately focused on Dionysus and Ariadne proclaiming the theme of the room: the ecstasy of both Bacchic intoxication and love. But while Dionysus's *body* is casually, drunkenly open to our gaze, his face, with his upturned eyes focused on his lover, ignores the viewer. If we ask the question: What models did the artist have? we find ample evidence. This group of Dionysus and Ariadne shows up as a stock type in sculptures from the Hellenistic period.[31]

If a viewer wants to sort out the meaning of the frieze by looking for a sequence of actions, she will turn to the north wall, where a pattern of left-to-right reading begins. A veiled woman walks into the scene of a matron looking over the shoulder of a nude boy who reads from a scroll. A pregnant woman carrying a tray of offering cakes walks toward a scene of ritual washing, where a woman with her back to us draws a veil from a box held by a servant while another servant pour water over her right hand. A tableau of a Silenus playing the lyre and a Pan watching a Panisca give suck to a goat takes a viewer from the realm of these women's ritual performance to that of the mythical followers of Dionysus. The north wall ends with the imposing figure of a woman in violent contrapposto, her cloak billowing up behind her head, with her right arm thrown up in a gesture of surprise or terror. Although scholars have debated about what it is that terrifies her, she effectively carries the drama across the corner of the room to the back wall.

Two scenes frame the central image of Dionysus and Ariadne on the rear wall. A seated Silenus hold a cup while a young pan gazes into it and another holds up a comic mask. One and a half scenes complete the wall on the right of Dionysus and Ariadne: the unveiling of the sacred phallus – another stock motif that the artist would have known – and the figure of the demon-flagellator, poised to reach across the corner of the room to strike her victim on the south wall (fig. 17). Some scholars interpret the nude dancing woman as the flagellant rejoicing after her whipping. Following the break in the frieze made by the large window, a viewer takes in another corner composition: a

[30] R. Herbig, *Neue Beobachtungen am Fries der Mysterien-Villa in Pompeji: ein Beitrag zur römischen Wandmalerei in Campanien* (Deutsche Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 10; Baden-Baden: B. Grimm, 1958).

[31] For this type and other models known to the artist see J. Davis, "The Search for the Origins of the Villa of the Mysteries Frieze," in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient Ritual, Modern Muse.* Exh. Cat. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology October 1–November 19, 2000, (ed. E. Gazda; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 83–95.

woman at her toilet attended by two cupids, one holding up a mirror while the other, with bow in hand, admires her from the entryway wall. On the opposite entryway wall is the isolated figure, often called the *domina*, or mistress of the villa, surveying the frieze from a calm distance (fig. 18).

Through the evidence of both texts and parallels in other visual representations, scholars have been able to identify the meanings of most of the individual scenes. The very fact that scholars, at a remove of two millennia, can identify so many elements underscores the fact that we are not seeing the actual mysteries of Dionysus but rather elements of the public presentations of the god. Even still, it is useful to ask several of our questions about production and reception. For instance, if we ask: What models does the artist have? and: Does he understand those models? it is clear that the artist is sophisticated in his knowledge of models from past or contemporary visual art. What is more, he shows unusual skill in interweaving the representations of human and divine beings. But if we ask: What does the viewer know about the image? we immediately have to separate the initiate from the non-initiate viewer. The non-initiate might be able to identify images familiar to him from public manifestations of Dionysiac ritual. It would have been an entirely different story for the initiate; she would read the frieze from her own experience; she would recognize the allusions, the abbreviations, the relation of the tableaux to the secrets – and perhaps the sacred tableaux – that no non-believer ever saw.

If the Mysteries Frieze, despite its complex allusions to the *sacra dionysiaca*, still has as its primary purpose the decoration of a wealthy suburban villa, the visual representations that begin to appear during the course of the second century C.E. are decidedly didactic in that they reminded believers of the very steps of initiation that they had experienced or that they would experience. At Ostia Antica, where Becatti studied and published fifteen mithraea, mosaicists and wall painters find a variety of ways to visualize the seven steps of initiation.[32]

The Mithraeum of Felicissimus, dated to the second half of the third century, is perhaps the most straightforward in its imagery, executed in the medium of black-and-white mosaic (fig. 19). The artist created a ladder-like framework that extends from the entrance of the mithraeum to the altar at back. The imagery in the space between each rung of the ladder condensed the narrative of each step of initiation into three symbols. In this way the artist represented the same step of initiation in several ways.[33]

This little mithraeum is a long, narrow space with the usual couches to either side for the cult members to recline on (fig. 20). The entryway space

[32] G. Becatti, *I mitrei*, Scavi di Ostia (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1954).
[33] Becatti, *I mitrei*, 105–12.