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Article Author: Orr, D. G.

Fax: (518)580-5540

Ariel:

Email:

ILLDESK@skidmore.edu

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Roman Domestic Religion: The Evidence of the Household Shrines

by DAVID G. ORR, Philadelphia, Penna.

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List of Abbreviations:

AJA	American Journal of Archaeology.
ArchRW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft.
BMCatCoins	MATTINGLY, H., Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum (London: 1923).
BOYCE	BOYCE, GEORGE K., Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome 14 (Rome: 1937).
Bull. Com.	Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
CJ	Classical Journal.
CP	Classical Philology.
CRF	Comitorum Romanorum Fragmenta, ed. OTTO RIBBECK (Leipzig: 1962).
CQ	Classical Quarterly.
DarSag	DAREMBERG, CH., and SAGLIO, E., Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines (Paris: 1877—1919).
Délos	BULARD, M., Délos. Volume IX (Paris: 1926).
DEMARCHI	DE MARCHI, ATTILIO, Il culto privato di Roma antica. Two volumes (Milan: 1896).
Ercolano	MAIURI, AMEDEO, Ercolano, i nuovi scavi. Two volumes (Rome: 1958).
ESCHEBACH	ESCHEBACH, HANS, Die städtebauliche Entwicklung des antiken Pompeji (Heidelberg: 1970).
FOWLER, Religious Experience	W. WARDE FOWLER, The Religious Experience of the Roman People (London: 1911).
Herculaneum	MAIURI, AMEDEO, Herculaneum. Sixth English Edition (Rome: 1970).
HTR	Harvard Theological Review.
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, ed. HERMANN DESSAU, Berlin: Three volumes (Berlin: 1892—1916).
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies.
Lexikon	ROSCHER, W. H., Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie (Leipzig: 1884f., repr. Hildesheim: 1965ff.).
MAU	MAU, AUGUST, Pompei. Translated into English by F. KELSKY (New York: 1902).
MAZOTS	MAZOTS, F., Les ruines de Pompéi. Four volumes (Paris: 1812—1838).
NS	Notizie degli scavi di antichità (Rome: 1877ff.).
OCD	The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Second Edition (Oxford: 1970).
ORR	ORR, G., Roman Domestic Religion: A Study of the Roman Household Deities and their Shrines (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland: 1972).
RE	PAULY, A., WISSOWA, G., and KROLL, W., Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft (Stuttgart: 1894ff.).
RPhC	Rivista di Filologia e d'Istruzione Classica (Torino).
RhM	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie.
RK	WISSOWA, G., Religion und Kultus der Römer. Handbuch der Altertumswiss. IV 5 (Munich: 1902).
RM	Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung.
RR	LATTE, KURT, Römische Religionsgeschichte. Handbuch der Altertumswiss. V 4 (Munich: 1960).
SIG	Sylloge inscriptionum Graecarum.
SPINAZZOLA	SPINAZZOLA, V., Pompei alla luce degli scavi di Via dell'abbondanza. 3 Volumes (Rome: 1953).
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association.

I. Roman Household Religion

Household worship for the ancient Roman was primarily a quest for the special protection of particular deities or *numina*¹. As the cult developed, specific groups of divine powers were venerated in an established ritual within the home. This ritual, imperfectly known, nevertheless played an important role in the Roman dwelling, first by the ancient head of the Roman household (*paterfamilias*) and his servants and family, and later by non-Romans and freedmen. This private worship persisted to the end of Rome's political existence and much of its physical culture survived in Christian iconography within the home. The domestic cult demonstrated the reliance of the family for its maintenance and continuity on powerful groups of deities which were approachable by all members of the household. Within its structure was incorporated temporal regularity and ritual simplicity². Rome's formal public cults offered status and monumental power but not intimacy. The household shrine of the Roman bound the family to its past and encouraged its present success. The flexibility of the cult also enabled it to permit the introduction of many strange deities into the *lararia* (the household shrine, see p. 1575) niches, miniature temples, and paintings.

Roman domestic religion incorporated three important focuses within its framework. Each focus maintained its own unique set of rituals and deities. At the hearth (living fire) a great religious power was to be propitiated. In the fields, or small gardens, and later at the household chapel, the chief tutelary powers of the home were honored. Finally, in the storerooms and cupboards certain sets of gods were watchful and omnipresent. In order, one can recognize above Vesta, the Lares, and the Penates. This essay will interpret and describe each of these elements in turn and will conclude by discussing the *lararia* (religious shrines) where the worship centered. Since the lion's share of these shrines has been preserved in Campania, that region will serve as a model within which the archaeological framework of the household cult can be understood.

There was no priestly college to make the domestic cult concrete, and no written dogma to express its traditions. It is possible that the domestic cult was a sort of miniature version of the public rituals, but it was certainly less formalized and more naive³. JESSE CARTER's⁴ comments on

¹ There is no treatise on the subject as a whole. The Bibliography gives the best articles and accounts on the elements comprising the cult.

² See WARDE FOWLER, Roman Ideas of Deity in the Last Century B.C. (London: 1914), p. 15, and 25. Also R. M. OGILVIE, The Romans and their Gods in the Age of Augustus (London: 1969), pp. 102—105.

³ OGILVIE, op. cit., p. 105. OGILVIE's small essay on the household shrine contains several notable conclusions. For example, he argues that when Rome became a large urban community the ordinary citizen felt a stronger attachment to the city than to his family cult.

⁴ JESSE BENEDICT CARTER, The Religion of Numa (London: 1906), p. 184.

Roman religion in the Augustan Age demonstrate its survival in the imperial period:

"... The age of formalism had passed, the religious demand of the individual could no longer be satisfied by a mere ritual. For good or evil something more personal, more subjective, was needed. Men sought for it in various ways and with varying success, but except in the simple forms of family worship old religion was dead."

II. Vesta and the Hearth

The domestic hearth was a major center for the household cult. Since the earliest periods of Roman history it functioned as an important area for the propitiation of household *numina*⁵. During religious festivals the housewife decorated it with floral garlands⁶. Closely associated with the fire found in the hearth was the goddess Vesta⁷. Although we know much concerning the public cult of Vesta, little is definitely available about her role in the domestic hearth and cult⁸. Yet we are certain that Vesta maintained both her agricultural interests and her hearth fire form in household worship⁹. It seems that she was one of the Penates since she was referred to in close connection with them. These *di Penates* were supposed to have had an abode in the temple of Vesta, where ancient objects pertaining to them were enshrined¹⁰. The familiar round form of the temple of Vesta was ancient and traditional for the goddess and may have gone back to prehistoric antecedents¹¹. The cult of Vesta symbolized to the Romans the religion

⁵ Ovid, *Fasti* 6. 301—308. WISSOWA, *Lexikon* Vol. VI (1937), s. v. Vesta, 244; CARTER, *op. cit.*, p. 13, and NICOLA TURCHI, *La Religione di Roma antica* (Bologna: 1939), pp. 12—13.

⁶ Cato, *R. R.* 143.2, and Ovid, *Trist.* 5.5.10. A woollen fillet was sometimes added. See Propertius 4. 6. 1—6. For the hearth see also LATTE, *RR*, pp. 90—97.

⁷ WISSOWA, *Lexikon*, Vol. VI, s. v. Vesta, 244—247. Servius, *Aen.* 1. 292. To Ovid, Vesta was "nothing but living flame", see Ovid, *Fasti* 6. 291.

⁸ H. J. ROSE, *Religion in Greece and Rome* (New York: 1959), p. 178; CARTER, *op. cit.*, p. 13, TURCHI, *op. cit.*, pp. 12—13. See also GERHARD RADKE, *Die Götter Altitaliens, Fontes et Commentationes 3* (Münster: 1965), pp. 320—324; H. HOMMEL, *Vesta und die frühromische Religion, ANRW I 2* (Berlin—New York: 1972), pp. 397—420.

⁹ Cato, *R. R.* 132.2. CYRIL BAILEY, *Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome* (Berkeley: 1932), p. 49. Also ANGELO BRELICH, *Vesta*, Trans. by V. von GONZENBACH (Zurich: 1949), pp. 19—24. Ovid, *Fasti*, 6. 267.

¹⁰ *RK*, p. 163 W. WARDE FOWLER, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London: 1933), pp. 126 and 136. BRELICH, *op. cit.*, pp. 41—48. The temple served as the hearth of the state.

¹¹ WISSOWA, *Lexikon*, Vol. VI, s. v. Vesta, pp. 247—253. In its beginnings Vesta's temple probably had been a primitive oval hut. Ovid, *Fasti* 6. 261—262. See also MICHAEL GRANT, *The Roman Forum* (New York: 1970), pp. 55—60.

of historic beginnings since her temple supposedly contained the sacred fire and the Palladium brought from Troy by Aeneas¹².

In Vesta's temple, according to Ovid¹³, there were no images, only the fire tended by the Vestals. Her power is described as "standing-by power"¹⁴. The archaeological evidence indicates that Vesta's appearance in the Campanian shrines, for example, is not limited to the few painted depictions that have been preserved (see below, p. 1580, n. 165). The power and image of Vesta is the potential force to avert crisis and danger in the home and she is embodied in the living flame of the hearth.

Within the home Vesta's fire was probably tended by the daughters of the *paterfamilias* or his wife. Sacrifices to her at the hearth included many of the commoner items offered to the gods and there is one instance in which she is worshipped with Jupiter Dapalis¹⁵. Vesta preserved her abstract character in the domestic matrix of the household cult and her anthropomorphic depiction, rare in the *lararia*, was chiefly reserved for her critical public functions and roles¹⁶.

III. Janus

Brief mention should be made of Janus although there were probably many other ancient deities and *numina* which survived in the household cult and which should also bear attention. The real problem is to establish positively these ancillary powers and deities. Janus was one of the oldest of all the Italic deities and was closely coupled with Saturnus¹⁷. Architecturally, a *Janus* (*IANUS*) could be simply an arch, a form charged with ancient power and roles. One Janus arch was located near the house of the

¹² *RK*, pp. 163—166. Ovid, *Trist.* 3.1.29. For the Vestal Virgins, see THOMAS WORSFOLD, *The History of the Vestal Virgins* (London: 1952). For the Regia see FRANK E. BROWN, *The Regia, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 12 (1935), pp. 67ff.

¹³ Ovid, *Fasti*, 6. 295—298.

¹⁴ Ovid, *Fasti*, 6. 299.

¹⁵ Cato, *RR* 132.2.

¹⁶ See below, p. 1580, n. 165. At Delos there were also paintings of Vesta (Hestia) sometimes shown in connection with the *omphalos*. MARCEL BULARD, *La religion domestique dans la colonie italienne de Délos* (Paris: 1926), pp. 400—401 and 310—312.

Vesta is sometimes depicted in the *lararia* of Pompeii accompanied by an ass. See BOYCE, nos. 77 and 420. Ovid, *Fasti*, 6. 317—318; also Propertius, 4.1.21. For Vesta in Pompeii see HEINR. JORDAN, *Vesta und die Laren auf einem pompejanischen Wandgemälde* (Berlin: 1865), pp. 1—20, and Chapter V; BETTY JO MAYESKE, *Bread and Bakeries of Pompeii* (Unpublished dissertation, University of Maryland: 1972). See also ROY M. PETERSON, *The Cults of Campania* (Rome: 1919), p. 255. For Vesta and the ass see also, I. S. RYBERG, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 22 (Rome—New Haven: 1955), p. 62 with figure 38a.

¹⁷ CYRIL BAILEY, *Religion in Virgil* (Oxford: 1935), pp. 377ff. For the origins and natures of Janus see LOUISE A. HOLLAND, *Janus and the Bridge, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome* 21 (Rome: 1961), p. 308 and passim. See Plutarch, *Numa* 19.6. See also *RR*, pp. 132, 133.

Vestals in the forum¹⁸. This arch, erected by Marius, was somewhat significant since the *Vestalia* was kept by the Vestals near there¹⁹. Janus, the spirit of living water (as Vesta was of fire) was also connected with the bright sky, the half-yearly cycles of the sun, chaos, time, and most importantly for the domestic cult, the *numen* of house doors²⁰. Janus' role in bridges and the establishment of boundaries is important to consider when his domestic usage is to be understood. His place at the *fauces*, the border between a Roman's public and private province, is the only area where the old god played a domestic role²¹. There are no images or epigraphical evidence to firmly place Janus in the Campanian house shrines, which is not surprising since his images are rare in any context.

IV. The Household Penates

Closely linked with the Vestal cult was the cult of the Penates. In public worship the Penates were two youthful gods sometimes considered to be the deities brought to Italy by the Trojan Aeneas²². Recent archaeological evidence attests to the fact that Castor and Pollux, the Dioscuri, were the Penates. Perhaps it was in Lavinium that the first shrine to the Penates of Troy was built. There is also some evidence that the cult of the Dioscuri and the Penates was fused²³. The Penates, as state gods, and

¹⁸ R. E. A. PALMER, *Roman Religion and Roman Empire. Five Essays*, The Haney Foundation Series 15 (Philadelphia: 1974), pp. 200—205.

¹⁹ For the *Vestalia* see RR, pp. 109, 143, 363.

²⁰ HOLLAND, *op. cit.*, p. 3. *Ianus bifrons* is portrayed on Republican coins, see EDWARD A. SYDENHAM, *The Coinage of the Roman Republic* (London: 1952), p. 7. See Aen. 7. 180. *Saturnusque senex Ianique bifrontis imago vestibulo astabant*. See also Vergil, Aen. 12. 198.

²¹ ROSCHER, *Lexikon*, Vol. II, part I (1890—1894, repr. 1965), s. v. Janus, 32—33. See also HOLLAND, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

²² Part of the evidence centers on an inscription found in 1959 by professors CASTAGNOLI and GAZZA, during their excavations at Frattica del Mare, the site of ancient Lavinium. Engraved on a bronze tablet, the inscription was found by the eighth of a series of thirteen archaic tufa altars. The inscription reads: *CASTOREI PODLOVOVEIQVE/ QUROIS*. See F. CASTAGNOLI, *Dedica arcaica lavinate a Castore e Polluce*, *Studi e Materiali* 30 (1959), 109—116, and S. WEINSTOCK, *Two Archaic Inscriptions from Latium*, *JRS* 50 (1960), pp. 112—118 (especially 112—114). For summaries see A. ALFÖLDI, *Early Rome and the Latins* (Ann Arbor: 1963), pp. 268—271 and R. BLOCH, *The Origins of Rome* (London: 1960), pp. 144—145. WEINSTOCK argues that the inscription shows that the Penates, worshipped at Lavinium, were the Dioscuri, *op. cit.*, p. 114. G. CARL GALINSKY (*Aeneas, Sicily and Rome*, Princeton Monogr. in Art and Archaeology 40, Princeton: 1969) points out that the origin of the Penates may lie elsewhere, p. 156, *op. cit.* See also WISSOWA, *Lexikon*, Vol. III, part II (1902—1909, repr. 1965), s. v. Penates, pp. 1879—1882.

²³ GALINSKY, *op. cit.*, pp. 154—157. In their temple on the Velia in Rome the Penates were represented as two seated youths holding spears. See Dionysius of Hal. I. 68. 2. WEINSTOCK argues that the fusion took place in the temple of Vesta and that the temple on the Velia may have been built later, *op. cit.*, p. 114. For the Trojan origin of the Penates see F. BÖMER, *Rom und Troja* (Baden-Baden: 1951) and A. ALFÖLDI, *Die trojanischen Ur-*

of whatever origin, protected the hegemony of Rome, a function which they originally had in the storeroom before they were elevated to anthropomorphic status.

The Penates' position in the family storeroom (*penus*) is not disputed. Behind the hearth of the early Roman home, at the rear of the *atrium*, was the *penus*, a place inhabited by the *di Penates*, always conceived of and expressed in the plural²⁴. These abstract *numina* were guardian forces which protected the food supply²⁵. By preserving the grain supply in the *penus*, they powerfully personified the continuity of the household's means of subsistence.

The worship of the Penates in the home formed an integral part of the household ritual. Cicero²⁶ comments on the significance of the household Penates and equates them with the worship of the *Lar familiaris*. The word *Penates* in its domestic contexts commonly referred to all the household deities and it is possible in this way to think of the painted gods in Campanian house shrines as *Penates*²⁷. They are indeed all the gods which inhabit the home. They were worshipped before the hearth and were closely associated with the Lares and Vesta. The Penates can be interpreted as embodying all of these household cult elements. Clearly there is a kind of collective mental set at work here. Perhaps the individual aspects of Lar, Vesta, and Penates melded somewhat and by the early empire were grouped together as domestic deities. Also, the state versions of the cult of the Penates and their roles as defenders of the empire probably filtered down into the home where some sort of tacit recognition occurred²⁸.

V. The Household Lares

Reliable details regarding the controversial origins of the Lares are practically unavailable²⁹. This disagreement can be reduced to two main

ahnen der Römer (Rektoratsprogr., J. 1956, Basel: 1957). For the temple on the Velia see F. CASTAGNOLI, *Il tempio dei Penati e la Velia*, *RFIC* 74 (1946), pp. 157—165, and G. LUGLI, *Monumenti minori del Foro Romano* (Rome: 1947), pp. 165—192.

²⁴ FOWLER, *Religious Experience*, pp. 73—74. For *penus (cella penaria)* see WISSOWA, *Lexikon*, Vol. III, part II, s. v. Penates, pp. 1879—1882. Penates at the hearth, Servius, Aen. 3. 12. See RR, pp. 89, 108, 416.

²⁵ Martial refers to them as guardians, 8.75.1. ²⁶ Rep. 5.7.

²⁷ Cicero, *Har. Resp.* 37. Horace, *Carmina* 2.4.15; 3.23.19.

²⁸ The state Penates were worshipped in close alliance with Vesta. The *sacra* of the Penates were kept in the *penus* (inner part) of Vesta's round temple in the forum. See Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.41.1. See also Macrobius, 3.4. 11—13. Also RYBERG, *op. cit.*, p. 41. Vergil uses the Penates as those deities brought from Troy. See Aen. 2. 512—514, the Phrygian Penates who had an altar at Troy. Other passages: Aen. 3.12, 2. 293—295, 2. 717—720, and of course, Aen. 4. 596—599.

²⁹ See, besides the articles in the standard texts (RR, pp. 90—97) mentioned in the bibliography: G. HENZEN, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Berlin: 1874), W. HERMANN, *Römische Ur-*

schools of thought. One group holds that the Lares were originally gods of the fields and were introduced into the house from the *compita*³⁰. The opposing school claims that the Lares were deified ancestors worshipped at the hearth³¹. Although the former theory seems to have more value in any domestic consideration (see p. 1565ff.) it should be remembered that the Lares were not limited to precise spheres of influence or certain clearly defined functions³². The nature of tutelary religious forces is that they protect and watch and not define their powers. To the Roman it was enough that they had power and it did not matter much how it was evolved and where it was directed. Evidence of this vague character lies in the later practice of attaching to the word 'Lares' an epithet indicating the special field in which they were to operate. The existence of all these classes is

Götteraltäre (Kallmünz: 1961), GIULIA PICCALUGA, Penates e lares, Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni 32 (1961), 81—97, MARGARET WAITES, The Nature of the Lares and their Representation in Roman Art, AJA 24 (1920), pp. 241—261, GORDON LAING, The Origin of the Cult of the Lares, CP 16 (1921), pp. 124—140, W. H. HALLIDAY, Lectures on the History of Religion from Numa to Augustus (Liverpool: 1922), W. WARDE FOWLER, Roman Ideas of Deity in the Last Century B.C. (London: 1914), esp. p. 15ff.

³⁰ See RK, pp. 166—174; PALMER, op. cit., p. 117, and 114—115. An inscription dating to the fourth century, cut on a *cippus* and found at Tor Tignosa, reads: *Lare Vesuvia O. f.* The reading is that of HANS-GEORG KOLBE, Lare Aineia, RM 77 (1970), pp. 1—9. Earlier the reading had been interpreted as documenting a singular Lar Aeneas. See M. GUARDUCCI, Cippo latino arcaico con dedica ad Aeneas, Bull. Com. 76 (Bull. del Mus. della civiltà Romana 19), 1956—1958, pp. 3—13., and WEINSTOCK, op. cit., pp. 116—117 esp. The Lares were worshipped in groves, see Cicero, Leg. 2.8.19.

³¹ The opposing theory was formulated by E. SAMTER, Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer (Berlin: 1901), pp. 105—108. Parts of the theory came from the passage in Pliny which states that if a scrap of food falls on the floor during the course of a banquet, it is proper to burn that portion before the Lares. Since the floor was the home of the ghosts, the food, therefore had gone to the spirits of the underworld. Pliny, N.H. 28, 27—28. SAMTER also cites the festival of the crossroads where the balls and dolls hung up would represent surrogates of live individuals. Festus p. 272, 15, ed. LINDSAY; OCD, pp. 578—579, s. v. Lares. See also BOEHM, RE XII 1 (1924), pp. 806—834, s. v. Lares; LAING, op. cit., p. 127, and ATTILIO DE MARCHI, Il culto privato di Roma antica (Milan: 1896), I, pp. 34—36. The view that the Lares were spirits of the dead ancestors of the family may have been a Greek one. See WAITES, op. cit., pp. 255—261; HALLIDAY, op. cit., pp. 28—29, and LAING, op. cit., pp. 125—126. WEINSTOCK argues that the Lar was generally used as the equivalent of the Greek *ἥρως*. See op. cit., pp. 116—117, especially n. 50, p. 117 for a list of classical passages in which *ἥρως* is used for Lar, e.g. Diony. Hal., 4.2.3.

His belief in a cult of Aeneas in Latium would include the idea that the Lar was the dead ancestor. JOYCE REYNOLDS believed that the earlier reading by GUARDUCCI and WEINSTOCK of the Tor Tignosa Lare Aineia variant was correct, see J. REYNOLDS, Roman Epigraphy, 1961—1965, JRS 56 (1966), p. 121.

³² G. CARL GALINSKY argues that the case endings and the vagaries surrounding the earlier reading obscure the real meaning and tend to oversimplify the complex nature of the Lar, op. cit., pp. 158—159. The Tor Tignosa inscription referred to by GALINSKY and the above note remains a most important piece of evidence for the establishment of the real meaning of the Lar. The arguments of WISSOWA, LATTE (in RR), and now PALMER, testify to the diverse character of the Lares in their shift from the groves and fields to the home. PALMER, op. cit., pp. 114—120, discusses the Tor Tignosa inscription (second reading) in terms of their promotion of health and welfare to individuals.

important in any consideration of the Lares and the diversity of their roles illustrates the original flexibility of the cult.

The types of Lares in the household cult (*domestici, familiae*) certainly were tutelary in their special functions. The *Lar familiaris* apparently entered the home as a *numen* that guarded the family. The opening lines of Plautus³⁴ 'Aulularia' describe the functions clearly: *Hanc domum iam multos annos est quom possideo et colo patri auoque iam huius qui nunc habet*. Tibullus³⁵ echoes these kinds of feelings when he describes his anxiety on being sent on military service and his hope that his Lares will protect him and watch over him. The Lar indeed followed his master on journeys and there were special kinds of Lares to protect him in different capacities far from home. Ovid³⁶ describes the Lares as watchful and this word underlines this basic concept.

Some evidence to suggest that the Lares did in fact come to the hearth from the fields, groves, or *compita* can be briefly summarized³⁷. The yearly festival called the *Compitalia* took place not on a fixed day, but simply when the winter solstice arrived³⁸. The ceremony was performed at the crossroads, or where four properties intersected. These sacred spots were called *compita* and were charged with *numina* since boundaries, especially where four lines met, were always thought of in the Roman mind as highly

³³ *Numen* is basically a supernatural power which can be deposited in or on tangible objects. See ALBERT GRENIER, Les religions étrusque et romaine, Coll. Mana II 2 (Paris: 1948), pp. 82—84. For a bibliography of *numen* see RR, p. 57, n. 2. See also TURCHI, op. cit., pp. 16—18. Exact definitions of these domestic *numina* were obscured by their utilization as abstract generic terms. For example, *Di Penates*, can refer to all domestic *numina*, including Vesta. See RK, p. 163. For Lares, see below, p. 1566. The *Lar familiaris* is the *lar* of the household.

³⁴ Aulularia 1—5.

³⁵ I.10. 13—25. The presence of Lar statuettes in abundance on the Roman frontier also testifies to this. See RAYMOND TROUVENOR, Catalogue des Figurines et objets de Bronze du Musée Archéologique de Madrid, Vol. 1 (Paris: 1927), pp. 50—52 and Plate XIV. See also below, p. 1568ff.

³⁶ Fasti 5. 142.

³⁷ The oldest Lar known is the one which inhabited a *compitum* (the place where four properties touched or where four streets met). For *compita* see RK, p. 167ff; CARTER, op. cit., p. 14. Schol. on Persius, 4. 28. See also H. BLOCH, A Monument of the Lares Augusti, HTR 55 (1962), p. 219.

³⁸ *Compitalia*: Cicero, Pis. 4. 8—9, ad Att. 2.3.4; Dion. Hal., AR 4.14; Gellius, NA 10.24; Macrobius, 1.2.27, 1.7.34, 1.16.6, for just a few. Excellent is Festus, 108, 213, 272. RR, p. 90, also W. WARDE FOWLER, The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic (London: 1899), pp. 279—280. Varro, L.L. 23, 25, and 29. During the *Compitalia* the farmer's yoke was hung up as a symbol of the suspension of labor (Persius, 4. 26—32). A festive dinner followed in which each family contributed one honeycake to the gods; Dion. Hal., 4. 14.3; LOUISE A. HOLLAND, The Shrine of the Lares Compitales, TAPA 68 (1939), pp. 428—441. After the feast occurred the curious ceremony of the woolen dolls. Each free member of the household was represented by a male or female puppet and each slave by a ball. This reflected the ancient idea that inanimate objects could receive *numen*. Festus, 272. 15—22; 273. 7—12, ed. LINDSAY. See RK, p. 167ff. These puppets and balls were hung up before the Lares. It was hoped that the Lares would spare the living and take the balls and puppets instead.

unstable and dangerous areas. Here the Lares were worshipped by the *familia* (slave-holding) and it is possible that these servants brought the cult to the *focus* (hearth). Cato³⁹ mentions that the *vilicus* (the overseer of the farm) was allowed to perform religious rites only "at the *compitum* or before the hearth". The Lares of the Arval Brothers' ancient hymn are purely agricultural and may also refer to this particular aspect of the Lares⁴⁰. Tibullus⁴¹ describes his *lares* as wooden and kept in a narrow shrine.

The word 'Lares' was frequently used as a metonym for the household⁴². Vergil⁴³ occasionally employs the word 'Lar' as a substitute for 'home' or 'household'. Similarly, Martial⁴⁴ makes the same connection when he also uses 'Lares' metonymously.

The Lares were sometimes looked upon as guardians of a particular place, not necessarily a home⁴⁵. Charinus, a character in the 'Mercator' by Plautus⁴⁶ states that he will seek another country and another Lar, meaning another place or household. Inscriptions refer to Lares of forests and of fields⁴⁷. By the fourth century A.D. Arnobius⁴⁸ describes the Lares as the gods of streets, roads, buildings, houses, and even the air.

In the household shrines the Lares may have suggested to their worshippers some of the various types of usages they had during the late Republican and early imperial epochs. The *Lares viales*⁴⁹ were the guardians of roads and wayfarers; travelers who embarked on lengthy ocean voyages honored the *Lares permarini*⁵⁰. Among the soldiers in the imperial armies, the worship of the *Lar militaris*⁵¹ was popular. These *Lares militares* were the protectors of the common soldiery and probably reflected the Lares

which the soldiers had left behind at home. People who travelled on little-known footpaths and byways had protecting Lares called the *Lares semitales*⁵². Even games had Lares, as the *Lares ludentes*⁵³ found on Roman Delos illustrate.

The *Lares praestites*⁵⁴, the guardians of the state of Rome, were especially concerned in the empire with the maintenance of the imperial cult. In this capacity they have become the *Lares Augusti*⁵⁵.

The household Lares were offered spelt, grapes, garlands of grain, honeycakes, and honeycombs⁵⁶. First fruits, wine, and blood offerings were also dedicated to the Lares⁵⁷. Tibullus⁵⁸ mentions a circlet of spring flowers which crowned the heads of his wooden Lares. The Lares were worshipped in the home on holidays and perhaps were given some daily attention, according to the piety of their masters⁵⁹. Some Lares were described as smoke-grimed and black, probably due to their proximity to the hearth⁶⁰. The domestic Lares promoted health and welfare in the home⁶¹.

³⁹ CIL VI 36810 and XI 3079 and above n. 49.

⁵³ BULARD, op. cit., pp. 162—163.

⁵⁴ Ovid, Fasti, 5. 129. BULARD, op. cit., p. 330. For its connection with Silvanus on Delos see BULARD, op. cit., p. 339. In Capua, ministers had charge of the worship of the city Lares (CIL X 8789); see also ROY M. PETERSON, The Cults of Campania (Rome: 1919), I, 354. For Naples see CIL X 1682. The *Lares praestites* are probably depicted on a Roman silver *denarius* of Lucius Caesius (ca. 103 B.C.). The reverse of this coin shows two seated Lares together with a monogram which Sydenham interprets as *LA[ves] RE[gienses]*. This may refer to the mint at Rhegium, and these are either Lares of the place or the *Lares praestites*. SYDENHAM, op. cit., p. 76, No. 564. PALMER, op. cit., p. 208, reads the *RE* as *regionum*. The *lares* of the neighborhoods were certainly organized according to the city of Rome's four regions.

⁵⁵ Augustus shared his title with the Lares, extending his own family cult to a broad imperial one. CIL VI 443, 445—449; CIL X 1582 to cite several.

⁵⁶ For spelt see Juvenal, 9. 138. Calpurnius Siculus, Eclogue 5. 25—27. For the others see Tibullus, 1. 10. 21—24. Grain was also offered to the Lares, see Horace, Carmina 3. 23. 3—4.

⁵⁷ Horace, Sat. 2. 5. 12—14; Horace, Carmina 4. 5. 33—36; and Horace, Sat. 2. 3. 164—165, and Carmina 3. 23. 4 (pig). A lamb and a pig were also added, Plautus, Rudens 1208. Tibullus recalls that a heifer once was the sacrifice but now a lamb was sufficient, 1. 1. 21—22. Incense was also offered to the Lares, see Prudentius, Peristephanon, liber 10. 261; Tibullus, 1. 3. 34; Ovid, Fasti, 2. 631.

⁵⁸ 2. 1. 59—60. For garlands see Plautus, Trinummus 39 and Aulularia 385—386. A wreath was offered to the Lares on the Calends, Nones, and Ides, Cato, RR 143. 2. The household shrines of Pompeii were often equipped to attach fresh garlands by means of nails, see below p. 29.

⁵⁹ On the Nones, Ides, and Calends, see above, n. 58. Martial, 3. 58. 23 mentions the practice of sacrificing to the Lares on holidays. Tibullus describes a rural ceremony to the Lares for good crops and wine, 1. 1. 19—24. Boys presented their *bullae* of childhood to the Lares' shrine when they donned the *toga virilis*. A similar ceremony involving more objects was undertaken by girls. When she married, a Roman bride brought three coins to her new home: one for her husband, a second for the Lares of the hearth, and a third for the Compital shrine, the Lares of the crossroads. Nonius pp. 852, 863 L., also Plautus, Aulularia 23—27, 382—387. For the objects hung up at the *compitum* shrine see Festus, pp. 108, 272, 273 L. For the *bullae* ceremony see Petronius, Sat. 60. 8.

⁶⁰ Prudentius, Peristephanon, liber 10. 261, and Contra Orationem Symmachi 1. 204.

⁶¹ The Lares were associated with the cult of the Genius in a very intimate fashion. See Ovid, Fasti 5. 145 and CIL VI 445, 452, for example. In this manner they promoted the well-being of their *familiae*.

³⁹ Cato, RR 5.3. Cato, RR 143.3. also states that the *Lar familiaris* was sacrificed to "as one was able". See BULARD, op. cit., p. 76.

⁴⁰ Acta Fratrum Arvalium (HENZEN, Berlin: 1874), pp. 26—27. For Rites to Lares: ILS 451 = CIL VI 2086. The Lares appear as *LASES* and are connected with the propitiation of the fields.

⁴¹ 1.10. 15—20.

⁴² Lucan uses the word *lares* in this manner in 2. 331; 2. 729; 5. 537, and 7. 346. See also Catullus, 31. 9, and Horace Sat. 1.2.56.

⁴³ Georg. 3. 344.

⁴⁴ 10. 61. 6.

⁴⁵ Vergil, Aen. 5. 744.

⁴⁶ Mercator, 836—837.

⁴⁷ FOREST, CIL II 804; FIELDS, CIL VI, 646. See also WISSOWA, Lexikon Vol. II, part II (1894—1897, repr. 1965), s. v. Lares, 1887. WISSOWA suggests this use refers to the god Silvanus. The Arval Hymn, CIL I², 2 = ILS 5039, see above n. 40, already has connected Mars and the Lares together in the protection of arable ground.

⁴⁸ Adversus gentes 3. 41. See also GEORGE E. McCracken, trans., Arnobius of Sicea, the Case against the Pagans (Westminster: 1949), p. 224, nn. 250—260.

⁴⁹ CIL II 4320, II 2417, and 2518. An inscription *LARES VIALES* was discovered on the Via Portuense together with *Lares Semitales* and *Lares [R]u[s]a[tes]*, see NS (1907), pp. 465—466. One inscription was found on each of three *cippi* of peperino tufa.

⁵⁰ CIL XIV 4547 (*La[r]fibus Permarinis*). The temple of the *Lares permarini* was dedicated in 190 B.C. Livy, 40. 52. 4—6.

⁵¹ CIL III 3460 and 3463. Ovid, Tr. 4. 8. 22., describes a soldier setting up his arms before the Lares. For Penates, see Lucan, 1. 240.

At Pompeii the Lares were frequently found in inscriptions dedicated to the Genius of the family⁶². Other short epigraphs state simple messages like *ite Lares, Lares prof[ili]os*, and even *Lar*⁶³. One inscription found on the wall of a Pompeian kitchen simply reads: *Felix Laribus / con[se]c[ra]t[ur] vetum*.

The portrayal of the Lares in the Campanian shrines follows a general form. Usually they are depicted as mirthful beings, in tip-toe dancing pose, and holding brimming *rhyta* of wine⁶⁴. The dancing pose of the Lar and his youthful and somewhat freely drawn form present a startling contrast to the idea that they indeed were the Roman's conception of their ancestors. Their overall guise is Greek and their source is probably a Dionysiac type found in South Italy⁶⁵. Certainly the Pompeian dancing Lar does possess some non-Roman elements. The *rhyton* carried by the Lar is a Greek form which probably reflected an oriental influence⁶⁶. The *rhyta* found in the Campanian house shrines are spouted drinking horns and were equipped with various types of decorated *termini* including antelopes and lions. A painting in the tomb of C. Vestorius Priscus from Pompeii shows a man drinking from this type of *rhyton*. Another painting from this same tomb shows a silver(?) *rhyton* on a stand. The footwear worn by the Lares may

⁶² CIL X 861, CIL X 1235 (at Nola).

⁶³ CIL IV 1539; CIL IV 844; and CIL X 7555 respectively.

⁶⁴ NS (1934), p. 91.

⁶⁵ DE MARCHI, op. cit., I, p. 48, Plate I. See also Boyce Plate 18, No. 1; Plate 24, Nos. 1 and 2; Plate 22, Nos. 1, 2, and 3 for good illustrations of the Lares in the house shrines of Pompeii. Also see below, p. 1583, Plate V 11.

⁶⁶ In the "Tunicularia" of Naevius, CRF 99—102 R³, a Greek is described painting the *Lares ludentes*, see also n. 53 above. WAITES, op. cit., pp. 257ff., suggested that the dancing pose came from an association with the cult of the Great Gods or Cabiri. She argued, pp. 251—253, that the Lares were portrayed in much the same way as the Dioscuri originally (for coin portrayal see SYDENHAM, op. cit., p. 76, no. 564) and thus necessitated a different pose. WISSOWA's simpler explanation that it was probably an eastern Greek Dionysiac pose common in South Italy is more plausible, RK, p. 172. WAITES, p. 252, illustrates two classes of Lares, one, the aforementioned 'dancing' type and a very static form shown holding a *cornucopia* and *patera* (or wheat ears).

⁶⁷ The spouted *rhyton* became well-known in Greece as an eastern import toward the end of the fifth century B.C. and was widely used by the fourth century B.C. See HERBERT HOFFMANN, *Attic Red-Figured Rhyta* (Mainz: 1962), p. 3, especially nn. 9 and 10. *Rhyta*, of course, are known from an earlier period. See A. D. LACY, *Greek Pottery in the Bronze Age* (London: 1967), p. 91. A steatite bull's head *rhyton* is illustrated on p. 93. This vessel has a small hole in its mouth and dates to the Minoan I period. Other animal *rhyta* are known. The heads of horses, donkeys, mules, bulls, cows, goats, rams, sheeps, dogs, bears, deers, antelopes, cats, lions, griffins, and sea dragons all appear on Tarentine *rhyta*. See HERBERT HOFFMANN, *Tarentine Rhyta* (Mainz: 1966), p. VII. Although the antelope-headed *rhyton* is by far most common in the shrines of Campania, the lion and goat also appear. The painted Lares in the *lararia* of Pompeii may be 'aerating' the wine by allowing it to flow from their *rhyta* into their pails. See JOSEPH V. NOBLE, *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery* (New York: 1965), p. 22 and p. 152, Fig. 139. Athenaeus, XI. 497 states that the *rhyton* was "curved like a horn and pierced". HOFFMANN, *Tarentine Rhyta*, links the vessel with the cult of the dead, especially the Greek hero cults. He argues that the shapes are ornamental rather than functional, p. 111. Certainly its presence in mortuary painting found in the tomb of C. Vestorius Priscus in Pompeii reflects that idea.

be either Greek or Roman but their loose hair arrangements, some shown falling in long curls, were somewhat alien⁶⁸. Some Lares have hair styles which are quite short and definitely Roman. The Lares seem to be dressed in Roman apparel; their high girded skirt is the Roman *tunica*⁶⁹. Both Ovid⁷⁰ and Persius⁷¹ have commented on the high girding of the *tunica* worn by the Lares. The Lares are also shown wearing a shawl-like garment which is customarily draped over both arms⁷². The identity of this item of dress is difficult to trace since the Lares are not wearing them correctly. The garlands seen above the Lares recall the words of Tibullus⁷³ who stated that floral crowns were offered to the Lares. The Lares are often shown with wreaths and also are depicted bare-headed.

The round felt cap of the freedman, the *pilleus*, can be seen on at least one painted Lar⁷⁴. This strongly recalls their position among freedmen in the early empire. The Lares are usually shown holding a *situla* which receives the arched stream of liquid from the *rhyton*. Sometimes a *patera* was substituted for the *situla*⁷⁵.

The 'dancing' type of Lar is by far the most common way of showing these *numina* in the Campanian *lararia*. Most of the bronze statuettes found throughout the Roman world also resemble this pose. The painting style of the Lares shown in Pompeii varies greatly (see below, Plates IV 8, VI 12, IX 18). Yet the painted images of Lares in these shrines, with their *rhyta* pouring out a constant flow of wine, accurately mirror the wealth of the Campanian vineyards. Although their anthropomorphic form does contain many Greek and non-Roman ideas, their indigenous Roman concepts survived.

VI. The Genius in Household Worship

In its particular domestic ambience the Genius generally refers to the guiding *numen* of the family, its procreative force, and especially the living

⁶⁸ WAITES, op. cit., refers to them as members of "the wine-god's train".

⁶⁹ LILLIAN M. WILSON, *The Clothing of the Ancient Romans*, Hopkins Univ. Studies in Archaeology 24 (Baltimore: 1938), pp. 55—65.

⁷⁰ Ovid, *Fasti*, 2. 634.

⁷¹ 5. 31.

⁷² This was probably a form of the Greek *chlamys* or the Roman *paludamentum*. The identification is difficult because the garment is not worn by the Lares in the usual fashion. See MARIE JOHNSON (ed.), *Ancient Greek Dress*, Part I: ETHEL ABRAHAM, "Greek Dress", p. 53 (Chicago: 1964) for the *chlamys*, and WILSON, op. cit., pp. 100—104, for the *paludamentum*.

⁷³ 2. 1. 59—60.

⁷⁴ WILSON, op. cit., pp. 117—118. See also R. J. FORBES, *Studies in Ancient Technology*, Vol. IV (Leiden: 1964), p. 92. Free-born persons who had fallen into captivity wore the *pilleus* for a while after the recovery of their freedom. See Livy, 30. 45; and 34. 53. For a good illustration of a *pilleus* on an ancient Roman coin see BMCatCoins, I, p. 158, no. 79, with Plate 29, Fig. 11.

⁷⁵ The *patera*, a shallow dish used in the sacrificial ceremony, was employed in the domestic cult to pour out libations. See Ovid, *Met.* 9. 160.

⁷⁶ ANRW II 16

spirit of the *paterfamilias*. In essence, the Genius was the 'other-soul', the life-double of a man⁷⁶. The most important power it represented was fertility and the watchful power to continue the family *nomen* and *gens* from one generation to another⁷⁷. Its other function, perhaps even another type of Genius, was to guard a physical object or geographical location⁷⁸. Both kinds of Genius occurred in the domestic shrines.

The origins of the Genius, like the other elements of the domestic cult, are extremely obscure. WISSOWA⁷⁹, FOWLER⁸⁰, and others have all argued for the belief that the Genius was one of the oldest elements present in Roman religion. PALLOTTINO⁸¹, among the Etruscologists, holds that the idea came from the Etruscans and was transferred with many other religious concepts at an early date. The Etruscan Genius reflected a tremendous visual and physical interest and was represented by the *phallus*, particularly on grave monuments. Like the Roman concept, the Etruscan Genius was subordinated to the individual man and held sacred the day on which procreation became manifest, the birthday of the *paterfamilias*.

In Rome there was an old cult of Hercules located at the Greatest Altar in the Cattle Market, from which women were forbidden. Perhaps the older cult of the Genius (or male principle) was the same one, because of this taboo⁸². The concept of the female taboo seems to be somewhat related to the idea that the Genius had a female counterpart, called the Juno⁸³. Every man had his Genius and every woman had her Juno. Juno, a feminine form of *iuuvenis* (*iuuix*) also reflected a 'youth' concept in the representation of procreative force. The intimate association of the Juno with the Genius appears to be of later date and came about after she was regarded as a deity of birth and women⁸⁴. The goddess Juno may not have been the deity of

⁷⁶ FOWLER, *Religious Experience* . . . , p. 74; OTTO, RE, VII (1912), p. 1163, s. v. Genius.

⁷⁷ ROSE, op. cit., p. 193. Since it represented the life force of a man and his family, the Genius was transferred to a successor on the death of the male head of the family. The Genius was used throughout its long history in Roman religion as a *numen*, never becoming a fully developed deity. See EMILY SHIELDS, *Juno: A Study in Early Roman Religion* (Northampton: 1926), p. 40. Also JANE HARRISON, *Themis* (Cambridge: 1912), p. 283.

⁷⁸ The *Genius loci*. See Calpurnius Siculus, Ecl. 5. 25—29, who propitiates the Lares, Faunus, and the Genius of the Place with a sacrifice of salted meal. A good example to show how the Genius was used in this sense is to examine the inscriptions showing the various types of military Genii. *Genius castrorum*, CIL VI. 230; *centuriae* CIL VI 207—221. For a lengthy list of the wide variety of the locative Genius, see RR, p. 332.

⁷⁹ RK, p. 182. The Genius in early Italy must have been a „*seelischer Begleiter*“ of the individual man. See also OTTO in RE, VII (1912), p. 1155, s. v. Genius.

⁸⁰ *Religious Experience* . . . , p. 75.

⁸¹ M. PALLOTTINO, *The Etruscans* (Baltimore: 1955), p. 158 and 295. PALLOTTINO believes that the Etruscan Genius was the original Roman Genius. See also FRANZ ALTHEIM, *A History of Roman Religion* (London: 1938), p. 169.

⁸² ELI EDWARD BURISS, *Taboo, Magic, and Spirits* (New York: 1931), p. 45. See also J. G. WINTER, *The Myth of Hercules at Rome*, Univ. of Mich., *Stud. Human. Ser.*, 4 (1910), pp. 171 ff. Macrob., 1. 12. 28; Plut., qu. Rom. 278 ff.; RR, pp. 214—215.

⁸³ For Juno see Petronius, 25. For Juno and Genius see Pliny, N.H. 2. 16, and Tibullus, 4. 6. 1. Also PRISTER, RE XI 2 (1922), 2126, s. v. *Kultus* (Personen).

⁸⁴ SHIELDS, op. cit., p. 6.

female individuality anymore than Venus yet the term indicates a much closer affinity⁸⁵. Moreover, the Genius is used to designate father and mother and was even substituted occasionally for Juno⁸⁶. A link between the two may exist in the *lectus genialis* which was a somewhat ancillary element of the household cult. The naming of a Genius in association with women is definitely known from epigraphical evidence⁸⁷.

The domestic Genius was worshipped on the birthday feast of the *paterfamilias* (his chief festival) and also when the *paterfamilias* was married⁸⁸. His sacrifice included a bountiful supply of wine and honey-cakes which were partaken by god and worshippers⁸⁹. Blood sacrifices included pigs and, occasionally, lambs⁹⁰. Members of the Roman household swore by the Genius⁹¹. Horace⁹² mentions that the Genius is mortal and that it passes "to another person on the death of the first one". Servius⁹³ stated that upon an old shield on the Capitoline was written: *genio urbis Romae, sive mas sive femina*. This also shows the confusion between the Genius and its feminine counterparts.

The Genius, like so many other catch-all type of *numina*, took on additional roles in the late republic and early empire. A temple at Stabiae, the colony of Puteoli, and even an actor, all had a Genius to protect them⁹⁴. The Roman emperor, the state, and the Roman people all had their own particular Genius⁹⁵. On the flange of a red earthen vase found in Vienne, France is the simple line: *Genio Populi Feliciter* ("to the Genius of the

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38. PALMER, op. cit., p. 4, feels that Juno is the goddess of youth without assigning either to men or women, that particular state.

⁸⁶ CIL XI 1820 *Genio Sancte Sacrum IUL Silvanus V E.*

⁸⁷ CIL VIII 22770 *D M S Genio Tarquittiae Marcelli Matri Piissimae.*

⁸⁸ CIL X 860 and 861. Tibullus, 2. 2. 1. Censorinus, 2. 2. SHIELDS, op. cit., p. 38.

⁸⁹ Ovid, *Trist.* 3. 13. 17.

⁹⁰ Horace, *Carmina* 3. 17. 14 ff. Tibullus (1. 7. 49) states that the sacrifices were bloodless.

⁹¹ Tibullus, 4. 5. 9. Plautus (*Curculio* 628) refers to the *genius* as *me et genium*. The Genius is also mentioned in *Aulularia* 724.

⁹² *Epist.* 2. 2. 188 *natura deus humanae mortalis in unum quodque caput.*

⁹³ Servius, ad Aen. 2. 351. A depiction of the serpent itself is on the shield. See also SHIELDS, op. cit., p. 37.

⁹⁴ Stabiae: CIL X 722 PETERSON, op. cit., p. 299. Puteoli: *Genius Coloniae Puteolanorum*, PETERSON, op. cit., p. 119. The inscription was a dedication of a vow made by a freedman, Marcus Annius Macer. Herculaneum documents an inscription which might refer to the Genius of a *collegium* or of the city. Actor: CIL X 1404. Philemo, an actor of secondary roles, is recorded in PETERSON, op. cit., p. 286.

⁹⁵ During the Hannibalic wars five victims were sacrificed in honor of the Roman people. See Livy, 21. 62. 10. Coins of the Roman Republic depict the Genius of the Roman People as early as 96—94 B.C. See SYDENHAM, op. cit. Nos. 604, 752, and 791. The draped bust of the Genius of the Roman People, bearded and wearing a diadem, with the letters G.P.R. behind, is shown as No. 752. For the concept of the *Genius Augusti* and its worship in Italy and the Empire see LILY ROSS TAYLOR, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middleton: 1931) LATTE, RR p. 308, felt that participation in the cult was a political, rather than religious, expression.

people, good fortune")⁹⁶. The Genius had evolved from an ancient procreative force, dynamic and intimately expressed in the household cult, to a *pro forma* acknowledgement which the empire's subjects felt for the political reality of Rome.

In Pompeii the meshing of both concepts of the Genius, private and public, occurred. Street shrines held dedications to the imperial Genius while household herms and shrines were focal points to honor the domestic Genius⁹⁷. The pictorial representation of the Genius, togate and carrying a *cornucopia*, is usually accompanied by the familiar serpents. In this domestic context, the Genius graphically personifies the spirit of an epigraph found at Terracina: *Genius familiae*⁹⁸. Other inscriptions connect him with the Lares, the most important of the household deities with which the *lararia* painting at Pompeii portray him.

The Genius is closely linked to the serpent in the household shrines of Pompeii and is probably represented by that reptile in numerous contexts. In Roman religion, as in the Hellenic cults, serpents evolved into quite diverse symbols⁹⁹. Ovid¹⁰⁰ tells us how Aesculapius came to Rome in the guise of a huge snake which symbolized the life-giving powers of the cult. Other powers are represented in the cult of Fortuna of Antium and Jupiter himself is recognizable in the visible form of a snake¹⁰¹. The snake also appears in the ancient and mysterious cult of Juno Sispes (Sospita) whose temple in Lanuvium had a grotto inhabited by a huge serpent¹⁰². Snakes were also important in everyday life since they served as portents¹⁰³.

The Romans distinguished between the various kinds of serpents which were then present in Italy. Pliny¹⁰⁴ described the *Aspides* (Asps) which

kill by coma, inflicting of all serpents the most dangerous bites. Another kind, the *draco*, is described by Pliny¹⁰⁵ as non-poisonous. Perhaps this type of snake may in fact be one of the larger Rat Snakes still present in modern Italy¹⁰⁶. In modern Calabria such harmless snakes are kept as house pets¹⁰⁷. Pliny¹⁰⁸ further describes the *draco* as an animal which can bring good luck to a home, a concept still felt in the rural areas of South Italy.

The serpent embodied the religious force of the Genius, especially the Genius of the Place. Servius¹⁰⁹, commenting on Virgil's 'Georgics', states that the serpent rejoices in the dwelling and is called Genius by the Romans. Persius¹¹⁰ describes the use of painted serpents as guardians of the place. Cicero¹¹¹ uses snakes as the symbols of the life force. In this passage from the 'De divinatione' the reptiles represented the life and death qualities of two people, one male and one female, and thus appear to be manifestations of the Genius. Actual serpents, incidentally, are almost impossible to sex. Aelian¹¹² clarifies this natural dilemma by arguing that the male snake can be distinguished from the female by his crest and beard. In the house shrines of Campania this may be the distinction between male and female painted snakes but not in real life¹¹³. Vergil¹¹⁴, in describing the memorial feast for Anchises, uses the snake as either the attendant of the dead hero or the Genius of the Place. Gellius¹¹⁵ also describes the serpent with a high crest as possibly an animal used to represent the Genius.

Both the serpent and the Genius (depicted anthropomorphically) are common in the domestic shrine iconography. Two distinctive types of serpents appear with the Genius. The first, Type I, shows a viperine, large

⁹⁶ CIL XII 5687—5694. Coins of the third century A.D. have the inscription *GENIO POPULI ROMANI* along with the nude figure of the Genius. The Genius of the Roman People also appears as a young beardless male on a rare coin of Galba, see *BMCatCoins*, I, p. 288.

⁹⁷ An inscription on the herm of L. Caecilius Jucundus records a dedication to his Genius by one of his freedmen, CIL X 860. Another inscription, found on an altar records a dedication to the *pater familias* and his Genius and Lares by a freedman, CIL X 861. An inscription "to the Genius and the Lares" was found at Nola, CIL X 1235 (*Genio et Laribus*).

⁹⁸ CIL X 6302.

⁹⁹ The serpent in Greece was the guardian of the house and a portent of good fortune, see MARTIN P. NILSSON, *Greek Folk Religion* (New York: 1940), p. 71. See also NILSSON's 'The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion' (Lund: 1927), pp. 283—284. For the festival of the Diasia (the worship of Zeus Melichios in serpent form) see LUDWIG DEUBNER, *Attische Feste* (Berlin: 1966), pp. 155—158. During the Thesmophoria in October, Greek women threw cakes and prayed to the serpents (spirits of the dead) which lived in caves or vaults sacred to Demeter. Plutarch, *Cleomenes* 39. Tame snakes were carefully tended in a sacred grove dedicated to Apollo in Epirus. As a young virgin fed them, various omens of health or sickness, famine or abundance, were interpreted from the manner in which the serpents took the food from her, Aelian, *N.A.* 11.2.

¹⁰⁰ *Met.* 15. 699—740.

¹⁰¹ Jupiter: Silius Italicus, *Punica* 13. 640—644; Fortuna: *RR*, Plate Seven.

¹⁰² Propertius, 4. 8. 3. For an excellent summary of the cult see PALMER, *op. cit.*, pp. 30—34.

¹⁰³ Cicero, *De Divinatione* 2. 29. 61.

¹⁰⁴ *N.H.* 29. 65. Vipers are still fairly common in the Apennines of Italy.

¹⁰⁵ *N.H.* 29. 67 *Draco non habet venena*.

¹⁰⁶ DAVID G. ORR, *Coluber longissimus* in Pompeii, Italy, *Journal of Herpetology* 2 (1968), p. 167.

¹⁰⁷ NILSSON, *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion* (see note 99), p. 281. See also RK s. v. Schlange, p. 610. Pliny mentions that snakes were kept at home as pets, *N.H.* 29. 72. The emperor Tiberius had a pet *draco* which he fed with his own hand. See Suetonius, *Tiberius* 72. Martial (7. 87. 7) mentions another *draco* coiled around a lady's neck. Serpents gliding harmlessly among cups and over laps are described by Seneca (*De ira* 2. 31. 6).

¹⁰⁸ *N.H.* 29. 67. To see a snake in modern Pompeii is to have "*buon fortuna*". Interview with Pompeii Custodian, July 5, 1972.

¹⁰⁹ *In Georg.* 3. 417 (*Serpens gaudet tectis ut sunt ἀγαθοὶ δαίμονες quos Latini genios vocant*).

¹¹⁰ *Sat.* 1. 112ff. *Hoc iuvat? 'hic' inquis 'vesto quisquam faxit oletum'. pingue duos anguis, pueri, sacer est locus, extra meite': discedo*. This would mean the Genius of the place and there is clear archaeological confirmation for this in Pompeii; snakes are painted on the wall to prevent just such a defilement, see NS (1910), p. 262.

¹¹¹ *De Divinatione* 2. 29. 62.

¹¹² *N.A.* 11. 26 and 10. 25.

¹¹³ Pliny, *N.H.* 11. 122 sharply comments that "no one can be found who has seen serpent's crests."

¹¹⁴ *Aen.* 5. 84—85. Servius, *In Aen.* 5. 84, comments that there is no place without a Genius, which usually manifests itself in a snake. See also GEORGE K. BOYCE, *Significance of the serpents on Pompeian House Shrines*, *AJA* 46 (1942), pp. 13—22. Boyce sees only the Genius of the Place in the Vergilian passage.

¹¹⁵ *Noctes Atticae* 6. 1. 3.

necked, animal¹¹⁸. The body of this type of serpent is generally covered with smooth scales but is occasionally shown with rough scales. Type II serpents do not show the viperine head¹¹⁷. In the example shown (Plate III 6) there is no noticeable tapering of the body between the head and the neck. The scales are smooth and the serpents are shown as thick-bodied reptiles. These snakes probably were modelled from non-poisonous snakes. The kind of snake shown as Type III is more likely a strictly naturalistic image of an actual non-poisonous species of serpent¹¹⁸. This snake, usually depicted in the act of crawling up a tree, would appear to be an essential part of the Pompeian garden painting. No snake of this type has been used in *lararium* painting.

A study of these snake types does lead to one significant conclusion. Many scholars have argued previously that the serpent shown in the Campanian house shrines is the Greek *Agathos Daimon*¹¹⁹. It is important to realize that the *Agathos Daimon* as serpent is usually represented in only one main pose. Although confronted pairs of serpents are known from Alexandrian coin types (the cult center of the *Agathos Daimon* was at Alexandria), all the serpents are viperine and resemble only the Type I serpents found in the Household shrines of Campania¹²¹. Moreover, all the *Agathos Daimon* snakes are shown wearing the Egyptian headgear called the *shhen*¹²². The characteristic coil and posture of the Alexandrine *Agathos Daimon* snakes are not found in the Pompeian shrines. The painted viperine snakes (Type I) are the most common in the Campanian shrines but a great number of the *lararia* snakes fall into the Type II category. The Uraeic cobra, on the other hand, is depicted in Pompeii just as it is found in Alexandria besides the *Agathos Daimon*¹²³. The images of other deities in the cult of the Egyptian gods at Pompeii also show no significant variation from their Hellenistic Egyptian counterparts. Perhaps the cult

¹¹⁶ Type I and Type II serpents are distributed throughout the Pompeian shrines almost equally. See illustration, Plate III 5 and 6.

¹¹⁷ See Plate III 6. This class of serpents probably represents the non-poisonous species of Italy.

¹¹⁸ A snake of this type is shown coiled around a tree on an *oecus-sacrarium*-painting located in VII. ix. 47, in Pompeii. These three numbers represent region, insula, and house numbers used to identify the architecture of Pompeii.

¹¹⁹ *Agathos Daimon*: MARTIN P. NILSSON, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (Munich: 1961), II, pp. 213—218. For the earlier cult see I, pp. 144, 214, 404, 414, and 586. See also WERNICKE, *RE* I 1 (1894), pp. 746—747, s. v. *Agathodaimon*. For the *Agathos Daimon* in Pergamum see ERWIN OHLEMUTZ, *Die Kulte und Heiligtümer der Götter in Pergamum* (Darmstadt: 1968), pp. 137 and 263. ERICH KUSTER, *Die Schlange in der griechischen Kunst und Religion*, *Relig. Versuch. und Vorarb.* 13, 2 (Gießen: 1913), p. 142. Here KUSTER argued that the serpent was "a generous, charitable, fertility and prosperity creature, in short an *Agathos Daimon*". The *Agathos Daimon* was a serpent but was it the serpent seen in the household shrines of Pompeii?

¹²⁰ G. DATTARI, *Monete Imperiali Greche* (Numi Augg. Alexandrini) (Cairo: 1901), Vol. II, Plates XXVIII and XXXI.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Plate XXVIII, nos. 1109 and 1938.

¹²² *Ibid.*, nos. 288—289. ¹²³ BOYCE, pp. 56—57.

of the *Agathos Daimon* is present in Pompeii as it is in Delos and on the coins of Nero in Alexandria, as a cult symbol for the imperial religious program. It seems unlikely that the serpents in the *lararia* of Pompeii and Campania are the representations of the *Agathos Daimon*.

Serpents are clearly used in the house shrines as accompanying animals for the togate and human image of the Genius. A bronze statuette of a Genius found near the entrance of a house in Pompeii seems to depict the serpent as an attribute of the individual Genius¹²⁴. The serpent, bearded but not crested, is shown coiled around the right arm of the Genius, and his head is arched above and behind the head of the statuette.

The togate Genius is a common element in the *lararium* painting. He is depicted as a togate male figure, usually holding a *patra* and sometimes shown with a *cornucopia*¹²⁵. Serpents, crested and bearded, are ubiquitous in the shrine painting. What did the snake mean? It is shown as the guardian of the place, as the animate arm of the procreative Genius force, and as a simple apotropaic device. It also means good fortune and serves as an indicator that a place or object is sacred and not to be treated with disrespect¹²⁶.

The Roman Genius, represented anthropomorphically, zoomorphically, and abstractly, was an integral part of the Roman domestic cult. The Genius was a religious idea that could accommodate a great variety of roles. Every individual, household, legion, cohort, and guild might possess a Genius¹²⁷.

VII. The House Shrines of Pompeii

The household shrines of Pompeii, or *lararia*, served as the focal points for the household cult and, as such, constitute our most important assemblage of physical evidence for Roman domestic religion. Since Pompeii has fortuitously preserved our largest collection of these shrines, a study of its archaeological evidence becomes mandatory for a thorough analysis of the cult. The word *lararium* is first encountered in the 'Scriptores historiae Augustae' and was used to describe the particular characteristics of Roman household shrines¹²⁸. In earlier accounts household shrines

¹²⁴ NS (1910), pp. 379—381.

¹²⁵ See Plate IV 9.

¹²⁶ A painting found at Herculaneum shows a huge serpent coiled around an altar and raising his head to accept the offerings placed above him. Beside him is the inscription: *Genius Huius Loci Montis*. See BOYCE, *Significance*, p. 18. For another Genius of the Mountain see CIL VIII 14588. For the Genius of a fountain see CIL VIII 4291.

¹²⁷ Individual, CIL X 772; household, CIL VIII 2597; legion, CIL VII 103; cohort CIL VII 440; guild, CIL XIV 10.

¹²⁸ Marcus Aurelius kept golden statues of his teachers in his *lararium*. See Marcus Antoninus 3. 5. The death of the Roman emperor was predicted by Tacitus when the gods of his *lararium* fell down, HA, Tacitus 17. 4.

are called *sacraria* and even *aediculae*, the latter a term that in fact only describes one type of household shrine.¹²⁹

The custom of erecting a shrine to the household deities within the Roman house was an ancient one and perhaps the first shrines, indeed even the images of the deities, were crafted from impermanent materials, such as wood. The practice itself may have been an indigenous Italic one, but there is some evidence that the Romans borrowed the idea from the Etruscans.¹³⁰ A few extant Etruscan paintings appear to represent household rites and small aedicular shrines are known from Etruscan urns of the fourth century B.C.¹³¹ A small pedimented shrine, quite similar to a Roman *aedicula* type *lararium*, is shown on a funerary chest from Volterra.¹³² The first shrines at Pompeii were probably small wooden ones and by the time of the early imperial epoch they were, for the most part, monumentalized in stone and masonry.

The household shrines of Pompeii, dating from the late Republican and early imperial periods, serve as typological reference points for the whole Roman world, since no other town has equalled their quality, degree of preservation, and variety. Boyce, in his important 'Corpus', has classified the shrines in three main divisions: the niche type, the *aedicula*, and the wall painting type.¹³³ Other types, of course, also exist. The most impressive is the room, or detached building, which has been set aside for household piety. This has been called a *sacellum*.¹³⁴ It should also be carefully noted that household worship can take place without using any of the above. The presence, for example, in Pompeii of hundreds of portable altars illustrates well the possibility of domestic sacrifice and propitiation on a humbler scale. Larger altars have also been discovered in domestic contexts. Sacrifice involving lighted altars demands a room open to the sky and may also account for the great number of *lararia* located in peristyles, *atria*, and gardens.

All of the three formal types of shrines have two main features in common: the representations of the images of the deities and the provision

for sacrifice before the images. The niches found in most shrines probably contained the statuette of the god as they do in modern European Christian shrines. Boyce comments that the above two requirements "dictate the form of the shrine within certain limits but allow at the same time considerable freedom in working out details of form and appearance"¹³⁵. Sacrifice is implemented by permanent and portable altars, and the images of divinity are accommodated by paintings, statuettes, and symbolic references.

The simplest type of shrine is an arcuated or rectangular recess in the masonry wall, the basic niche form.¹³⁶ Usually it is coated with the same kind of plaster covering the wall around it and occasionally even forms part of the overall decorative scheme. Although ubiquitous in Pompeii no two niches are exactly alike and they differ greatly in execution and cosmetic treatment. Simple in shape and decoration, many niches are difficult to identify as shrines since they could serve other functions.¹³⁷ Most are located at an easily reachable height on the wall. The more elaborate niches are provided with aedicular façades which frame the recess.¹³⁸ This form actually creates another sub-type of niche, the pseudo-aedicular shrine. Generally constructed from stucco, the aedicular façade gives the niche great character and religious realism. Boyce lists these types around niches, wall paintings, and on the rear of wall niches.¹³⁹

The finest and most impressive *lararia* take the form of miniature temples. These, three dimensional in shape and resting on *podia*, are known as *aediculae*.¹⁴⁰ The great shrine in the House of Menander's *atrium* is one of the finest extant *aediculae* found in Pompeii.¹⁴¹ These types of shrines are carefully built to blend or accent the decor used in the rest of the room. One unique survivor has slabs of grayish marble covering its base carved with scenes depicting the disastrous earthquake of 62 A.D.¹⁴² Some of these little temples have been excavated with the statuettes of gods still standing in them.¹⁴³

The third major type of shrine is the wall-painting type.¹⁴⁴ These shrines are usually provided with altars. These paintings follow a rather consistent canon of painted Lares, usually paired, sacrificing togate figure with *cornucopia* (Genius)¹⁴⁵, and serpent(s). The whole composition is framed in swags, floral decorations and *taeniae*. Yet, each painting differs remarkably

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

¹³⁰ See Plate I 1.

¹³¹ Wall niches were favorite receptacles for oil lamps.

¹³² See Plate I 2.

¹³³ Boyce, p. 101.

¹³⁴ See Plate II 3.

¹³⁵ See Orr, op. cit., Plate III, Fig. 7.

¹³⁶ Boyce, Plate 30, Fig. 4; Orr, op. cit., p. 90. See also Plate VIII 16.

¹³⁷ Boyce, p. 101. For a good example of an *aedicula* shrine with Corinthian capitals see Boyce, p. 38, no. 112.

¹³⁸ See Plate II 4. Also Orr, p. 92, and Plate IV, Figs. 8 and 9.

¹³⁹ See Plate IV 8.

¹²⁹ *Sacraria*: Cicero, Pro Milone 86. *Aedicula*: Petronius, 29. 8. Sometimes the household shrine appears as a cupboard or is closely associated with one. Wooden cupboards (and shrines) have been preserved at Herculaneum, see below p. 1585. Petronius, 29, also tells of Trimalchio's large cupboard which contained small household shrines. A Roman sarcophagus in the Leyden Museum has a good representation of a cupboard household shrine executed in low relief on the inside face of the sarcophagus. See A. L. F. Rivet (ed.), The Roman Villa in Britain (London: 1969), Plate 4. 30.

¹³⁰ See Ryberg, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 15.

¹³² Ibid. *Lararia* are known in Rome from the first century B.C.

¹³³ Boyce, p. 10. Some *lararia* do not fit any of these categories. The recently discovered Sarno River *lararium* does not correctly belong to the three groups cited above. See David G. Orr, Roman Domestic Religion: A Study of the Roman Household Deities and their Shrines (Unpublished Ph. d. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland: 1972), Corpus A, no. 42. Images are represented in the shrines by statuettes placed inside the niches or by paintings of the deities on the *lararium* or adjacent walls.

¹³⁴ Boyce, p. 18.

in style, execution, color, and pose. This is probably due to the 'popular' character of these paintings. Although 'primitive' painting has been the subject of countless works on the modern level, this kind of Roman art has yet to be adequately explicated in cultural terms. Intimately drawn and occasionally even humorously composed, the Pompeian *lararia* painting confronts us with a traditional force not known in the more formal and distant Pompeian mural schemes. Additionally, the full face composition of *lararia* sacrificial scenes seems to anticipate the late Roman Christian painting motives. Perhaps, in these rather simple domestic matrices, the Pompeian *lararia* painting reflected ideas which were to dominate later Roman art.

The most uncommon shrine is the *sacellum*. One garden building belonging to the wine-merchant Caius Caesius Restitutus had a niche on its east wall, a masonry altar in front of the niche, and two painted garlands above the niche¹⁴⁶. The *sacellum* found in the *caupona* located at VI. i.1., a rectangular windowless room with red walls and low benches distributed around three sides, with a ceiling vaulted and stuccoed, was provided with a *lararium* painting and a masonry altar decorated with a garlanded pig¹⁴⁷. Other *sacella* have been discovered in the more recent excavations.

Several kinds of altars have been discovered in association with house shrines. The earliest altars, tuffoid, date back to the Italic period of occupation¹⁴⁸. Many of the limestone altars have been painted after first being covered with thick coats of stucco. Some altars still bear the traces of the last sacrifices made on them¹⁴⁹. Portable altars of different sizes and forms have been found at Pompeii. These have been constructed out of tufa, marble, limestone, and terra cotta. Although many examples have been found in the excavations conducted in the years 1951–1954 their exact provenience is a matter of some debate. The smallest examples of these were doubtless used as votives and may have been placed in the niches themselves. In some cases where altars were not provided, simple tiles were imbedded in the wall¹⁵⁰.

The distribution of the shrines in Pompeii do not follow any general pattern. Regions Six and Seven have only a few shrines while Region One has many. This probably only comments on the fact that the latter named region is the most recent to be excavated and consequently has had preserved and recorded far more examples of its *lararia*. The room distribution of

¹⁴⁶ ORR, p. 92; BOYCE, p. 91, no. 457 and NS (1889), p. 123.

¹⁴⁷ RM 4 (1889), p. 14f. See also WILHELMINA JASHEMSKI, A Pompeian Vinarius, CJ 62 (1967), pp. 193–204. See also ORR, Plate VIII, Figs. 17–18.

¹⁴⁸ Two of these are still in situ placed there by the pre-Roman inhabitants of Pompeii: see BOYCE, p. 15. See also E. PERNICE, Hellenistische Tische, Zisternenmündungen, Becken-untersätze, Altäre und Truhen (Die Hellenistische Kunst in Pompeji, vol. V) (Berlin and Leipzig: 1932).

¹⁴⁹ BOYCE, p. 36. For ashes found on an altar in a garden *lararium* see also WILHELMINA JASHEMSKI, The Caupona of Euxinus, Archeology 20 (1967), p. 44.

¹⁵⁰ BOYCE, Plate 27, Fig. 1; ORR, Plate V, p. 96.

shrines found in the newly excavated areas of the city, Region One, for example, differs somewhat from BOYCE. More garden and kitchen shrines have been proportionately discovered in the recently excavated areas than in the rest of the city. Since fewer houses have peristyles in the newly excavated quarter this accounts for their scarcity there. The shops and taverns of the newly discovered region house twenty-nine shrines¹⁵¹. This compares with BOYCE's count of one hundred and eighty six¹⁵². Probably their great number illustrates the desire of the merchants and hostlers to honor the deities of their guests as well as to demonstrate their own piety.

Paintings and statuettes found in Pompeian shrines document the presence of a wide spectrum of deities, both Roman and foreign. The Lares appear as youthful sprites with brimming *rhyta*, sometimes also carrying either a *situla* or *patera*¹⁵³. Usually symmetrical when paired, BOYCE however cites a strange exception where one Lar holds a cup and the other grasps the customary *rhyton*¹⁵⁴. After looking at the painted depictions of Lares at Pompeii one senses that these are not the Roman's dead ancestors as they tend to show more *festivitas* than *gravitas*. The Genius appears togate and is usually posed with *cornucopia* and *patera*. His sober countenance and serious sacrificial posture contrasts sharply with the more animated Lares. The female counterpart, Juno, may be seen in at least one instance¹⁵⁵. The Genius can be shown with a rudder, Fortuna's usual attribute. Some paintings of the Genius figure may be actual portraits and a future study may clarify this intriguing possibility¹⁵⁶.

Closely linked with the representation of the Genius is the serpent. There is a great variety of serpent painting in the Pompeian shrines, but most fit the first two classes described earlier. Serpents are sculpted out of stucco in some of the Pompeian *lararia*¹⁵⁷. Serpents are also painted in contexts somewhat removed from that of piety. One example shows a man who is apparently defiling another man's house and is attacked by two serpents, the guardians of the owner's property¹⁵⁸. This example when compared with other *lararia* serpents and those customarily placed on

¹⁵¹ ORR, p. 99.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ See Plates V 10, 11, VI 12. See ORR, Corpus A, No. 3; BOYCE, p. 102.

¹⁵⁴ BOYCE, p. 102. BOYCE assumes this to be a *skyphos*. An unusual bronze statuette of a Lar (H. 0.165 m) found in the Mosel River near Trier holds what appears to be a *cornucopia* in his left hand. However, the tip of the *cornucopia* is provided with the forefront of an antelope, so that the whole object closely resembles a *rhyton*. The two attributes of a Lar, *rhyton* and *cornucopia*, seem to have been strangely merged in this example. See HEINZ MENZEL, Die Römischen Bronzen aus Deutschland, II. Trier (Mainz: 1966), p. 25.

¹⁵⁵ BOYCE, no. 349. DOROTHY K. HILL argues that the statuettes of the togate Genius (*genius togatus*) probably were not made after the Julio-Claudian period. This may explain why very few bronze statuettes of Genius figures have been found in Pompeii. See DOROTHY K. HILL, The Togate Genius in Bronze, AJA 72 (1968), p. 166.

¹⁵⁶ For two examples see BOYCE, pp. 272, and no. 309.

¹⁵⁷ See ORR, Corpus A, no. 55, and p. 103.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. Plate VI.

latrine walls demonstrate that the protective aspects of these animals are the most important in the domestic cult¹⁵⁹. Serpents are used on exterior walls facing streets and even the walls of ovens and mills for much the same reason¹⁶⁰.

In the *lararium* paintings the serpents are offered eggs, pine cones, figs, and dates. Eggs are both common in the diet of the larger Rat Snakes which inhabit the areas around Pompeii and metaphorically, as religious symbols, are used along with pine cones to represent immortality¹⁶¹. Serpents are generally paired and are shown flanking an altar. The presence of figs probably suggests an ancient festival, the *Nonae Caprotinae*¹⁶². Serpents seem to share the secret of immortality and thus they are frequent elements in the iconography of the Pompeian house shrine.

The major Roman deities depicted in the *lararia* reflect the religious make-up of the town of Pompeii. Three of the most popular deities, Fortuna, Vesta, and Bacchus, mirror closely the social, economic, and cultural character of the town. Fortuna, usually painted in a long sleeveless red *chiton*, with a *modius* on her head, a rudder in her right hand, a *cornucopia* in her left, and a green globe at her feet, seems to be the commonest image shown¹⁶³. Originally an agricultural goddess, she became, like the Greek Tyche, a goddess of luck or chance, and was popular in early imperial art and as a numismatic device. The luck which farmers hoped for their crops is altered in Pompeii to the luck of commerce and trade. The rudder comments on the dangers of shipping and the vagaries of Mediterranean trade in the early Empire. Her conflation with the Egyptian Isis also underscores this point. Sometimes encountered in the Pompeian *cauponae* Fortuna also can bestow her favor on every pitch of the dice¹⁶⁴.

Vesta, on the other hand, reflects the Romanity of the town of Pompeii and the ancient tradition of its household life. She is the patron deity of bakers and is most commonly found near their ovens and mills. She is occasionally depicted either riding an ass or leading the animal by its halter¹⁶⁵.

¹⁵⁹ Latrines: ORR, *Corpus A*, no. 9. An *aedicula* found in the *atrium* of I. xvi. 2. contains two painted representations of serpents without any other paintings of personifications or deities. The bodies of the serpents are slender but the treatment of the heads indicates that these reptiles are viperine and as such, fall into type I. Are these the *Genii loci*?

¹⁶⁰ WILLIAM GELL, *Pompeiana: The Topography, Edifices, and Ornaments of Pompeii*, 2 vols. (London: 1832), Plate XXXVIII.

¹⁶¹ MAZOIS, II, Plate X, No. 1. ORR, Plate VIII, fig. 19.

¹⁶² Plutarch, *Romulus* 29; *Camillus*, 33; *Varro*, *L.L.* 6. 18; *Athenaeus*, 3. 78c—d. 82d (ch. 14 and 23); and *Macrobius*, *Sat.* 1. 11. 36—40. *Macrobius* states that the milky fig juice was sacrificed to *Juno*.

¹⁶³ BOYCE, no. 372, for example, shows her as *Isis-Fortuna*. See TRAN TAM TINH, *Essai sur le culte d'Isis à Pompéi* (Paris: 1964), p. 108. See also the same author's 'Le culte des divinités orientales à Herculaneum', *Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain* 17 (Leiden: 1971).

¹⁶⁴ BOYCE, no. 13.

¹⁶⁵ Vesta leading an ass, BOYCE, no. 77; for Vesta riding on an ass see no. 420, also *Propertius*, 4. 1. 21.

Bacchus is the third most popular deity in the Pompeian shrines. His depictions vary from a god dressed in a *chlamys*, high boots, and wreathed with ivy, to an exceptionally well executed figure whose entire body is covered by an enormous bunch of black grapes. Sometimes he is seen pouring a libation on an altar with a *cantharus* or *patera*. As might be guessed, Bacchus is the patron god of wine-making and tavern keeping. One *taberna* painting shows Bacchus paired with Mercury. Others show him with Fortuna. One painting of Bacchus covered with grapes was found in the House of the Centenary where the wealthy wine-producer Aulus Rustius Verus lived¹⁶⁶. The god of wine was also worshipped by workers who labored in a Pompeian *fullonica*¹⁶⁷.

The early imperial cosmopolitan atmosphere which the little town of Pompeii subsumes is shown in the deities encountered in the shrines. Mercury, the patron of commerce and thieves, appears in many of the household shrines of freedmen and tavern owners. He is shown in the *taberna* with his *caduceus* and money bag. A *lararium* niche in the House of the Cryptoporticus is decorated with a bust of Mercury wearing a winged *petasos* and the image of a green *caduceus* over his left shoulder¹⁶⁸. The presence of two painted *caducei* probably refers to Mercury in the shrine found at I. xii. 12¹⁶⁹. A *caupona* painting showing a man pouring out wine from a *dolium* also includes his Greek name, *Hermes*¹⁷⁰. *Venus Pompeiana*, the patroness of the city, is shown in several shrine paintings. Occasionally she is shown with *Amor* and other figures. *Minerva*, in one instance shown as wearing a *peplos*, and carrying a shield and spear, can be found in one recently discovered *aedicula* which also includes a fine depiction of a togate sacrificing *Genius* with reddish-brown serpent¹⁷¹.

Foreign deities also find their home in the *lararia* of Pompeii. The cult of the Egyptian deities is well represented in the house shrine painting¹⁷². *Isis-Fortuna* is shown in at least three examples and the symbols of the Isis cult, e.g. the *sistrum*, appear in *lararium* painting. Probably the most unusual shrine yet to be discovered in Pompeii was at one time sacred to an eastern cult. This shrine, an arcuated niche with *lararium* painting, was discovered on the east wall of an outdoor *triclinium* located at I. xii. 15. Painted on the interior walls of the niche are two stags, a small yellow crescent moon, small red asterisks, a reddish-brown *Medusa* head, and a red and green garland. Flanking the niche are two incredibly rendered *Lares*. These large figures are shown with blue tunics, enormous blue *thyta*, and

¹⁶⁶ MATTEO DELLA CORTE, *Case ed abitanti di Pompei* (Napoli: 1965), p. 133, no. 216.

¹⁶⁷ BOYCE, no. 171.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 36.

¹⁶⁹ See Plate VI 13. See ORR, *Corpus A*, no. 38. This also shows the *sistrum* and a serpent coiled around an *omphalos*.

¹⁷⁰ BOYCE, no. 2.

¹⁷¹ ORR, p. 112.

¹⁷² See Plate VI 13.

green *palerae*. Two large heads, on the extreme left and right of the niche, seem to be part of the *lararium* panel. The presence of the stags and the crescent moon may mean that Isis-Artemis was worshipped here¹⁷³.

The River Sarnus was also propitiated in a very handsome *aedicula* shrine located in a small garden at the rear of I. xiv. 6/7. A pool probably surrounded this rubble masonry and stuccoed shrine. The lower front panel shows a commercial scene on the river Sarno with the river god himself pouring out his waters from an overturned jug¹⁷⁴. Doubtless an actual scene perhaps connected with the occupation of the owner, this trade scene illustrates the very intimate nature of domestic worship, through the melding of sacred and secular scenes.

Ancient Italic and Oscan deities may also have survived in the household cult of the Pompeian. An old shrine found in the Villa of the Mysteries was decorated in a primitive Oscan style similar to those paintings found in South Italian tombs¹⁷⁵. A procession made up of two horsemen, a throng of worshippers, and a trumpet player, are grouped around a painted altar. A strange figure (Lar?) pours wine from a *rhyton* on a layer of plaster which seems to be even older¹⁷⁶. Surely the most significant of these earlier shrines to survive is the example located in the southwest corner of the peristyle in the House of Menander. In this shrine stood five figures of some perishable material, probably wood, which left impressions in the volcanic ash. The excavators made plaster casts of these figures, surprisingly crude effigies, when one compares them to the finely executed *lararium* which once held them. Unfortunately, their condition is such that they will no doubt remain an enigma although both MAIURI and DE FRANCISCIS have speculated about them¹⁷⁷. They are not the images of the ancestors carried in the funeral processions of distinguished Romans although such images were to be found prominently displayed in the Roman house.

The Pompeian *lararia* also contain abbreviated references to cults and deities in their use of symbolism and organic decoration. Trees, for example, occur in many shrine paintings, and also figure prominently in the mural decoration known as 'sacro-idyllic'¹⁷⁸. There is some suggestion that certain trees were indeed worshipped in Pompeii and should, therefore, be reflections of those painted examples found in the *lararia*. One of the best examples is found in the excavations undergone in the southwest corner of a peristyle located in a house in Region Seven¹⁷⁹. Large holes in the earth near an altar located there have been interpreted as evidence for an *arbor*

¹⁷³ See Plate VII 15.

¹⁷⁴ See Plate VII 14.

¹⁷⁵ NS (1910), p. 141.

¹⁷⁶ AMEDEO MAIURI, *La Villa dei Misteri* (Rome: 1932), p. 80.

¹⁷⁷ AMEDEO MAIURI, *La Casa del Menandro e il suo tesoro di argenteria* (Rome: 1933), pp. 98-106. ALFONSO DE FRANCISCIS, *Il ritratto Romano, a Pompeii* (Naples: 1951), p. 19, discusses the images in connection with the *Lar praestes*.

¹⁷⁸ See A. MAIURI, *Roman Painting* (Geneva: 1953), pp. 121-122.

¹⁷⁹ NS (1910), pp. 466-467.

sacra which must have stood on this site. Certainly the intense agricultural activity in Campania, now known to have prospered within the walls of Pompeii itself, would lend itself to such worship¹⁸⁰. The *lararia*, at any rate, show this curious blend of agricultural and commercial, business and domestic, Foreign and Italic in their structure and iconography.

Plants and flowers, as well as various cult animals appear regularly in the *lararium* painting. The *corona spicca*, the crown of wheat ears, which was dedicated to Ceres and worn by the Arval priesthood, appears on a *lararium* painting along with Ceres herself¹⁸¹. Garlands decorate the great majority of Pompeian shrines since the domestic hearth itself was crowned with flowers on the Calends, Nones, and Ides of each month¹⁸². Not only were the Pompeian shrines covered with painted decorations of garlands but there is evidence that provision was made in the shrines for the hanging up of actual floral wreaths and garlands¹⁸³. Apollo, Bacchus, Minerva, Hercules, and Venus were represented by laurel, ivy, olive, poplar, and myrtle representations. Waterfowl appear on many of the shrines and perhaps they refer both to the Egyptianizing influence of mural decoration then fashionable as well as to the marshlands of southern Italy and their fauna.

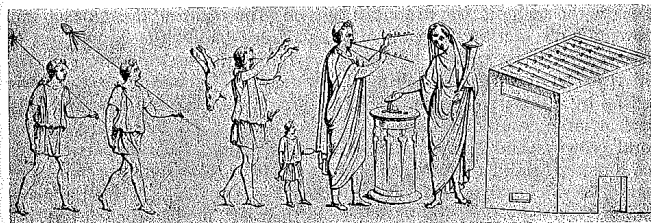


Fig. 7. Sacrificial Scene (Pompeii VII. iv. 20)

Marine animals (dolphins, hippocamps, and fish) of course comment on the Bay of Naples and its bounty. Several shrines are actually embellished with real conches and scallop shells.

Most depictions of sacrifice in the painted *lararia* are quite simply composed and executed in a popular, or naive, style. A domestic sacrifice is illustrated by Fig. 7 and is included to portray some idea of an actual sacrifice undertaken near the shrine on a festal day¹⁸⁴. The image of the

¹⁸⁰ For the Pompeian gardens and vineyards see WILHELMINA JASHEMSKI, *The Gardens of Pompeii: an Interim Report*, *Cronache Pompeiane* 1 (1975), pp. 48-81.

¹⁸¹ Pliny, N.H. 18. 2. 2. The crown appears on a *lararium* painting in connection with a depiction of Ceres, Boyce, no. 112.

¹⁸² Cato, RR 143. 2. 11.

¹⁸³ Nails driven into the walls to hold garlands are found in ORR, *Corpus A*, no. 3, and Boyce, nos. 213, 349, and 459. Juvenal, 9. 137 states that the Lares were offered floral wreaths.

¹⁸⁴ See also Boyce, Plate 18, Figure 2.

Genius is shown pouring a libation on the altar and holding a *cornucopia* in his left hand. Boyce feels that this representation of the Genius possesses strong individualistic portrait features. A *tibicen* (trumpet player) stands on the other side and is dressed in a white garment. A small *camillus* (acolyte in the household cult) is directly behind the *tibicen* and is depicted as carrying a shallow dish and a pitcher. A man wearing a knife and carrying a hog (the proper sacrifice to the Genius) appears next in the procession and is in turn followed by two men bearing poles which terminate in finials which resemble pinecones. An oven stands at the right of the panel and closely connects the painted image to the real kitchen in which it is located.

Several recently excavated kitchens in Region One of Pompeii also contain painted depictions of sacrifice. A house located at I. xiii. 2. contains a garden pseudo-*aedicula lararium*, a *sacellum*, and a kitchen painting¹⁸⁵. The kitchen wall paintings flank an arcuated niche which boasts painted garlands and a projecting tile shelf. Above the niche is a painted oak wreath (Civic crown?) which may be an imperial reference. A painted spit with cuts of meat and a large ham shank can be seen to the left of the niche. An eel, a favorite item in the Pompeian diet, impaled on a spit appears on the right. A serpent, green plant material, and a cylindrical altar are shown beneath the niche in the canonical fashion. The painting on the east wall shows a large sacrificial scene. Although faded badly, the figures can be discerned. A green garland borders this painting on the top and right. The top register showing the sacrificial ceremony is isolated from the lower register by a heavy red ground line. Two large Lares, carrying *rhyta* and pails, flank a large group of tunicate and togate figures. The Lares are wearing floral crowns. The sacrificial scene consists of two rows of participants, one directly behind the other. Just to the left of this group are two large, togate, sacrificing figures shown with their heads covered. Is this the *paterfamilias* of the dwelling and his wife? On their left, next to the left Lar, is a *tibicen*. The center group consists of fourteen people, seven in the front row and seven in back. The extreme left figure of the front row is a *camillus* bearing a garland. One of the men in the back row appears to be carrying a small animal for the sacrifice. Several figures seem to be gesturing ritually, with the left hand placed over the chest. Below the red ground line are three animals; two mules with packs and a large bull. The size of this throng seems to echo those celebrations which were imperial gestures organized by the *vicomagistri* and which took place at the street shrines. Perhaps this is the ceremony referred to in this and comparable sacrificial scenes found in Pompeian kitchen *lararia*. The painted images of the street shrines and those shown in the *lararium* painting appear to have much in common and were perhaps drawn from the same source. Pompeii has many extant street shrines including a regular series of them located on the Via dell'Abbondanza. A close examination of these *lararia* illustrates the above argument that they reflect similar styles, iconography, and compositional

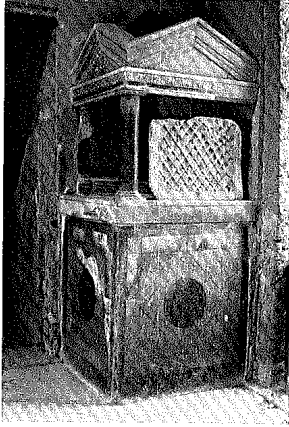


1. Niche Type *lararium* (Pompeii IX. iii. 12)

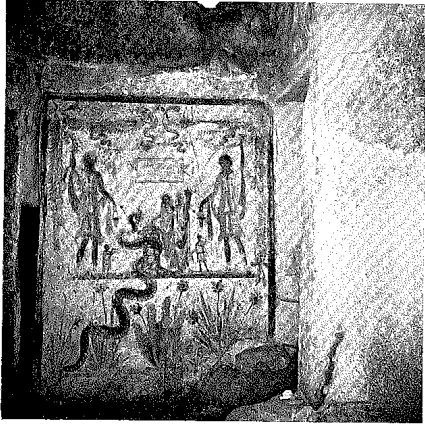


2. Pseudo-*aedicula-lararium* (Pompeii IX. ii. 21)

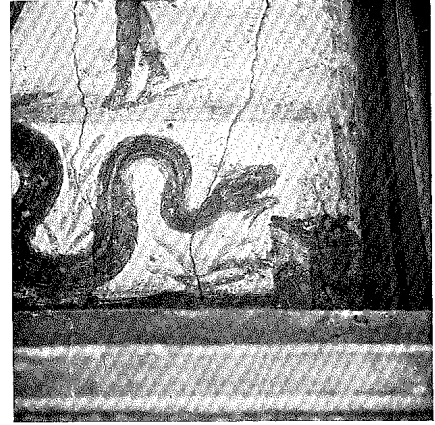
¹⁸⁵ ORR, pp. 161–162.



3. *Aedicula-lararium* (Pompeii I. x. 4)



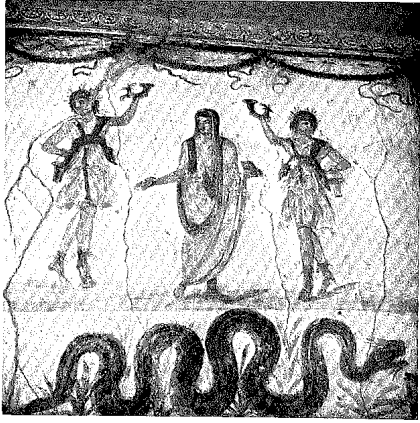
4. Wall Painting Type *lararium* (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)



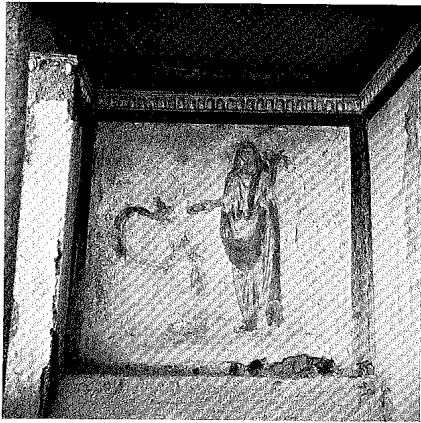
5. Type I Serpent (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)



6. Type II Serpent (Pompeii VI. xvi. 7)



8. Standard *lararia* Painting Canon. Two Lares flanking Genius with serpent beneath (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)



9. Genius (Pompeii I. xvi. 3)



10. Lar (l.) with Bacchus (r.) (Pompeii I. viii. 8/9)



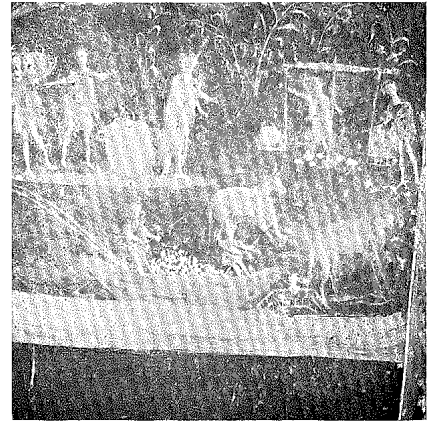
11. Lar (r.) with Genius (l.) (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)



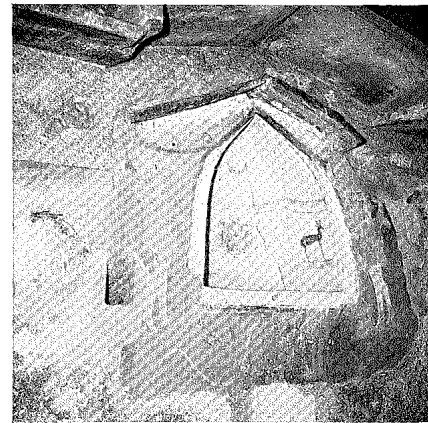
12. Lares flanking altar, serpents flanking altar below (Pompeii I. xii. 3)



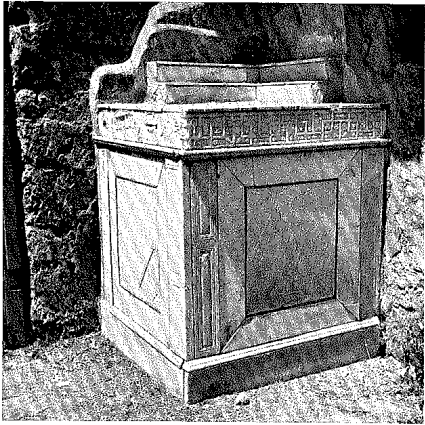
13. Detail of painted lararium niche showing *sistrum* (upper right corner), two *caducei* (upper left corner and center right), *stula* (center left) and serpent coiled around an *omphalos* (center top) (Pompeii I. xiii. 12)



14. Lararium painting detail showing commercial scene on the Sarno River (Pompeii I. xiv. 6/7)



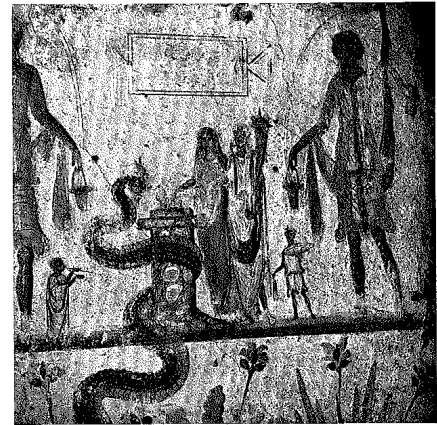
15. Lararium (Pompeii I. xii. 15)



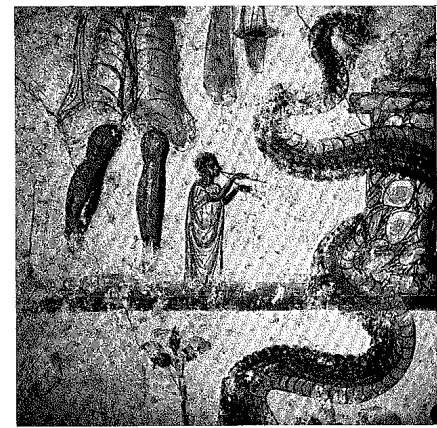
16. *Lararium* (Pompeii V. i. 10. 23/27)



17. *Lararium* with painted and stuccoed serpents (Pompeii I. xvi. 2)



18. *Lararium* detail sacrificial scene (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)



19. *Lararium* detail, *tibicen* (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)

20. Wooden *lararium* (Herculaneum V. 17)

details¹⁸⁶. Certainly, elements from this cult permeated the household cult, particularly among Pompeii's prosperous population of freedmen.

Although Pompeii has the greatest number of preserved household shrines in the ancient world, the surrounding Campanian area also contains a large number of shrines. Since Campania does have many more shrines than any other area in the Roman world it is sometimes difficult to resist the temptation of generalizing on the household cult based primarily on the Campanian *lararia*. However, there are notable differences between even the two principle Campanian towns where shrines are found in abundance, Herculaneum and Pompeii.

VIII. The House Shrines of Herculaneum

The domestic shrines of Herculaneum are second only to Pompeii in their importance, diversity, preservation, and distribution¹⁸⁷. Among the most important of these *lararia* are the finely crafted wooden shrines which have been miraculously preserved in Herculaneum¹⁸⁸. These wooden examples were completely carbonized during the eruption due to the intense heat of the ash and fill, and were surprisingly well preserved. One magnificent example located in insula V, number 31 was constructed in two sections with the lower part consisting of a cupboard with two doors. The top section was built in the shape of a temple with two columns, pröstyle, and a small *cella* which housed the statuettes found in the shrine. Another similar *lararium* found in a second story at insula III, number 13/15 still enshrined small statuettes of Jupiter, the Lares, Athena, Aesculapius, Fortuna, and Harpocrates¹⁸⁹. The overall effect of these wooden house shrines is one of traditional grandeur without ornamental embellishment. They contrast sharply with the brilliant mural decoration which occasionally surrounds them.

Probably the most controversial of all the *lararia* found in Herculaneum is located in a second story room (Room A) of the Casa del Bicentenario¹⁹⁰. It consists of a small stuccoed panel which bears the imprint of what some scholars have thought to be a Christian cross. A small wooden cupboard

¹⁸⁶ ORR, Plate XI, pp. 125—127. Excellent discussion with illustrations of the finest street shrines excavated in this century is in V. SPINAZZOLA, pp. 177ff. The author of this article is presently compiling a catalog of the street shrines of Pompeii. See also ESCHBACH, *passim*.

¹⁸⁷ For a complete catalog of the shrines of Herculaneum see Corpus B in ORR.

¹⁸⁸ Ercolano, pp. 263—265. The lead seal of an owner was found in one of these wooden shrines, p. 472, n. 53. See Plate X 20.

¹⁸⁹ ORR, p. 129.

¹⁹⁰ Ercolano, p. 237. See also C. GIORDANO and I. KAHN, *Gli ebrei in Pompei e in Ercolano e nelle città della Campania Felix* (Pompei: n. d.) and P. CIPROTTI, *Conoscere Pompei* (Rome: 1959), pp. 61—63 and: Herculaneum, p. 47.

¹⁹⁰ ANRW II 16

placed before this cross may have served as a storage cupboard for sacred objects, or even as a wooden altar. This 'cross', however, may actually be the remains of a shelf support. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that Christians were present in Campania by this date.

Lararia painting at Herculaneum is not common. The best preserved and most significant example is a second story *lararium* painting located in insula V, Number 15, which depicts two Lares and two confronting serpents in canonical fashion¹⁹¹. MAIURI believed that this painting was completed just prior to the destruction of the house in 79 A.D.¹⁹² The representation of the Lares is somewhat extraordinary since they are depicted with their feet bare. This appears to be the only representation known where this odd variation on the traditional formal pose occurs. A *taberna* painting, like those found in Pompeii, honors Bacchus, along with Hercules and Mercury¹⁹³.

A public extension of the cult may be seen in the *lararium* painting found on the east wall of an open rectangular area with an entrance on one side leading to the *Palestra*¹⁹⁴. The painted serpents in this example flank a painted and stuccoed altar. This shrine may have been dedicated and used by a *collegium* which met in the area.

The work of Professor TRAN TAM TINH has shown that the cult of the oriental deities such as Isis and Harpocrates was well established in Herculaneum¹⁹⁵. The large number of statuettes and religious artifacts found *in situ* in Herculaneum houses indicate that these deities were no doubt revered in domestic settings. The discovery of bronze statuettes of Isis and Harpocrates near a *lararium* base strongly suggest that these oriental deities had been welcomed into the circle of domestic guardians of at least one Herculaneum household¹⁹⁶.

IX. The House Shrines of Campania

Other areas in Campania echo the strong amount of archaeological evidence found in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Fifteen domestic shrines were excavated in Boscoreale¹⁹⁷. A *sacellum* was unearthed in a rustic villa located in Boscoreale¹⁹⁸. This *sacellum* opened on to a large portico which was located behind the villa's main entrance and was provided with

¹⁹¹ ORR, p. 130.

¹⁹² Ercolano, p. 235.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 462.

¹⁹⁴ ORR, Corpus B, no. 45.

¹⁹⁵ TRAN TAM TINH, *Divinités orientales* (see note 163), pp. 11–12.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁷ BOVCE, pp. 98–100.

¹⁹⁸ NS (1897), p. 393.

an altar and an arcuated niche. A semi-circular niche cut into a pillar located on the north side of a peristyle court of a rustic villa discovered in the Piazza Mercato of Boscoreale, has two strange Lares painted on the wall of each side of the niche¹⁹⁹. These sprites are shown wearing green trousers and have black shoes in place of the usual high boots or sandals²⁰⁰. A sacrificial scene is painted below this niche. This example again testifies to the practice of using certain standardized compositions, within which great individual liberties were taken. The current excavations in Campania, particularly in Stabia, have revealed other *lararia* of importance²⁰¹.

X. The House Shrines of Ostia

The household shrines of Ostia, the port of Imperial Rome, reflect the presence of the domestic cult there in the first three centuries of the Christian era. The houses and shops on the Via Epagathiana, an Ostian street which once marked the outer *pomerium* of the oldest section of the city that united the Tiber with the *decumanus*, preserve a great variety of house shrines²⁰². Inside one of the warehouses of Ostia was found a small vestibule, covered with an open roof²⁰³. On the walls were two graceful little brickwork shrines formed by moulding small yellow and red bricks, and placing inside the niches small triangular pieces of pumice stone. An altar found near here was dedicated to the *numen* of Serapis, to the Imperial Family, to Silvanus, and to the Lares (probably the *Lares Augusti*). This again illustrates the extension (and conflation) of the domestic Lares with those who guarded the imperial family. Although rare, domestic *lararia* painting has been discovered in Ostia. One example now in the Ostian Museum shows two bearded and crested serpents flanking a sacrificing Genius figure²⁰⁴. Another, found on the west side of an *atrium* located at VI. vii. 8/14, illustrates the use of a small reddish Medusa head to decorate a recessed niche²⁰⁵.

¹⁹⁹ NS (1898), p. 421.

²⁰⁰ Trousers were worn commonly by Persian and eastern deities. See MARIA F. SQUARCIA-PINO, *I culti orientali ad Ostia, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain* 3 (Leiden: 1962), Plate XV, fig. 22b, and M. J. VERMASEREN, *Mithriaca I, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain* 16 (Leiden: 1971), pp. 6–8.

²⁰¹ See LIBERO D'ORSEY, *Gli scavi archeologici di Stabia* (Milan: 1965).

²⁰² See GUIDO CALZA, *Ostia* (Rome: 1926), p. 145.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁰⁴ No. 10106/116 Ostian Museum. Traces of another garden *lararium* painting showing a large serpent can be seen in the museum as 10084/117. Both of these paintings were found in a second century A.D. dwelling.

²⁰⁵ See JAMES E. PACKER, *The Insulae of Imperial Ostia, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 31 (Rome: 1971), p. 48 and fig. 271. PACKER dates this building to the early first century B.C.

XI. *The House Shrines of Delos*

The *lararia* paintings found on the island of Delos, which probably antedate most of the Pompeian shrines, follow closely the compositions and iconography of the Campanian examples²⁰⁶. Most of the paintings, however, seem to refer to the public cult and not to the purely domestic usage of the household deities. Since the Delian paintings date to the late second century B.C. and because their representations are so similar to the Campanian *lararia* they occupy a position of some significance. Lares, dressed in short skirts and wearing the Phrygian cap seen in some of the Pompeian shrines, are depicted carrying the brimming *rytha* symbolic of the wine trade. Significant in their use of similar *lararia* forms employed in Pompeii, the Delian *lararia* still await further explication and study.

XII. *Other House Shrines in the Roman World*

At the other end of the Mediterranean in Roman Spain, archaeologists excavating the colony of Ampurias (Emporiae) have discovered important evidence for the household cult. In the garden of a Roman house stands an altar covered with stucco and painted in the *lararia* canon²⁰⁷. Two crested serpents flank a lighted altar on this herm-shaped shrine. Professor ALMAGRO believes this to mean a chthonic cult of the dead and that it is in fact a herm. The similarity of the serpents and decoration, coupled with its location in the garden (a common Campanian site for a shrine) attests to its watchful and protective role rather than its connection to the mortuary ritual.

Roman household worship followed the Roman into military service. The cult is widespread on the Roman *limes*. Recent excavations in Hungary and Yugoslavia have provided material for the interpretation of the domestic cult in the Roman province of Pannonia²⁰⁸. A fine bronze statuette of a Lar (H. 0.24 m) was found in a Roman villa located near Nagydém along with a statuette of Apollo (H. 0.38 m)²⁰⁹. The Lar is furnished with a laureate crown and a *cornucopia*. Another villa unearthed near Nemesvámos-Balácapusza contained a room which has a niche shrine on

one of its walls²¹⁰. A late Roman villa found in Budapest and dating to the end of the second century A.D. had a shrine dedicated to Jupiter²¹¹. A pedestal of a household shrine was discovered in the northeast corner of a building which formed part of this large urban villa. A small bronze statuette of Hercules, of Italic make, was found in this same building. It was discovered near a small niche in the east wall of the building which probably served as a *lararium*. Another shrine was excavated in a Roman villa near Tomási. This household *lararium* contained a bronze statuette of Abundantia²¹². Carnuntum, an important Roman town on the Danube, has also yielded evidence pertaining to the household cult. A marble statuette of a Genius, semi-nude and holding a *cornucopia* in his right hand, and a very similar piece made of bronze, were both found there²¹³. Three additional bronze statuette Lares have been found in Roman Austria²¹⁴.

The *limes* towns and fortified camps of Roman Germany contained household shrines. Most of the evidence comes from the presence of Lar statuettes in the Roman sites. At least six statuettes of Lares have been discovered in Germany, including an exceptionally well preserved dancing Lar in short tunic now in the Köln Museum²¹⁵. At least one domestic bronze statuette has been found north of the *limes*²¹⁶. It should be well noted that these Lares and Genius statuettes may also testify to the presence of the imperial cult but the two cults could operate as mutually acceptable religious functions.

In Roman Britain more conclusive archaeological evidence is available. A crudely constructed shrine was found in Roman Silchester²¹⁷. This *lararium*, unearthed in House Two, consisted of a platform which lay at the north end of an enclosed courtyard. A structure once had crowned this pedestal. The walls of this shrine were covered with blue painted plaster and had a panel of mosaic work. Small figures were also discovered

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 231—232.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 329 and Plate CCKII.

²¹³ ERICH SWOBODA, Carnuntum. Seine Geschichte und seine Denkmäler, Römische Forschungen in Niederösterreich 1 (Graz-Köln: 1964), Plate 33. For the bronze statuette see ROBERT FLEISCHER, Die Römischen Bronzen aus Österreich (Mainz: 1967), p. 116, Plate 78.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 117 and 119, Plates 80—82.

²¹⁵ Köln Museum example see: Römer am Rhein (An exhibition of the Romano-German Museum of Köln) (Köln: 1967), p. 223. See also HEINZ MENZEL, Die Römischen Bronzen aus Deutschland, I (Mainz: 1960), pp. 11—13, for two Lar statuettes, and II, p. 25, for two others. A Genius statuette wearing a mural crown has also been found in Germany (Genius of the town?), see *ibid.*, II, p. 26. A bronze statuette of a Lar holding a large *ryhton* was found in the Mosel River near Trier. See REINHARD SCHINDLER, Landesmuseum Trier, Führer durch die Vorgeschichtliche und Römische Abteilung (Trier: 1970), p. 40 with an illustration on p. 119.

²¹⁶ A. N. ZADOKS-JOSEPHUS JITTA, W. J. T. PETERS and W. A. VAN ES, Roman Bronze Statuettes from the Netherlands, Scripta archaeologica Groningana 1.2 (Groningen: 1967), I, pp. 14—17.

²¹⁷ G. C. BOOS, Roman Silchester (London: 1957), p. 124. See also JOAN LIVERSIDGE, Britain in the Roman Empire (London: 1966), pp. 420—421.

²⁰⁶ BULARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 399—400 and *passim*. See PHILIPPE BRUNEAU, Recherches sur les cultes de Delos à l'époque hellénistique et à l'époque impériale, Bibl. des Écoles franç. d'Athènes et de Rome 243 (Paris: 1970) for the current archeological interpretation.

²⁰⁷ MARTIN ALMAGRO, Ampurias (Barcelona: 1966), p. 35.

²⁰⁸ E. B. THOMAS (ed.), Römische Villen in Pannonien (Budapest: 1964), pp. 231—232, 282, 287, and 329—333.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 282—287. The statuette dates to the first century A.D.

here although none, unfortunately, were identifiable. The excavator reasoned that an *aedicula*-type shrine, similar to those previously described from Pompeii, once stood here. Roman Silchester has also been the source of at least one finely wrought bronze Lar. Bronze statuettes of a Genius, Mars, Mercury, Bacchus, and Venus have all been found in Roman Britain²¹⁸.

One final Roman province on another *limes*, will serve to complete this brief survey. A recognizable shrine from the town of Volubilis in North Africa contained figurines of Isis and Mercury²¹⁹. Both of these deities attest to the commercial importance of this town. A domestic altar was also excavated there²²⁰.

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 II 3. *Aedicula-lararium* (Pompeii I. x. 4)
 4. Wall Painting Type *lararium* (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)
 III 5. Type I Serpent (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)
 6. Type II Serpent (Pompeii VI. xvi. 7)
 7. (p. 1583) Sacrificial Scene (Pompeii VII. iv. 20) (BOYCE, Plate 18, Fig. 2)

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 421. The pipeclay figurines of Venus were found at Verulamium. See R. E. M. WHEELER and T. V. WHEELER, *Verulamium* (Oxford: 1936), p. 203.

²¹⁹ ROBERT ETIENNE, *Le quartier nord-est de Volubilis* (Paris: 1960), p. 57.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

- IV 8. Standard *laravaria* Painting Canon. Two Lares flanking Genius with serpent beneath (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)
 9. Genius (Pompeii I. xvi. 3)
 V 10. Lar (l.) with Bacchus (r.) (Pompeii I. viii. 8/9)
 11. Lar (r.) with Genius (l.) (Pompeii VI. xv. 1)
 VI 12. Lares flanking altar, serpents flanking altar below (Pompeii I. xii. 3)
 13. Detail of painted *lararium* niche showing *sistrum* (upper right corner), two *caducei* (upper left corner and center right), *situla* (center left) and serpent coiled around an *omphalos* (center top) (Pompeii I. xiii. 12)
 VII 14. *Lararium* painting detail showing commercial scene on the Sarno River (Pompeii I. xiv. 6/7)
 15. *Lararium* (Pompeii, I. xii. 15)
 VIII 16. *Lararium* (Pompeii, V. i. 10. 23/27)
 17. *Lararium* with painted and stuccoed serpents (Pompeii I. xvi. 2)
 IX 18. *Lararium* detail sacrificial scene (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)
 19. *Lararium* detail, *tibicen* (Pompeii IX. xiii. 3)
 X 20. Wooden *lararium* (Herculaneum, V. 17)

All photographs taken by the author. Figure 7 (drawing) is from BOYCE. Pompeii numbers refer to Region, insula, and house number. (Figure 16 follows ESCHENBACH's numeration and indicates a sub-heading under the house number.)