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CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

From chapter 2 an unexamined and largely untouched hermeneutical problem has emerged. It can be best described as a divergence existing between the objects concerning ‘Egypt’ and the connections made between these objects and associations of Egypt in the Roman past and within present research. A division can be observed not only between the way objects are used and regarded, but also the way in which scholars have generally dealt with them. Furthermore, the relationship between the the classification and recognition of something Egyptian and material culture is situated on much more complex levels than has been argued so far. Hence the distinction needs to be thoroughly charted and re-evaluated before any analysis can take part. It was concluded in chapter 2 that Aegyptiaca are the victim of current projections concerning Egypt. Taking one of the objects mentioned in the previous chapter as an example, such as the the Pyramid of Cestius in Rome, scholars and the general public alike are very apt to classify this object as Egyptian. This however, is derived from a specific visual availability and cultural learning in modern culture which was different in antiquity. If there is no other visual example present that would make the connection to Egypt stronger, how would an average Roman know a pyramidal form is Egyptian? That the effect of visual cultural learning is so significant however, also means that it works the other way around, in the sense that the objects which are present in the visual memory of the Romans form a backdrop to classify, use, and interpret other objects; and an association with Egypt might arise from this totally deviating from the way we would nowadays perceive it.\footnote{If people for instance, somehow came to learn that a pyramid was Egyptian, and that the tomb of Cestius was a pyramid, Romans would also learn to associate the form and material with Egypt through the visual availability of that specific artefact. If they were to imagine Egyptian pyramids, such objects would have a steep ‘Nubian’ style and be made out of marble.}

Even more strikingly is that it could be noted by means of such observations that scholars are too interpretative when looking at objects in general. Not
only were objects classified as Egyptian on modern grounds, and on a stylistic classifications, but this understanding has been equalled with the meaning and understanding in the past. While interpreting and classifying objects is a rather straightforward tool in archaeology, when they become equalled to the user’s perspective it is hazardous because this denotes an a priori assumption.\footnote{This became even more difficult when such interpretations initially used to classify in archaeological research, suddenly became a symbolic qualification for the ancient user within post-processualism. This had far-ranging consequences for the understanding of the use of material culture within ancient societies.} Objects in Pompeii obtained their meaning within a different context and on different levels of awareness; that of an everyday use-level in which objects formed the basic background noises of existence. A change of perspective with regards to Aegyptiaca must therefore be made. Not the object as interpreted by the scholar should be the central objective of study, but the perception of the object in its context should be the primary goal of investigation. Only then will it be possible to state anything valuable about the way in which Egyptian artefacts were used, how they integrated into a Roman context, and how they were able to affect Roman society. Moreover, it was observed in chapter 2 that the dichotomy between what Egypt was and the way in which people thought about Egypt, extends beyond the mere study of Egyptian artefact classification. It touches upon the way in which people think about artefacts, concepts, and their world in general. This chapter will therefore make an attempt to show how people think about and use objects and how this affects the use and concepts of the study of Aegyptiaca specifically; it will try to show its complexities, and will subsequently try to develop a way of studying Aegyptiaca avoiding scholarly projections and stylistic or iconographical interpretations. Not only will it be tried to create a method that is able to investigate perception and the pre-interpretative level of object experience for Pompeii. It also has the scope to theorise on how people treat objects and how objects make people.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 Initial observations and theoretical foundations

As stated in the introduction, Aegyptiaca consist of a category of incredibly diverse objects that were defined and assembled by scholars, lumped together as a single category of ‘things Egyptian’ and interpreted accordingly. As the previous chapter has shown, many issues arose from this observation. For instance: why did Greek material seem to have been an inherent part of Roman material culture? Why was Egyptian material always
considered an exotic outsider? Were Egyptian artefacts regarded as Egyptian by their users? Is this assumption a misdemeanour of our own abundant historical knowledge? The questions and observed problems demand that the thought of the scholar in his interpretation of Aegyptiaca, the interpretation of the Roman user of Aegyptiaca, and what is called the Aegyptiaca themselves, should somehow be separated in order to reach a clearer understanding of the use and perception of Aegyptiaca. However, similarly, a contradiction can be observed, because while methodologically these three phenomena should indeed be separated, ontologically they are intimately connected. There is no rigid difference between the world and what people think of it, of mind and material, because people are immersed in the world and their thinking is relative to the existence of that world. To put it simply, the way in which people think about the world and the very fact that people think, relies on the fact that a world exists. Translated to objects: we think not only of the things around us, we think because of them. This seems a generalised truism, but it has large consequences for the way in which objects play a role in everyday existence and as they will be studied in this research, as will be further elaborated on in the remainder of this chapter. It also seems to contradict the scope the present research wishes to take, as it is argued to methodologically separate things that are ontologically interdependent. It must therefore be stipulated that the methodology proposed here cannot fully embrace the complexities present in the world and the human understanding of the world. It will, however, attempt to develop an approach in order to allow more complexity in interpretation. Unravelling layers of perception should thus be seen as a methodological means to represent the complexity of artefacts and their perception.

This research argues that the current studies on materiality in archaeological discourse, networks, and agency that propose a nature of being in which the human and the non-human are seen as entangled and at each other’s mercy (such as recently proposed by Latour, Miller, Ingold, Brown, Thomas, Olsen, Hodder and others), are helpful in structuring the theoretical framework and in asking the right questions to the dataset. The current research can therefore deservedly be placed within the tradition archaeologists refer to as materiality, although the particularities of the context, material, and historiography of course request their own solutions.
regarding research strategies.\textsuperscript{173} In any case it seems clear that the problems and their consequences outlined here require a proper theoretical framework in which the objects can be treated and their specific issues solved before facilitating a suitable approach to contextualise Aegyptiaca can commence. The following sections will develop the theoretical framework; it will incorporate the most important theories that serve in solving the problem that was outlined above, which is how we can study the difference between the interpretation of Egyptian artefacts (as a conscious act in the past, but also in the present), the experience and dealings with Egyptian artefacts in their environment (as a subconscious act), and the Egyptian artefacts as things with agency (how they act upon people, both in the past and in the present). Within the context of studying the perception of Aegyptiaca, the following subjects are of specific importance to theorise: (a) perception and the related themes of consciousness (or awareness)\textsuperscript{174} and intentionality, (b) materiality and the related themes of agency and relationality, and (c) the environment as context.

\textbf{3.2.2 Perception}

Perception can be considered a central perspective through which is tried to better understand ‘Egyptian’ artefacts in Pompeii, but also a difficult concept to get a grip on archaeologically; for how can we access perception of people in the past? Perception is a complex and elusive concept and complicated to incorporate in a theory of objects, because it is shaped by a myriad of cognitive and environmental factors of which many cannot be taken into account archaeologically. In this archaeological study, perception as a phenomenon cannot be fully explored. Due to the limits of the data and the scope of the thesis it excludes for instance how biology or concepts influence perception, or how perception works in specific social situations.\textsuperscript{175} This

\textsuperscript{173} For a more detailed discussion on how the term functions within this framework, see part 3.2.3. Materiality, according to Miller 2005 the agency that material and artefacts have to create humanity and culture (“we are not just clothed but we are constituted by our clothing”, 42). The theory of materiality according to Latour tries to transcend the dualism of subjects and objects. The term has difficulties, especially for its diverse use and application between a large variety of scholarly disciplines and because many concept and theories (often contradictory) are related to the term. For a general understanding of materiality see Miller 2005, 1-50. For an overview of the difficulty of the term and its connected concepts see Holly 2013, 15-7 (especially figure 2).

\textsuperscript{174} See Dretske 2002, 420.

\textsuperscript{175} For a survey of the various theoretical takes on the concept of perception, see Maund 2003. There are similarities in the way in which perception works on for instance a social level (i.e., within the interaction with other people) because humans are similarly capable of interpreting social information in order to infer that something is animate. However, this
means that the research will primarily try to engage in how people perceived objects by closely looking at the contexts in which they were used, but also to expound on how objects were able to influence perception by the way they appeared; we are scrutinising human perception in relation to object-being. Because how things appear to us has not only to do with how we look, but also with how objects are. Objects, the physical environment, and visual learning therefore play an important role. Because perception is not a passive receiving signals, but is generated by means of learning, knowledge, memory, expectation and attention, the environmental situatedness of perception is of the utmost significance. Next to being contextual, perception should be primarily regarded as an action (or reaction), not something that lives in people or something that happens to them, it is something that people do.\textsuperscript{176} Relating to objects, perception as active response and use as act should be regarded central to object meaning, as it is argued that our fundamental contact with things arises from a 'practical synthesis' i.e., from handling them, looking at them, using them.\textsuperscript{177} Perception as employed in this dissertation concerns the organisation, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment. Despite its ostensible intangibility, it is considered worthwhile to take perception as point of departure to re-think cultural classifications and the workings of objects and styles, as it has not been seriously undertaken in the context of the study of Aegyptiaca yet. Related to this last statement, focusing on perception is particularly useful because it forces the scholar to think in totalities, look at practice, abandon arteficial labels, and start building op arguments contextually. When we wish to incorporate the agency of artefacts within perception, a method should be created that looks at perception as action and at perception in context, and also at the the pre-interpretative level of perception. This means a focus will be put on a particular part of perception, namely that of direct perception, which will be elaborated on in part 3.3. In this section we will continue briefly with discussing the connection between the workings of perception, the environment and the concept of agency, mainly by posing the statement that perception of external objects research will primarily deal with with perceptual and cognitive processes that allow humans to perceive and understand objects and their environment. It is therefore only indirectly aimed at this social perception. For a recent study on social perception and agency, see Rutherford 2013.

\textsuperscript{176} It is stated that perception is a kind of skillful activity of the body as a whole in response to its environment and not something which only occurs in the brain, see Noë 2004, 1-2.

\textsuperscript{177} As is the central theme as formulated in Merleau-Ponty 1962; 1963; 1968.
depend on context. As was noted, a distinction between a ‘real’ environment independently of the human senses and the perceived environment as constructed in the mind should be considered fluent.\textsuperscript{178} The idea does not so much imply that human beings are obtuse and inert slaves of their environment, it means that human perception, actions, choices and behaviour, are created in accordance with environmental agencies.\textsuperscript{179} Why is this important for archaeological research? Because we perceive context- or environment-dependent, and because we often use objects intuitively without thinking (from a practical synthesis perspective), it means that objects are capable of influencing the way people think and act to a much higher degree than people are consciously aware of. The way people perceive in general provides power, or rather agency, to objects and the environment, meaning that by studying objects in context, perception can be partly accessed.

3.2.3 Materiality and perception

These views on object agency, or materiality, significantly changes the way in which scholars should regard objects and their subsequent effects on people. Objects are important not only as the decoration and better functioning of people’s lives, but also as the constitutive of their lives. Such agencies should not be underestimated but should become a point of departure instead. This is precisely the way in which this research wishes to regard its objects of study. Although an object may have originated from Egypt, this does not imply it was consciously perceived this way. However the advantage that thinking about material agency brings is in this respect, is that even though not perceived, because something was from Egypt did influence people’s thinking and did affect the way in which other objects were perceived and used. Because of the observation that a mutual influence of material and mind exists, in which the artefact influences the way in which people think and act, studies focusing on material agency are helpful for the scope of this thesis. Materiality, object ontology, actor-network theory, thing theory, human-thing entanglement, the study of objects and agency has as many practitioners as it has names. Especially among archaeologists it has

\textsuperscript{178} See Ingold 2000, 178.

\textsuperscript{179} Although intentional concepts such as for instance choice seem always to indicate a premeditated act, this is less the case. Choices for object use are grounded in a framework which are also largely based on an intuitive reactions and unreflective handling with the things that surround us. It is a risk for the contemporary scholar, argued from his own intrinsically hermeneutic way of working, to ascribe intentionality to processes (and to the use of objects) that were not always existent.
become an important way of rethinking objects and the way they act in a certain context. However, in (art)history, sociology, literary studies, anthropology, and other disciplines, a growing awareness of the relevance of the things surrounding people can be witnessed.\footnote{A list of scholars engaged in object ontology and agency from within and outside the field of archaeology. Outside archaeology: Miller 1995 (‘consumption theory and material’ anthropology); Latour 1993/2005 (‘actor-network theory’ philosophy); Gell 1998 (‘art and agency’ art history/anthropology); Preda 1999 (‘the turn to things’ sociology); Brown 2001 (‘Thing Theory’ literature); Ingold 2007 (‘materiality’ anthropology). Within archaeology: Renfrew 2002, 23-32 (‘material engagement theory’); Orlin 2003 (‘object ontology’); articles by Witmore, Webmoor and Shanks 2007 (‘symmetrical archaeology’); Olsen 2010 (‘Object ontology’); Knappet 2011 (‘archaeology of interaction’); Hodder 2012 (‘human-thing entanglement’).} As this thesis wishes to focus primarily on the way in which the study of Egyptian artefacts in Pompeii can be helped by means of materiality perspectives, it is not considered fruitful to re-iterate and discuss all the different approaches within the concept of materiality here.\footnote{For good surveys on the way in which these perspectives found their way into material culture studies, see can Olsen 2010; Beaudry and Hicks 2010.} However, it should be discussed where this study depends on particular ideas taken from materiality-focused perspectives and in which way it departs from it.

A first important theory in this perspective is the way in which objects are regarded within the Actor-Network-Approach (henceforth abbreviated as ANT) as developed predominantly by people such as Callon, Law, and Latour.\footnote{For Latour’s ideas on ANT see his 2005 publication. See also Law 1992, 379-93; 1999, 1-14; Callon 1986, 19-34; Law and Mol 2009, 57-78.} Although their initial aim was to rethink sociotechnical processes, they have accommodated a fundamental change in the way in which objects can be regarded and analysed.\footnote{ANT is an anti-essentialist movement and does not differentiate between science and technology (or object and knowledge).} Taking Latour’s ideas as a principal guide in order to explore objects within ANT, he argues that human and non-human should be integrated into the same conceptual frameworks and accorded equal amounts of agency.\footnote{The symmetry is clarified by means of an example on the agency of the human and the gun. According to Latour, instead of either one of them having the ultimate agency to kill, the two bring each other forth. The active agent is neither human nor gun, but a human-with-gun. This view is translated into archaeology as symmetrical archaeology, see Witmore 2006, 51; Witmore 2007; Webmoor 2007; Shanks 2007.} Agency in this way is conceptualised as a variously distributed phenomenon that exists in relational networks of persons and things, in which all actors are analytically equal (symmetrical).\footnote{See Latour 1999, 15-25.} The purpose of ANT is therefore to focus on the relationality of entities, to overcome constructed dualisms, and to incorporate dependence as well as dependency into analyses and interpretations of...
human-thing interactions. Within this larger frame, other studies (e.g., by Ingold, Olsen, Knappet, Hodder) should be mentioned too, especially for their emphasis on the material aspects of the objects themselves within ANT related approaches. The theory of symmetrical agency poses clear advantages with regard to conceiving objects. Firstly, by accepting symmetry between objects and humans, it can be understood that both are agents in the creation of immaterial phenomena such as culture. Additionally significant for this particular enquiry is how that agency exactly is capable of affecting. Because it is not only the object itself as object, but also its intrinsic qualities and material properties that affect perception.

The way in which agency is explained within ANT therefore notably differs from anthropological understandings of fetishism or animism, such as for instance is employed by Pels. Whereas agency from an animism perspective ascribes intentions, aims, and purposeful actions to artefacts, ANT’s agency proposes that objects and humans are equal forces in the generation of knowledge. The way in which this dissertation will advocate agency in objects is situated closer to the latter model and is in view with the theoretical foundation stated in part 3.1, in which agency in objects is defined by existence. It is stated: “that things are in life rather than that life is in things”. Materiality, or material agency, in the way it will serve throughout this thesis is defined as the agency that objects and their properties possess to constitute thinking, humanity, and culture. Humans

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187 Archaeologists who use the term archaeology are divided. Scholars that apply materiality as a term in order to emphasize the material aspects of the world (not in particular the way in which humans engage with this). Derived from archaeometrical studies it is concerned with agency, see e.g., Boivin 2008, 26; Jones 2004, 330; Jones and Boivin 2010, 333-51. For those that view materiality as the socially situated agency employed by means of material culture and the way in which humans are generally involved with the human world (a more relational aspect), see Olsen 2010; Hodder 2012. For a discussion on materiality, see Ingold 2013, 28-9.
188 As proposed by Ingold, Olsen and Hodder. A need to really focus on the object and its physicalities is argued as follows: “Why has the physical and ‘thingly’ component of our past and present being become forgotten or ignored to such an extent in contemporary social research?”, see Olsen 2003, 87; 2010. Former materiality approaches forwarded by Latour and Miller are criticized: “To understand materiality it seems, we need to get as far away from materials as possible.”, see Ingold 2007, 2; Knappet 2008; Hodder 2012, 1.
189 We read: “animism - that is, ascribing intentions, aims, and purposeful action to artefacts knowledge.”, see Pels 1998, 94. For a discussion on inanimate agency, see Johanssen 2012, 305-47.
190 Preda 1999.
191 See Ingold 2007, 12. In this respect it is significant to realize that the agency employed here is not confused with intentionality, but rather that human intentionality has a material basis. For the focus on perception in this research it is important to consider that objects affect both the conscious and the unconscious mind. However, these traits are not internal to objects.
project thoughts onto objects, and humans as thinking subjects are constructed by means of the non-human world in which objects form an important substrate of their thinking existence. This should not be regarded as a qualitative aspect which only certain objects possess and others do not, but as an essential presence of power embedded in every object. Every object in its context affects human behaviour and thinking in its own way.

In addition to agency there is a further quality which makes the theory of ANT attractive for this research. ANT is not only a matter of presenting objects with agency, but also of reinstating those objects in the fluxes and the networks of the world of materials and concepts in which it came into being and will continue to subsist. ANT therefore not only proposes a symmetrical, but also a relational ontology. Beings, things, and ideas are continuously moving (i.e., in a state of being and becoming) in an environment which is also always in flux. Therefore all entities, material and immaterial, are constituted in a relational field. The emphasis on networks and relationality with regard to knowledge production is therefore a thought shared in this theoretical framework, as it leads to a more natural way of looking objects than the strict cultural categorisations that were imposed on ancient artefacts. Accepting a relational nature of being is furthermore important because it allows complexity to exist, it stimulates a bottom-up approach, and it creates a much more dynamic picture of object meaning. A relational ontology (and a network approach) can thus be considered a valuable addition to the way in which objects of the dataset will be considered, because it has the potential to pull Egyptian artefacts out of their static interpretational fields, while at the same time it provides the ability to study their material and cognitive relations with other objects and ideas more carefully.

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192 Heidegger 1971b, 163-8.
193 We read: “It is the dynamic, transformative, potential of the entire field of relations within which entities, continually and reciprocally bring one another into existence. All organisms are constituted in a relational field”. This relational field should not be seen or conveyed within a network but as a meshwork, because it does not consist of externally bounded entities in the form of interconnected points but is a constitution based on bundles of interwoven lines of growth and movement, together constituting a meshwork in fluid spaces, see Ingold 2006, 12-3; 2007a, 80.
194 “Human being’s in their entanglement with objects are inherently relational.”, see Harman 2007, 474.
3.2.4 Environment and context

The following section will set out the theoretical underpinnings of the contextual approach to Aegyptiaca. As argued in 3.2.3., it is important to regard relationality, agency, and the material properties of the object when looking at its use and perception. The context however, is the domain in which perception takes place. The particularities of agency are not acted out in a vacuum, but within a totality of things in context. It can be observed, however, that difficulties arise when applying terms such as environment, world, or context, as they seem to refer to different explanatory levels. Environment (or physical context) in the case of this research refers to the total sum of all surroundings of an organism, including objects, material, space, natural forces and other living things, which provide the conditions for living, but also the metaphysical world-making (it is thus an ecological definition of both the real physical world and human experienced world). It is made out of substances such as stone, flesh, vegetation, and molecules, and consists of objects such as plants, stones, animals and tables.\textsuperscript{195} Contextuality or contextual research on the other hand, is proposed rather as a methodological term. Because the aim of the project lies in the inclusion of the environment and affordances within the inquiry to object perception, I intend to study objects contextually.\textsuperscript{196}

The so-called environmental situatedness of thinking, which has been mentioned before, has become a growing (re)realisation for many disciplines, of those that work in the field of the mind, the brain and the environment alike.\textsuperscript{197} It means that thoughts are created within an environment; human beings are not brains in a vat and research should centre on the way in which the material in its environment is able to form and influence human thinking as cognitive extensions of the mind.\textsuperscript{198} Three theories (and their

\textsuperscript{195} See Gibson, 1979, 152. With regard to networks, the environment should be considered a zone of entanglement (not a bounded territory) where connections and agencies become meaningful.

\textsuperscript{196} Context itself, however, can be explained on a pragmatic and methodological level, in which context it means the place where things become meaningful to us (e.g., a house context) and on a philosophical level, in which it is related to the concept world meaning from which worldview, as the totality of being, something becomes known.

\textsuperscript{197} In biology (Noë 2009), anthropology (Ingold 2007; 2000), neurology (Lamme 2010), philosophy (Putnam 1987; 1988; 1990; 2002; in part Dennett 1991), and sociology (Latour). An important discovery from the field of neurobiology and psychology for example is that the human brain for a large part acts responsively to its environment and is thus predominantly a reaction to environmental stimuli, and not a conscious autonomous decision, see Kahneman 2012.

\textsuperscript{198} For arguments from the field of environmental biology, see Noë 2009; Malafouris 2013. For more material approaches to the way in which mind and material are interdependent, see Malafouris 2008; 2013; Renfrew 2000; Dennet 1993. Cognitive in this sense refers to
subsequent impact on archaeology) connected to environment and perception are of particular importance in order to frame the current approach on both a theoretical and a methodological level. The first is the theory of James Gibson on direct perception (already mentioned above) and the way in which his research has been employed in recent scholarship by for instance Neisser and Knappet.\(^{199}\) It focuses on perception of the environment and the way in which it influences behaviour, also known as the ecological approach to perception or as ecological psychology. The second are theories on perception of the environment and \textit{Dasein} (as developed by Heidegger) or phenomenology of perception, and the influence of Heidegger’s theory of \textit{Dasein} on recent studies concerning materiality and perception such as by Latour, Ingold, Harman, and Thomas.\(^{200}\) The third theory addresses the psychological processing of perception-layers in response to the environment (Dretske and Kahneman).\(^{201}\) The three theories are complementary and will together form the way objects are approached theoretically in this research.

The perspective of ecological psychology has many benefits to object perception studies, although it has until recently only been little regarded in archaeology (as opposed to for example the writings of Bourdieu). \textit{The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception} (1979), Gibson’s ground breaking work on direct perception, argues that people perceive the world directly in terms of its manifest structure, by means of the active pickup of ecological information from the environment.\(^{202}\) Each individual is considered an active agent, but the way in which this is produced and the way in which an agent produces his or her reality is by means of the movement of his perceiving body in the environment.\(^{203}\) The environment thus has primary qualities, on which human bodies reflect in accordance to what is observed in their

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\(^{201}\) See Dretske 2002 and Kahneman 2011.

\(^{202}\) Gibson 1979.

\(^{203}\) Because of its stress on visual aspects and optical inferences as picked up from the environment (a simplicity principle which denies perception as being based on underlying process mechanisms) it can also be related to structural information theory, which investigates the way in which the human visual system organises a raw visual stimulus into objects and object parts. To human beings, a visual stimulus often has a single clear interpretation although, in theory, any stimulus can be interpreted in numerous ways, see Leeuwenberg and van der Helm 2013.
immediate surroundings. This implies that perception is not the achievement that the mind has on the body, but of the organism as a whole within the environment; the world becomes a meaningful place for an individual because it is lived in rather than by means of having been constructed. Direct perception is important because it emphasises the vital role of the environment and its abilities (affordances) for human projection, symbolism, and the formation of concepts and meaning.

The second perspective in order to better understand an object's use and perception within its context is derived from theories often headed under the so-called 'phenomenology of perception'. Numerous different theoretical approaches exist that can be headed under the term phenomenology, however in general it is described as an interpretative approach which pursues to define the underlying essential qualities of human experience and the world in which that experience takes place. Phenomenology as philosophical theory pays attention to the nature of consciousness as actually experienced, not as is pictured by common sense or by the philosophical traditions. Experiences are not like objects in a box; they happen out there somewhere and are shaped by the interlocking of the human body perceiving his surroundings. Central to phenomenological

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204 Also referred to as 'visual kinesthesis', see Still and Good 1998, 50. This environment is real and physical, however, it is reality constituted in relation to the beings whose environment it is See Ingold 2000, 168.

205 And related hereto the significance of the environment as a holistic totality for perception and behaviour.

206 Phenomenology is a difficult term to adopt, as it has been practised in various guises for centuries. It was first mentioned as a movement during the early 20th century and was advocated by Edmund Husserl (1858-1938). However, as a philosophy, it was expanded by means of theories forwarded by Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The discipline of phenomenology as currently used may be defined as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness. When taken literally, phenomenology is the study of "phenomena": appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways in which we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. This concept was introduced as a movement mainly by Husserl. The pivotal works on experience and perception are by Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, see Merleau-Ponty 1964; Heidegger 1961. It is now and again shared under the denominator of phenomenological studies. Important studies which have shaped the way archaeology looks at phenomenology are by Tilley 2004, Thomas 2006, and Barret 1994. Although these scholars also focus on relational networks of being, the approach of these archaeologists centre around the social construction of this and ignore the physical aspects of the world. It accounts for a one-sided view of phenomenology where perception is seen as a purely cultural construction without the workings of the environment. In the face of certain arguments (see e.g., Thomas 2004, 26-7; 2006), I do not believe we should not acknowledge intrinsic qualities of either things or the environment or the human being itself for that matter.

207 It was therefore closely linked to other interpretative ways of knowing e.g., existentialism and hermeneutics.

208 With Heidegger, the environment is a central concept, albeit in a less pragmatic manner when compared with Gibson.
thought is the assumption also advocated in this dissertation: that people and world are intimately related in a way whereby each makes and reflects the other. Perception within this view is a vital element in how the human mind and its environment interact in the production of knowledge. Such views are not only attractive on a philosophical level (because of the focus on experience and because it withdraws from subject-object dichotomies), or as a way of explaining how people become aware of the world around them, it also provides a clear perspective in which the relational, the interdependencies, affordances and the mutual influencing connections of human and non-humans and humans and environment come together in the creation of an experience. It can therefore be regarded evident that this can help significantly in providing a wider understanding of Aegyptiaca, because it views them within this approach by default as part of a totality. Experience in this sense, is the key word for understanding the world as a totality.\textsuperscript{209} Although the term phenomenology, due to its multiplicity within disciplines and approaches might better to be avoided, the use of theories concerning intentionality and consciousness within the use and perception of objects, and the developments done within the field of phenomenology (or philosophy of mind), are nonetheless of great importance for the current undertaking.\textsuperscript{210}

Of these approaches the most important for this undertaking is Heidegger’s philosophy on being (\textit{Dasein}), because of his focus on things in lived experience, on viewing experience as experience-in-context, and because of his conviction that within this experience there is more than meet the eye. Heidegger in particular believed that being was pre-intellectual, but that modern society had clouded that immediate contact with existence.\textsuperscript{211} His analysis of \textit{Dasein} as Being-in-the-world offers a critique on the subject-object relationship from the perspective of everyday experience. Rather than thinking of actions as based on belief, Heidegger described, notably in his most influential publication entitled \textit{Sein und Zeit} (published n 1927), that which in fact goes on in people’s everyday life while coping with things and

\textsuperscript{209} Phenomenology looks into practices and experience, natural phenomena and people. It does not look into that which differentiates them, but into that which makes them all coherent, see Dreyfus and Hall 1992, 3.

\textsuperscript{210} Phenomenology as applied nowadays is more directed at the working of the senses (what it means to feel sensations). It is indeed better to speak of philosophy of mind. This broader term attempts to structure various types of experience (e.g., perception, intentionality, thought, memory, imagination, emotion. See Guttenplan 1994, 1-27.

\textsuperscript{211} In Heidegger’s view, the world already exists before someone tries to reflect upon it, see Sharr 2007, 26-7.
the way in which people are socialised into a shared world. Artefacts and the material world play a pivotal role within this theory, in which human reflexive practices arise in the everyday care for objects, in being around them, and in trying to respond to their challenges. Simple skills such as using a hammer or walking into a room have the power to make sense of the world and to find a way about in the public environment, testifying once again how intertwined and how powerful the interplay between objects, humans, and the environment is. Heidegger's philosophy offers a relevant perspective to frame the current inquiry by his focus on coping with everyday life instead of reflecting upon its various components. It therefore offers exactly that holistic viewpoint believed to be essential for conceptualising Aegyptiaca. Secondly, his ideas help to deal with the second proposed aim of the dissertation, namely studying the (material and social) properties hidden in the experience of Egyptian objects (this will be further discussed in part 3.3). Furthermore, his attempt to overcome scholarly projections on how the world works is in line with the central concerns of this thesis.

In respect however to the subject of environment that is of central concern to this dissertation, we must discuss how this was conceptualised within Heidegger's framework. Being-in-the-world seems to form the key of how people encounter life and make sense of the world, it is not something formed only from inside or only from outside, but it is formed through being. However, a question that remains unanswered with regards to this theory, is what that world exactly is that Dasein lands in? Heidegger argued the world to be a totality of being, but he remained rather ambiguous about the world.

212 See Dreyfus and Hall 1992, 2.
213 See Heidegger 1962, 93. This most interesting thought clearly resonates the issue this thesis has with regard to Egyptian artefacts i.e., his equipment or tool-thesis. It greatly influenced the many scholars who looked with renewed interest at the power of objects in the life of people (Brown 2001). Being of relevance, too, to the way in which this thesis deals with the perception of Egyptian objects Heidegger’s theory will be more extensively discussed in 3.3. Kahneman can be considered to belong to the school of cognitivists and Noë to the school of ‘ecologists’. According to the former the brain is responsive to the environment while according to the latter it is environmentally located. Both views are not contradictory, and should rather be seen as complementary.
214 However, those actions surpass an interpreted world as there is a pre-ontological experience in an experienced world in which many realities become obscured, see Heidegger 1962, 405.
215 It must thus be stipulated, that whereas Heidegger proposed his phenomenology as the foundation of all philosophy, it will be restricted here in order to rethink objects and experience. Husserl, the first to engage in the study of phenomena, was in search of the formal qualities of the concrete reality which human beings recognise as their experience. Here ‘form’ or ‘formal’ means the essential immanent in the particular, see Natanson 1973, 4.
Heidegger’s *Dasein* does take place in a real world, a world with nature, gravity, trees, molecules, and temperature and although people cannot perceive it unmediated, it does not mean that it does not exist.²¹⁶ Although the level of perception is the way in which this research wants to review objects, it is important that the physical world should not be disregarded as something only relative to experience.

In this way however, Heidegger’s theory brings a balance and forms an addition to Gibson’s theory on direct perception. Gibson entirely rejected the unconscious inferences within perception, while he was convinced of the fact that all necessary information was contained within the visual information available to observers as they explored the environment. Albeit not fallacious, Gibson’s theory omitted the complexities in stratification and hierarchy that come with perception.²¹⁷ For instance, he did not discuss intentionality of people within direct perception.²¹⁸ Another theory besides *Dasein* brings nuance to Gibson’s direct perception (without abandoning the influence of the environment on the human mind) and to that of Heidegger’s theory alike, which is the work of Daniel Kahneman.

Kahneman does illustrate the way in which these different layers of intentional and unintentional perception could work within everyday behaviour and decision making. In his book ‘*Thinking, Fast and Slow*’ he attempts to describe the interpretative and perceptive qualities of the brain within the psychology of economic processes. What Kahneman concludes from this is that people do not base their decisions on rational thought and argumentation, but rather on context and experience-based fast thinking.²¹⁹ Moreover, he discovered that the brain processes information in two distinct manners, represented by brain system 1 (the fast brain), and brain system 2 (the slow brain).²²⁰ System 1 is the unconscious, automatic responsive brain

²¹⁶ For this particular criticism on Heidegger’s theory, see Sloterdijk 2005, 223-41. ‘The real world’ is not meant as a naïve ontology, it is a critical realist ontology meant to stipulate that although people have no access to it, the world influences how we think. Putnam 1987 and Baskhar

²¹⁷ Sequences of perception exists as does a form of indirect perception which enables Gibson’s direct perception. Criticism expressed by Rock’s posthumously published *indirect perception* 1997; see also Treisman, Wolfe and Robertson 2012.

²¹⁸ It is argued that Gibson has no workable way of the required constraints consonant with his assumption that perception is direct, see Fodor and Pylyshyn 2002, 169. See also Dennet in Fodor and Pylyshyn 2002, 482-95.

²¹⁹ Kahneman 2011; for studies on the psychological state of becoming conscious or aware of phenomena, see Dretske 2002, 419-42.

²²⁰ Kahneman’s theory thus also balances phenomenological approaches, as these focus mainly on the structures of conscious experience.
which is active most of the time, because this is how people can quickly and cost-effectively (without much energy) cope with their lives. System 2 is the conscious, slow and interpretative brain, whereby a full mental effort is necessary in order to analyse the environment.\textsuperscript{221} Kahneman illustrates that fast thinking is the system normally employed in daily life, which strengthens the theory of direct perception discussed above. The illustrations below (fig. 3.1) show how strongly adding a context affects how people think about things, and how human perception is therefore primarily dependent on it.

\textbf{Fig. 3.1} The renowned Müller-Lyer Illusion and the 13-B priming illusion. They illustrate the way in which human perception primarily depends on context. Viewing things within a context (adding perspective lines as in the fig. above) or a background, is decisive of our perception of something, because the ‘fast’ brain dominates the slow system and will as soon as possible make sense of the situation. If the 13/B is preceded by a 12 it will be perceived as a 13, when preceded by an A it will be perceived as a B.

This has vast consequences for how things are perceived in general, and therefore also for how Aegyptiaca should approached in this research. Things

\textsuperscript{221} When looking at 41x13, the fast brain will recognise this as a multiplication. However, the problem is solved by means of System 2. System 1 has developed to easily scan the environment rendering the human mind is much more susceptible to the environmental influences.
that are perceived as ‘common’ in a certain context, will not be consciously picked up by brain system 2 and will therefore just be unreflectively dealt with, while when something appears to be ‘striking’ in a context, brain system 2 becomes activated and things are approached interpretatively and consciously.\textsuperscript{222}

The theories of Gibson, Heidegger and Kahneman clearly complement each other as to the way in which perception and the environment should be incorporated into the research. They make clear how important it is to study things in their context, and within the totality of their environment when wanting to know the use and perception of an object. In different ways they argue that the human brain is a situated brain, and that it, and the objects within the world, make us think a certain way. Object meaning is made in context and from a context, in which the object and what it stands for have agency.

\textbf{3.2.5 Epistemology}

The realism that accompanies the acceptance of object agency has considerable implications on a philosophical level and on the ways of world-making as envisioned in this dissertation. How should these ways of thinking be incorporated on the level of knowledge theory? Arguing from the above sections on material agency and the power of the environment on the way people think, it has become clear that it is important to regard both the world as a reality and the world as a representation, because although only the latter is in the human mind, they are not completely separated entities. The study of Aegyptiaca, and on a larger level the study of the hermeneutics of concepts and objects, should be critically approached in an epistemology which accepts both the world as experienced and as independent reality. Epistemologically speaking, it is thus of great significance, regarding this framework, to become liberated from those postmodern views that relativise reality to human projection and re-allow realism into the interpretative frameworks (because although perception is relative, it is relative to something). Especially in a study on objects and their complexities in interpretation it is relevant not to lose sight of the realities the world consists

\textsuperscript{222} This ties in with the dichotomy noted in the beginning of this chapter and in chapter 2, that there is a conjunction in how archaeologists handle objects and how they were dealt with in the past. Archaeologists use brain system 2 to interpret objects, while they should invent a method to analyse how people in the past (with brain system 1) used objects. To use fast-thinking as a way of studying objects should be scope of research.
of, even if it cannot be perceived unmediated.\textsuperscript{223} Although the world can never come to the human mind unmediated (it is always interceded by social, environmental, and linguistic concepts), the world as it is does affect the mediation. This also suggests there is much more entanglement between the world and the perceiver of the world. What we are able to know about the world tells us something about how that world is.\textsuperscript{224} Therefore the rigid opposition between purely positivistic methodological monotheism and hermeneutic relativistic post-positivism as often encountered in archaeological research should be considered obsolete. What it necessary, especially for archaeological studies, is to arrive at a synthesis were empiricist methods and tools are not discarded and reality is not regarded as non-existent, nor should it be thought people are able to gain access to the past unmediated by the present. For a long time this has been considered an ‘either or’ discussion within archaeology, where either a realist or a relativist epistemology could be adopted. However, such a rigid opposition would only be an option when one considered hermeneutics a methodology and positivism a theory of knowledge, which they are not. Although the true complexity of the world might be largely inaccessible to human comprehension and although people are not able to grasp or communicate it through language this does not mean it is not there; there remains the existence and presence of something real, and it affects and constitutes our experience.\textsuperscript{225} Therefore, in order to overcome the idea that humans and their world are two separate entities, to review ecological and phenomenological theories into a workable methodology, and to acknowledge both the real and the experienced as creators of the perception of human beings, critical realism is adopted as epistemological framework in this dissertation.\textsuperscript{226} Critical realism (or internal realism) as firstly proposed by Bhaskar and by Putnam, then adopted and developed by scholars such as

\textsuperscript{223} We read: “\textit{The tacit assumption by archaeologists, that artefacts exist as real things in the world, is essential to our ability to discover anything about the past from material remains.}”, see Wallace 2011, 127.

\textsuperscript{224} Castoriadis 1997.

\textsuperscript{225} Deleuze’s so-called ‘new’ empiricism, in which concepts are not simply abstractions or tools that are to serve in order to explain concrete phenomena, but are themselves extracted from a confrontation with the pre-conceptual realm of the empirical is a good example of this, see Gane 2009, 90.

\textsuperscript{226} A philosophy of science called transcendental realism aims to specify the fundamental structure of reality. According to the original developer, ‘\textit{given that science does and could occur, the world must be a certain way}’, see Bhaskar 1978, 29; 1998. From this critical realism emerged the general perspective of transcendental realism within the social sciences. Hilary Putnam arrived at a similar philosophy with his concept of ‘internal realism. Putnam 1981;1987;1990 .
Danermark, Wallace, and McCullagh, is meant as a critical approach in order to reassess current theories and provide ontological boundaries.\textsuperscript{227} It accepts the conscience of humans within their environment and gives as much agency to that environment as to the human being in that environment, as its ontological position stands between science and humanities and prioritises the investigation of the nature and workings of reality.\textsuperscript{228} The framework enables the investigation of a reality that is not necessarily observable or capable of being experienced by humans, but is nonetheless real. This implies that reality has an objective existence but that our knowledge of it is conceptually mediated: facts depend upon a theory but they are not determined by theory. The idea of relativism in the sense that knowledge is socially produced and in the acknowledgement of the criticism of the empiricists/objectivists ideal in which science produces objective empirical observations, is accepted.\textsuperscript{229} All knowledge is conceptually mediated and context-dependent, however, it is not all of equal value. Moreover, of further significance (as it embeds the notions forwarded by Latour, Heidegger and Gibson on an epistemological level) is that critical realism also emphasises the importance of holism and relationality, but in this case on the level of social analysis. Critical realism is sees the world as ontological relational and acknowledges the relational nature of human and non-human. The method to overcome, on a philosophical level, dualism and the Kantian divide that Heidegger and Latour attempted to bridge and in order to synthesise positivistic methodologies within a postmodern framework and integrate ‘postprocessualism’ and ‘processualism’ in archaeological research can in my view be established by turning to materiality in context, based on a critical realist epistemology.

\textbf{3.2.6 Theoretical synthesis}

Within the epistemology of critical realism, object agency and the theories of perception proposed by Gibson, Heidegger, and Kahneman can now be formed into a framework and an approach for this thesis. As argued in part 3.1, the nature of the dataset, context, and research questions ask for a methodological strategy which can be aided by recent scopes on objects, but nonetheless needs to find its own approach. It is not sufficient to state that

\textsuperscript{227} Danermark et al., 2002; McCullagh 2004; Munslow 2002; Bhaskar 1998; for a critical take on realism, see Putnam 1987.

\textsuperscript{228} For the manner in which Bhaskar proposes human agency is criticized, see Pleasants 1999, 99-120.

\textsuperscript{229} See Danermark et al., 2002, 202.
objects and their materiality must be the centre of the approach, because this study focuses on deconstructing and disentangling Egyptianness as a projected concept, as an object, and as a thing. Firstly, as a thing, and as the material behind the materiality, Egyptian artefacts should be taken seriously as Egyptian artefacts within the process of perception, because its ‘realities’ and its material properties have agency. This leads to a scope which must methodologically attempt to dichotomise the different properties that lie behind perception. Secondly, archaeology is not only about objects, but also about the way in which people thought about those objects and about their projections. Concepts should receive proper attention within materiality approaches and within this dissertation too. Thirdly, the direct environment is the context in which everything becomes meaningful; it is not just a background of isolated autonomously taken decisions. The environment as well as related physical and psychological fields in which human-human and human-thing interaction takes place should be at the centre of the research. Although influenced by objects and meaningful from a context, projections, symbols, and objects as vessels of meaning should not be discarded because the focus lies on materiality; rather they should be integrated in an approach. The emphasis in this sense is placed on the ways that people and their world are connected and how things such as cognition, value-making, and culture are dependent on things. The next part of this chapter (3.3) will therefore first review objects and concepts in the light of the theoretical framework and will subsequently construct a methodology in which Aegyptiaca can be analysed.

3.3 Rethinking objects

What are the consequences of this rethinking of the relations between objects and concepts concerning the way in which objects in general, and Aegyptiaca in particular, are studied? To solve the problems discussed in chapter 2 it is necessary to look at objects differently than is to be found in previous studies. The transformation within archaeology from a hermeneutic and symbolic framework to understand objects to materiality is of help in this reframing. This revolution within the field of archaeology unfolded rapidly; whereas the publication Hodder edited in 1989 edited book was still called: *The Meaning of Things, material culture and symbolic expression* and focused on the identification and interpretation of the symbolism of material artefacts, his 2011 book *Human-thing entanglement* centred on the interdependencies of objects and humans, and looked into “the objects
themselves and the way in which they are able to draw things and humans together”. As can be observed, the way in which to regard objects has changed considerably in only a decade: from the object as a symbolic vessel to the object as agent in cultural change. Olson phrases the regained realism in object analysis as follows: “Things, objects, landscapes, possess ‘real’ qualities that affect and shape both our perception of them and our cohabitation with them.” From this transition in thinking the following issues in particular are of direct significance to the present research: first, realising that a clear separation should take place between scientific and everyday dealings with objects, second, the divergence between the reality and the perception of objects and third, the realisation that these two factors are co-dependent and influence each other.

Returning to the hermeneutical problem posed in the onset of this chapter, the manner in which archaeologists interpret artefacts notably differs from the way they were interpreted in the past. An important aspect in rethinking objects realised by means of materiality-focused approaches, is therefore to separate between the real existence of objects and what they consist of, and they way in which human users perceive them. When archaeologists defined objects as Egyptian, it was founded on a genuinely different (visual, historical, and cultural) knowledge basis producing different mental associations which cannot be simply transposed onto the past. Moreover, it cannot be confirmed that Egypt on the whole was a defining characteristic or interpretation of such objects in the past. Heidegger calls this discrepancy in experience a difference between object and thing. In his view, a thing (a jug in his example) is its own independent thing, things which just are, while objects are thought of entities. Thingness, moreover, can be defined on three levels i.e., the thing as proprietor of certain characteristics or features, the thing as a unity of a multiplicity of perceptions, and a thing as constructed fabric. At a first level, the perception of objects can be observed as seeing a substance which has assembled certain features. For instance, a piece of glass never appears as just a piece of glass, but always

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230 Furthermore, it is stated on the book cover that: “Its focus is not on artifacts themselves but on the social contexts in which they are produced and give meaning…”, see Chilton 1999; Hodder 1989, 2011.
231 See Olsen 2003, 88.
232 This is a very important division with regard to our study of Aegyptiaca, which can also be seen and understood in these two lights, depending on its shape and the viewer's knowledge.
233 The relationality in perception is furthermore stipulated. as things are in fact gatherings and consist of multiple strands, see Heidegger original 1950, transl. 2002, 5-8.
as a number of characteristics such as smooth, transparent, coloured, thin, fragile etc. In this manner, the thingness itself and its features become obscured. People never experience the different parts of things, but instead bundle all the various realities or traits, because the human brain assembles all aspects within perception in order to process the world in the most efficient way. The totality of components of a thing makes how it becomes an object. When we see a certain object, such as for instance a blue woollen carpet, the way the woollen and blue is perceived is interdependent. It is also dependent on environmental phenomena such as lighting conditions for instance. This means that people do not actually see the property (something belonging to a particular object) of the object as such, but only an aspect of its property dependent on the context of perception. What is thus of significance for trying to understand object-meaning on a perception level is that when an object is perceived to have a certain property (such as for instance a certain colour) we have to include in the description something about the perceptual context in which the object and property are seen. This presents a renewed interest for materials in the sense as what they can evoke, something strongly emphasised by a scholar like Ingold. According to him we should redirect our attention from the materiality of objects to the properties of materials. This means that it counts that

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234 This is fundamental to Heidegger's phenomenological way of thinking, because the thing operates in a certain environment (e.g., people, language, nature, practices, perspective, colours, other objects, or the ready-at-hand association of values) it is always concealed from the real thing.

235 This assembling leads to perceptions created by means of totalities: we do not hear a multitude of instruments, but music; we do not see a frame, a saddle, two wheels and a bell, but a bicycle. We hear a voice screaming, a door slamming, rain tapping etc. However as, in these cases, things become objects (or tools) the various material traits becomes obscured, see Merleau-Ponty, 1962. Furthermore, objects in the present thesis means the assemblage of traits of a thing which are united in an interpretation, that which it gathers and draws in when looking at it. It is thus not the thing itself, but what it stands for, what it does when utilized and in unreflective coping. The thing itself is pre-interpreted, the object is interpreted.

236 The blue colour of a carpet would therefore never be the same blue were it not a woolly blue, see Merleau-Ponty 1962, 313. It is argued here that a colour is never merely a colour, but the colour of a certain object: "Even if our attention is focused on the colour alone, we will still find a meaning that emerges from its harmony or opposition to other colours and light levels in the field, and indeed from texture, shape and weight of the object whose colour it is.", see Crowther 1982, 139.

237 Perception is thus not only the object, but always the object-in-context In the case of the perception of colours, we need to include lighting context, distance, size, shape and structure. We cannot see properties as such but see a carpet by means of its colour aspect. Or we see the colour aspect of the carpet. Aspects serve to indicate that the colour we see can not entirely and accurately be described independently of the fact it is the colour of a specific object, and not some other, see Kelly 2007, 23.

something is made out of marble or wood, and it matters whether the stone is coloured white or black. Although people do not consciously perceive something is made of wood (they see a chair), it makes a difference for the perception of the chair that it is made of wood and not out of stone, it even affects the way people would use the chair.\textsuperscript{239} These physical properties, and the context in which their properties come to the attention of people, provides contours to the perception of objects. These properties are moreover a vital factor in the way in which relations of entities are capable of structuring a network and how people and actions are ‘drawn into particular entanglements’\textsuperscript{240}. One of the objectives of this thesis is therefore to not only study the various parts of objects and the way in which these separate qualities can affect the totality of perception, but also to study the sum of those parts as something that influences the viewer in the way he thinks (both the materiality and representation of objects). This points to a divergence between thing and perception, the physical world and the way in which we think of it, but it clearly argues that the two largely affect each other. People for example can regard an object as sacred, or exotic, but base such an interpretation on the unconscious pre-interpretative perception of the material. This also relates to another component of Gibson’s direct perception which is directed to object agency: the theory of affordances. Gibson’s original thesis, as was discussed above, holds that people possess an unmediated ability to pick up of information from the surrounding world as an active and exploratory process, whereby the perceiving subject acquires knowledge of that world directly through affordances.\textsuperscript{241} Affordance in this sense is the potential something has to trigger certain actions. Explaining this within the materiality paradigm as was sketched above it means that every object has affordance and the way in which an object is made and in which context it appears to a viewer will guide the specific action that evolves from a confrontation with an object.\textsuperscript{242} However, as Gibson argued perception to be primarily a reaction to visual stimuli, this should be balanced by the account that objects can become fixed in

\textsuperscript{239} It will even help create how people develop the entire concept of a chair.

\textsuperscript{240} Hodder 2012. Materiality is the agency of objects, but also the agency of its material properties. Olsen 2010; Ingold 2007.

\textsuperscript{241} This implies that we know primarily by seeing and that we react on our surroundings. Gibson 1979.

\textsuperscript{242} The form of objects and the way in which they are made and which space they occupy in an environment dictates the use as well as the way in which it is thought (or un-thought) about. A chair (form) requires a certain material in order to function. It can therefore consist of wood, but not of custard.
privileged ways, and that humans, even in its most direct and reactive way, are more than just a reacting organism.\textsuperscript{243} As argued above, there exist layers of experience behind direct perception that are not consciously understood but nonetheless are able to influence decisions.\textsuperscript{244}

\textit{Habitus and object perception}

This latter claim is also stressed by Idhe when pointing out that socially constructed signs also can guide people.\textsuperscript{245} When moving the agency of objects and their perception to a social situation, matters seem to become even more complex. In the same respect as discussed above it can be argued that things are not merely a reflection of the social, but that they also constitute the social. However, when regarding interacting people in the environment, with their expectations and mental frameworks, a layer of experience is added in which social learning partly guides use and perception. These social understandings consist of deeply ingrained values and habits (also called habitus) that are not experienced consciously. When considering perception in this way, meaning by including social complexities, it refers to the research carried out by Pierre Bourdieu.\textsuperscript{246} His \textit{habitus} and

\textsuperscript{243} Although affordances are a useful way of providing agency through objects, a danger exists of becoming ecological deterministic. The reason for this is that not everything is dictated by the environment. It is important to realise (as Knappet illustrates) that knowledge is not accessible from a physical form alone, but that it is derived from numerous associations and internal categorisations. An attempt has been made to overcome ecological determination by assessing the relation between people and their environment by means of transparency, relationality, and sociality. Affordances in this way i.e., what the object affords and the way in which human beings respond to that, provide a very useful concept with regard to the present study, see Knappet 2005, 47.

\textsuperscript{244} However, these ‘underlying construction of society’ that structures our behaviour is also created to a certain extent somewhere ‘outside’ the body. Rules in this way are capable of structuring the social world and guide our encounter with worldly matters. According to phenomenology, our ability to apply rules must be grounded in a background capacity. We are governed by a causation in which our background ability to cope with the world can be causally sensitive to the specific forms of constitutive rules of the institutions without actually containing any representations of those rules. The practices themselves determine the content. For example, we know that when we step into a bakery and there are many people, we have to wait our turn. This is not a conscious thought but a direct social reaction to a physical situation. See Wrathall 2007, 71

\textsuperscript{245} In this respect, Being-in-the-world actually means being-the-world-within a world. This is the ‘postphenomenological’ approach as forwarded by Ihde. Here we are being-in-the-world within a culture, a step further in comparison with Merleau-Ponty where the research desire to search for something, apart from an experiencing body, can account for the culturally shared material hermeneutics and the way in which social rules play a role herein. Idhe 1993; 1999; Adams 2007, 1-5; Hasse 2008, 46-9; Vygotsky 1978, 33.

\textsuperscript{246} Especially in his 1980 work \textit{´Le sens Pratique’}. It is compatible to the current framework as a social addition as Bourdieu argues that within society’s fields (such as politics or science) there are a specific set of rules which are partly reflectedly and partly unreflectedly used by people. In each of these fields people develop a specific and unconscious way of perceiving, thinking, and acting in order to function (habitus).
doxa concepts argue in a similar vein as Heidegger (but now socially embedded) that fundamental but largely unconscious principles and values, which are taken as self-evident universals, are guiding our actions and thoughts.247 Things however, in this sense also help shape people’s thoughts on issues such as value, or on what is aesthetically pleasing, as well as that they are able to evoke specific social reactions. Although an object is originally Egyptian, it might not have been consciously perceived in this manner. Egyptian as a property however influenced the way other objects were perceived and used, and is an agent within in social learning and the creation, maintaining or chance of habitus. In this way it can contribute to the studying of social values and social related perceptions of artefacts that are of fundamental importance when analysing Roman houses and households. A statuette of Bes might not have been experienced Egyptian, but as something ‘beautiful’ or ‘ugly’ or ‘expensive-looking’ at the first confrontation. This experience is created by means of socially mediated (and therefore valued on social terms) values. It is still a statuette, but this factor is obscured by aesthetic judgement.248 These aesthetic or social judgements are also concepts developed and negotiated from within a specific environment. They are of relevance to this research because Egyptian artefacts form a part of this network of social values too. This will be further discussed in chapter 5 (see below).

3.4 Rethinking concepts
In addition to objects, concepts also need to be ‘re-thought’ within the theoretical framework. When using this particular term in the context of the Roman world, the first thing that springs to mind gaining access to concepts of Egypt are those which were employed in the literary sources. However, as will be made clear below this is highly problematic. As this is an archaeological study of Egyptian artefacts in a Roman context, it cannot consider literary concepts in the way they should be treated.249 However, it is important to regard them in order to discuss in what way the concept of

247 See Bourdieu 1990, 52-5.
248 Aesthetic judgements, or better judgements of taste, are also largely unreflectively dealt with and can be considered acts of social positioning, see Bourdieu 1984; Sepp and Embree (eds.) 2010; Casey 2010, 1-7; Toadvine 2010, 85-91; Tuan 1993, 1-31. They relate to more generally aesthetic experience and not so much target the appreciation of that which we now call art which has been regarded as an object of special significance over other objects. See Heidegger, 1957.
249 On the mutual influences of concepts and objects as well as the use of texts and objects, see Mol (forthcoming 2015).
Egypt is applied, and whether that carries any useful indications as to how Egyptian objects were used. Briefly, when the concept of Egypt is employed in literary sources a wide range of registers are revealed. It can be observed for instance that Egypt as a concept is used when discussing Roman moral, as a counter-example of the Roman, as the Other versus the Self. However, Egypt was also regarded as grain-producer, as exotic, as a Roman province, as beautiful, mystical and a far away and highly developed culture. Herodotus’ book II of *Histories* which was completely dedicated to Egypt is the most famous example of this, and tells both of an admiration and fascination as well as a real ethnographic interest in the country and its people. Furthermore the invention of writing was often ascribed to the Egyptians by for instance Plato, while Diodorus Siculus’ first book of *Library of History* claims that the gods were first created in Egypt. Such traditions speaking of admiration and descent however also seem to be leaning heavily on each other. As classical writers were quite aware of the writings of their predecessors, many sources seem to be a literary reaction to an earlier account. Another tradition employed in the literary sources exploits the negative associations of Egypt, and seems to use Egypt as a counter-example in order to praise the civilisation of Rome. They therefore recount rather negatively about the country and its customs. The recurrent thought that the Egyptians worshipped of animals for instance, features prominently in Juvenal’s 15th satire, often referred to by scholars in this context. Cicero uses Egypt in a similar manner when writing about religion, mentioning the Egyptians (and the Syrians) as an example of uncivilised animal worshippers.

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250 For an in-depth study on the literary concepts of Egypt and their complexities, see Leemreize (forthcoming 2015)
251 Plato *Philebus* 18b-c, Diodorus Siculus *Library of History*, I 9,6.
252 Tait 2003, 35
253 “Who knows not, O Bithynian Volusius, what monsters demented Egypt worships? One district adores the crocodile, another venerates the Ibis that gorges itself with snakes. In the place where magic chords are sounded by the truncated Memnon,1 and ancient hundred-gated Thebes lies in ruins, men worship the glittering golden image of the long-tailed ape. In one part cats are worshipped, in another a river fish, in another whole townships venerate a dog; none adore Diana, but it is an impious outrage to crunch leeks and onions with the teeth.” Juvenal *Satires*, 15. An example of how such accounts of Egypt were used to convey the perception of Egypt in scholarship see for instance Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984, 1852-2000.
254 “Very likely we Romans do imagine god as you say, because from our childhood Jupiter, Juna, Minerva, Neptune, Vulcan and Apollo have been known to us with the aspect with which painters and sculptors have chosen to represent them, and not with that aspect only, but having that equipment, age and dress. But they are not known to the Egyptians and Syrians, or any of the almost uncivilised races. Among these you will find a belief in certain animals more firmly established than is reverence for the holiest sanctuaries and images of the gods with us.” Cicero *De natura deorum*, I, 29, 81.
The largest problem with using the ancient sources in this way to get a grip on possible employed concepts of Egypt in Roman society, is that it neglects the context of the story, the way in which Egypt is used to enforce a rhetorical argument, and the context in which the text was written. Writing in Greek or Latin, in Classical Greece or the Roman Empire for example, makes an incredible difference to the use and understanding of the concept of Egypt, however, there is more context to take into account even more important. For instance, the genres in which Egypt featured included a wide variety, such as satire, philosophy, and history; all with its own traditions concerning the use of particular structures and themes. Furthermore on the same note, although it is useful that Egypt was used by Cicero as the first example that came into his mind when he had to mention a less sophisticated culture, the context of his text focuses on the relativity of the appearance of the gods. Cicero means that although Apis looks like a bull, it does not mean that the Egyptians did not see him as a god because of this appearance, in the same way that his friend Velleius cannot imagine Juno without the appearance that he has learned to recognise her.\textsuperscript{255} The context of both the purpose and the genre of the text should be taken into account therefore, when one wishes to gain proper access to concepts of Egypt. Pursuing that, it seems that in all their variety the sources carry one overlapping similarity, which is that although Graeco-Roman writers were keen on using Egypt as a literary tool, they did not seem to carry particular interests in the country or its people.\textsuperscript{256} It points to a difference in perception between Egypt as object and Egypt in text as well. Whereas Cestius built himself a pyramid in Rome to house his grave, Pliny mentions them

\textsuperscript{255} “For we often seen temples robbed and images of gods carried off from the holiest shrines by our fellow country me, but no one ever even heard of an Egyptian laying profane hands on a crocodile, ibis or cat. What therefore do you infer? That the Egyptians do not believe their sacred bull Apis to be a god? Precisely as much as you believe the Saviour Juno of your native place to be a goddess. You never see her even in your dreams unless equipped with goat-skin, spear, buckler and slippers turned up at the toe. Yet that is not the aspect of the Argive Juno, nor the Roman. It follows that Juno has one form for the Argives, another for the people of Lanuvium, and another for us. And indeed our Jupiter of the Capitol is not the same as the Africans’ Juppiter Ammon.” Cicero, \textit{de natura deorum}, I 29, 81-83. In this sense, in fact, he appeals to one of the central concerns of this dissertation about the relationship between subject, style, and perception.

\textsuperscript{256} Tait 2003, 36. As Ucko and Champion note:”The reality of whether classical knowledge of Egypt matched the apparent literary interest is a question, it is not just a matter of what evidence was available to them or a question of physical or linguistic access. There is a more fundamental problem of whether the classical world was really interested in ancient Egypt. Classical writers were keen to deploy Egypt, the Nile and its revered tradition of knowledge as literary motifs. But seldom (except maybe Herodotus) showed much interest in the people or the culture of Egypt.” Ucko and Champion 2003, 11. These ideas are also confirmed by the research of Leemreize 2014, 56-82.
(referring to the country Egypt in this case) as: “the pyramids – also in Egypt—must be mentioned in passing, too: an unnecessary and stupid display of royal wealth.”

Tastes differ of course, but looking at how Egypt features in the literary sources seems to denote a large gap between the rhetoric’s and Egypt used visually in domestic everyday life. Concerning antique texts the approach to Ancient Egypt was largely prescribed by the particular context, or literary genre, within which Egypt was mentioned. In its own unique way Egypt in literature was employed as a part of the self, a mirror, and a part of the Roman Empire. It therefore seems unlikely that such carefully employed literary topoi testifying of a large tradition in a literary context, were associations that emerged when people engaged with Egyptianised objects or saw a wall painting in an Egyptian style. Although this certainly does not mean that literary sources and physical remains are always two worlds apart, in the case of the concept of Egypt they do seem to represent two separate contexts. This means that the mental associations or concepts used when reflecting on Egyptian objects are different than the literary concepts. What does seem to correlate however, is that concepts concerning Egypt from the written sources are as manifold and as complex as the objects from this study and likewise, only the context in which the concepts are employed can elucidate their significance.

Concepts from historical accounts therefore, are a both a complexity that lies beyond the scope of this research as well as that they feature in quite different mental templates and frameworks in everyday experience. They also concern a quite specific influence. Whenever concepts are found in literature it means are consciously handled (in accordance with Kahneman’s slow brain system). This, as argued above, is not a common way to deal with the objects that surround people. In everyday coping, people usually employ a very visual way of dealing with the world, and mental images are more likely to become associations than abstract and conscious notions. Within direct perception such concepts do not reach the surface of conscious reflection. Furthermore, concepts employed in historical sources, such as the concept of the country Egypt as a literary construct for example, cannot be regarded

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257 Pliny the Elder, *historia naturalis* XXXVI.75 cf. 82

258 Tait 2003, 36.

259 See Leemreize (forthcoming 2015). See also Manolaraki 2013 specifically aimed to the Nile as a literary concept.

260 The associations with the concept of Egypt (when one is asked: what do you think about when you think of Egypt?) is much more likely to be ‘pyramids’ (in a present-day situation), than an abstract notion such as ‘mystical’ or ‘old’. This is the difference between written sources, a slow brain process, and perception in daily life, a fast brain process.
in the same context as object study, it has its own context of emergence and use.

Because objects and concepts are able to affect each other, they should be regarded as interdependent features. Things are not just symbolic projections as has been stated above, but symbolic projections do play a role in perception. Although ideas are shaped within a certain environment, they are not merely things that surround people without any reflection being deployed. And although the concepts of Egypt as we know them from literary accounts might not have seem to be very influential with regard to object perception in this particular case, this does not mean that there were no concepts employed at all when experiencing Egyptian material culture. A danger included within taking up a materiality perspective, is to grant too much agency to objects and disregard the concepts, mental associations, and symbols altogether, while they nonetheless form a vital component of perception. Furthermore, the observation that now and again Romans thought things were Egyptian when they were not, and vice versa, forms a clear argument of the necessity to also include concepts within the framework.

Concepts are mental representations, which the brain applies in order to denote classes of things in the world, they mediate between the world and the brain and help to structure human’s existence. Concepts and categories show no real static or necessary features to emerge, rather they seem to be specified by probabilistic features and develop very heterogeneously. This means that in addition to a direct inference (this is a dog), experiencing something involves a use of categories, classifications, and representational awareness of the kind of object the mind is directed towards. These features are present in the object of perception as actualities; they are present by

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261 In perception, however, seeing an object and thinking about one differs. This disparity according to Coates lies in the fact that visual experiences contain an additional component, a distinctive phenomenal aspect that is absent in mere thought. We should acknowledge that seeing is also a cognitive process, whereby concepts can represent their surroundings and vice versa. Seeing involves a classification, an awareness of kinds and even at the most basic level of consciousness people have an idea of how a particular experience differs from other past and other potential experiences. We thus also allow cognitive processes to play a role within perception, see Coates 2007, 15.

262 The ‘prototype theory’ proved that within concepts and categorization, certain members of a category are more central than others. For example, when asked to present an example of the concept furniture, a chair is more frequently mentioned than a stool. Subsequently an environmental and visual influence in the prototype theory of concepts has been established. Rosch 1973 (on natural categories); 1975; Rosch and Mervis 1975; Neisser 1987. On the development of conceptual structures, see Keil 1987, 175-200.
virtue of being imagined. Mental phenomena - ideas within various states of consciousness - furthermore show 'aboutness', or directness, directed towards objects in the world. Belief, mathematical thinking and imagination are always directed towards objects or state of affairs. Within perception, the concept of Egypt and the object Egypt can be separated as thinking about something and seeing something. Seeing the colour blue or smelling coffee, feeling the woollen carpet; these are all sensory aspects of experience which people can become aware of. Concepts in contrast, as argued by Coates, are essentially dispositional in nature; they are involved in the exercise of intrinsically representational states of mind, states of mind that are directed onto possible states of affairs in the world. They nonetheless possess the power to trigger expectations concerning the function and behaviour of a certain object. For instance, a changing concept can change the world without that world actually transforming. The concept earth, for example, when it changed from flat to round, did not change the real world, but it completely altered its representation with huge cultural consequences. Concepts also have the power to alter society by materialising a social construction, such as for instance the concept money.

In terms of this particular dataset, the concept of Egypt or the idea Egypt in the mind could be directed to the object Egypt in physical space. However, the concept of Egypt was also influenced by means of objects (see 2.5, where it was noted that the idea of what was Egyptian was very much formed with regard to visual stimuli such as museum objects and movies etc.). It consists of an interplay, because the way that the idea Egypt influenced the materialisation of the thing Egypt also had its effect on the idea of Egypt which again affected the object etc. Again this should be seen in a network

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263 See Sellars 1978, 422.
264 See Tieszen 2005, 184-5. Or to put it simply: every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, albeit not all in the same way. In presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired etc., see Moran 2000.
265 See Coates 2007, 12.
266 For example, I can imagine lying on the woollen carpet and feeling the material, or sitting on a wooden chair or the experience of drinking that cup of coffee when I see it.
267 For instance, the concept of money. Society is therefore something very real and not, as many post-positivist state, a social construction. Social forms are a necessary condition for any intentional act and their causal power establishes their reality, see Bhaskar 1998, 27.
268 Even concepts (as well as categorisation and classifications e.g., of Egypt and Aegyptiaca) as discussed in chapter 2 are influenced by means of direct perception and affordances from the environment, although less directly when compared with perception. A category is always defined by a reference to a cognitive model, However, they are so closely connected to affordances they seem perceptually given. On the move from direct perception to conceptual
of objects and ideas, where more concepts and objects shaped the ideas and the materialisations related to Egypt, and in which the context was guiding. People do not see an object, or interpret it as an isolated feature; when a statue of a sphinx in a garden is observed, then it is regarded in that garden and with the garden’s contents. Concepts should thus be seen as ecologically and socially situated cognitive associations. Conceptualising something is carried out by means of a mind in an environment. If concepts are mediated by means of society and the environment (social and material) however, it might be possible to study the relation between them.

In this respect, it is interesting to look into the way in which we think of objects in general. How can we know when things are taken for granted and when something is consciously reflected upon? How do objects appear to people? In part 3.3 it was observed that material properties are not experienced as parts but as a totality of our involvements with the object as well as its totality of representations, connotations, and properties. However, more factors play a role within the perception of objects which are of significance to the study of the use and perception of objects. As became clear from Kahneman’s work, people largely deal unreflectively with the objects and their surroundings. Objects are merely there. However, people do occasionally deal with the world in a reflective and interpretative way. While Kahneman relates this to two different brain systems, Heidegger refers to it as ready-to-hand (Zuhandenheit) versus present-at-hand (Vorhandenheit). Ready-to-hand in this case represents the everyday untheorised (or pre-interpretative) dealing with objects as a totality of involvements. Presence-at-hand is thus not the way in which things in the world are usually encountered. Present-at-hand is for example when an archaeologist

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269 As was argued before, it means that also cognition is not something that is formed independently in the brain. Thinking in general is inseparable from doing because it is a social activity that is situated in the nexus of ongoing relations between people and the world. Noë 2009; Lave 1988. See also Merleau-Ponty 1962; 24.

270 Heidegger, 1962.

271 Even then it may be not fully present-at-hand, as it now show itself as something to be repaired or disposed, and therefore a part of the totality of our involvements. In this case its Being may be seen as unreadiness-to-hand. Heidegger outlines three manners of unreadiness-to-hand: Conspicuous (damaged, e.g. a lamp’s wiring has broken), Obtrusive (a part required for the entity to function is absent e.g., we discover the bulb is missing), Obstinate (when the entity impedes us in pursuing a project e.g., the lamp blocks my view of
observes, classifies, and interprets artefacts, when something becomes present for the observer and when it is theorised and interpreted. These states of perception are a useful way of thinking about how objects can be encountered, and that these encounters fluctuate. However, when the ready-at-hand perception (and Kahneman’s fast brain system) is the typical way of dealing with one’s surroundings, how do things move to present-at-hand situations? Heidegger provides the example of the hammer, which in a normal situation is just used in order to achieve something, not consciously interpreted as a hammer (which would actually obstruct a successful use). However, when the hammer breaks it loses its usefulness and appears as merely there, present-at-hand. When a thing is revealed as present-at-hand, it stands apart from any useful set of equipment, and we then become aware of it (in Kahneman’s terms it slips to brain system 2). Furthermore, we become likewise aware of the network it exists in (all the things, actions, and people required to repair and make the hammer work again) and the complex interdependencies the object is involved in. However, while Heidegger only uses the example of a broken tool, more examples can be mentioned where things become present-at-hand. For example: when objects are not broken, but differently shaped than considered common, or when something appears outside a regularly used context. When it is somehow deviant to the accepted norm which allows an unreflective coping or an unconscious focus on its use and the goal to be achieved.

In order to describe the entanglements objects bring together for a society, Hodder presents the illustration of Caselli’s concert piano at the Mesolithic site of Lepenski Vir (see fig. 3.2). I wish to use the very same illustration in order to point to the difference between the awareness and taken-for-grantedness in perception. Everything exposed in the painting: the huts, the tools, the clothing, are used unreflectively, in the way Heidegger’s ready-at-hand thesis proclaims.

the computer screen). On conscious experience (awareness as present-at-hand condition), see Dretske 2002, 419-42.

272 Dennet is skeptical in being able to establish the moment in which we can identity perceptual (as opposed to conceptual) and states by means of evaluating their contents. ‘The question of exactly when a particular element was consciously (as opposed to unconsciously) taken admits no arbitrary answer’, see Dennet 2002, 494.

273 See Hodder 2012, 2, fig. 1.1.
The men and women do not focus on what is in their hands, their tools are just used, the huts are not looked at, the clothes are worn. Everything has a place within this context which allows people to merely respond to situations instead of thinking them through. The piano, on the other hand, is out of place. Within this context it has precipitously moved to a present-at-hand situation (it would not have been so in a piano shop or concert hall), like Heidegger’s broken hammer. Not fitting into the context, it suddenly becomes reflectively and consciously dealt with as an object. It becomes interpreted, its material is thought about, and its presence triggers an active response. The above figure therefore clearly elucidates the problem of Egyptian artefacts in Roman perception: are Egyptian objects (always) the concert piano of Pompeii? If so, under which circumstances? Or do they perhaps perceptively belong (or start to belong- within the process of integration) to the fishing nets, scrapers, baskets and tools; as a part of the whole and the ordinary, just unreflectively used. Which conditions causes an object to move from the unreflective to the reflective side of perception? Form, material, the viewer, or context? A combined study of all these features and their inner relations regarding the perception of objects-in-contexts is considered the prerequisite for the methodology developed in this chapter.
3.5 Approach, deconstructing and re-placing Egypt in Roman Pompeii

From the above theoretical discussions on the study of Aegyptiaca in Pompeii the following issues should be taken into account as a theoretical basis of the methodology. They concern the way in which objects are unconsciously dealt with and thus form the substrate of our beings, thoughts, and doings, the way we project ideas onto objects, and the way that objects only become meaningful and act out agency from a specific environment. A way should be found in which these thoughts on object-perception and agency can be translated into a methodology in which Aegyptiaca can be studied with the aim of providing them a proper place in the Pompeian material culture. The approach asks for a two-fold analytical treatment. First, the perception of Egyptian artefacts should be separated from the way we (scholars) think of them. Moreover, an attempt should be made to arrive at a Pompeian perception of these objects in which the relation to Egypt is explored instead of exploring them as Egyptian. This is step one, a deconstruction of the category Aegyptiaca. The second step is to re-place the objects and review the objects not as specifically Egyptian, but as objects that have a meaning inherent to the environment in which they were used (in this case Pompeian houses) and as a totality of involvements. According to the theoretical framework, objects should be regarded holistically; their value emerges in a web of other entities and in a specific context of being and practices. This is step 2, what will be called place-making. These two steps complement each other and are both necessary, but should be treated in two separate parts. Whereas the first part of the methodology separates concepts from objects as a methodological deconstruction, to overcome the modern projections of scholars and to gain access to the layers of perception, this is not in accordance with the adopted framework which argued that subject and object are in fact no independent concepts. The second part therefore uses the complexity of perception and complements the research in paying justice to the totality of meaning-making and to being-in-the-world in which subject, object and consciousness cannot be separated but indeed constitute each other; only in context of use things can be properly valued. Both methodologies will be briefly introduced and their value for the analysis of the dataset will be discussed in the coming sections.
3.6 Methodology I: Deconstructing ‘Aegyptiaca’

3.6.1 Associations between objects and concepts

The interdependency and mutuality within the construction of objects and concepts are illustrated above. However, albeit ontologically connected, they must not only be methodologically separated in the first analytical part in order improve the starting point with regard to regard Egyptian objects, but also to (partly) overcome preconceptions within interpretation held by archaeological classifications. Which associations did Pompeians have when they perceived certain objects and where did those associations derive from? As inferred from chapter 2, the current associations of an archaeologist with these objects played a crucial part in the way in which the object was interpreted. As Egypt was in such cases always the first interpretation, it therefore automatically constituted the most important characteristic of the object, which was unproblematically transferred to a Roman context. However, it has become apparent, that present-day associations with Egypt, Egyptian artefacts, and Egyptian styles played a too dominant role in the interpretation of Roman Aegyptiaca. In addition to the fact that their original owners not always perceived such objects in an interpretative realm, the objects also existed in completely different associative networks. Instead of automatically regarding objects as Egyptian and interpret them accordingly, the connection that artefacts had with Egypt should be questioned and be critically analysed.

3.6.2 Deconstruction

Intrinsic meanings do not exist, but are mediated by means of social interaction and through coping with them in an environment.\(^{274}\) Instability and flux should therefore be the constituents of that which is thought of as an object. The static interpretations of Egyptian artefacts as well as the structural denial of their contextual, conceptual and material heterogeneity should be renounced before the objects can be re-interpreted from the level of contextual perception. A thorough deconstruction by means of a disentanglement of the concepts and objects that comprise the ‘category’ Aegyptiaca is necessary in order to see whether there are conceptual connections between objects, concepts, material, and contexts. Only those entities present in the immediate visual environment of Pompeii can therefore be accounted for. This will be the goal of chapter 4. The analysis

\(^{274}\) Bourdieu 1990, 50-6
will produce a relational network which is incomplete by default (because only archaeologically inferred entities can be included, as it is unsure how for example concepts from intellectual discourses and reflections in literature played a part in this process in Pompeii) but nonetheless, it is useful to disentangle the deeply entrenched concepts surrounding Aegyptiaca. What visual basis is found in Pompeii that might have affected perception, and how were these used? What associations existed with other objects or material in the immediate surroundings? Pompeii is exceptionally suitable for this kind of research because its context and contents have been preserved to an unprecedented level within the Roman world. Although not a “Pompeii premise” as once argued, the site is indeed an ideal archaeological playground to illustrate the complexities involved within the understanding of material culture.\(^{275}\) It is claimed that comprehensively examining these complexities between concepts and objects is not only worthwhile with regard to this particular case study, but to archaeological research in general.

3.6.3 Relationality

Whereas the term networks already appeared a fair amount of times within this chapter, a few words need to be said concerning networks and relationality. Thinking in a relational way assumes that a network approach should be adopted within the methodology. However, the way the relational thinking and the separation of concepts and objects occur in this thesis should not be considered as anything like the formal approach currently and increasingly employed and developed within archaeological research.\(^{276}\) Formal network approaches (those that use networks in a quantitative way such as within Social Network Approaches, complexity theory, or space syntax), and the ideas presented in this chapter, however, share the assumption that relationships not only exists between entities (e.g., human beings, objects, ideas) but that they are omnipresent, important, and worthy of being the object of study.\(^{277}\) As with numerous other recent network approaches within archaeology this research sees the benefits of graph visualisation. However, the network as it is employed in this thesis will merely be a qualitative approach in order to illustrate existing relations between ‘Egypt(s)’ concepts and objects. It is not to order complex data; it is

\(^{275}\) Allison, ‘not the Pompeii Premise’ in reaction to Shiffer. See Allison 1992, 49-56.
\(^{276}\) See Brughmans 2013; Mol 2014; Knappet 2011.
\(^{277}\) See Brughmans 2013, 625; Wasserman and Faust 1994.
used to show the complexity of the data. There is thus no quantitative analysis, the focus is on the deconstruction of static concepts, to bring in more dynamism in interpretation in the way illustrated above, and to show the connections between different entities: between images and objects, and between objects and subjects. Combining concepts, contexts, and objects in an approach to observe the way in which they relate means that the networks as conceived in this research are called multi-entity, two-mode, or bipartite networks (see also part 4.1).\textsuperscript{278} This kind of network approach is increasingly applied in material culture studies, for example by Gell, who applies it for the use of motifs in Marquesian art within different social groups.\textsuperscript{279} Furthermore, scholars like Knappet, Gosden, and Watts study the relations between images, texts, and objects (Knappet 2008); objects and stylistic inferences (Gosden 2004, also Gell 1998); and the way objects are regarded semiotically within networks (Watts 2008).\textsuperscript{280} Although not identical to that which is proposed with regard to this research, the approaches are helpful to shape the network as envisaged for the deconstruction of Aegyptiaca. Approaches such as the above have dual benefits in the sense that they are able to rise above the separation between the study of material, image, and idea by means of integrating them in the same network, and because they constitute a better way to illustrate how artefacts and images slip in and out of objecthood and thingness.\textsuperscript{281} Furthermore, it is claimed that such relational thinking is capable of leading to a deeper understanding of the overall character of networks as human and non-human collectives (as proposed by ANT).

Although multi-entity networks are useful, there are a few drawbacks that have to be taken into account within ‘thinking through’ them. The largest shortcoming is that when a graph or a network is drawn, it is flawed the very moment it is completed because it represents a static image of what is in reality a highly dynamic process. The meaning of an artefact in these networks is created and sustained by its material, contextual and conceptual relations, and they form the basis and catalyst for its change of meaning. There is a difference between using relationality as a theory and using networks as a method. While relationality assumes a continuing connection between entities, the visualisation hereof is incapable of grasping this. Visually there is something deeply wrong in the way networks are pictured.

\textsuperscript{279} See Gell 1998, 155-215.
\textsuperscript{281} See Knappet 2008, 146; 2008, 138-56.
since we are never able to use them to draw enclosed and habitable spaces and envelopes, they are always continuing and relating to other.\textsuperscript{282} However, although all models that attempt to capture complex situations are inherently oversimplifying and incorrect, they can nonetheless be helpful. Multi-entity networks are therefore useful as they constitute a first bridge of the gap between empirical case studies and overarching theories; they allow a way to look at the way in which the meaning of artefacts is created in a relational instead of a categorical way.

The most significant advantage in adopting a relational approach is that Egypt in this case will serve as a heuristic device, not as a classification. The research objective moves from objects studied as Egyptian to studying objects in relation to Egypt, which means withdrawing from the \textit{a priori} proclamation that things were automatically experienced as Egyptian. Relational thinking furthermore allows more dynamism into the interpretation process, taking account of the materiality of an object (as in the agency of an object itself and its material properties) as well as its semiotic values (what is thought of that object, by the present-day and ancient public).\textsuperscript{283} In this way, it becomes possible to unravel what lies behind the choices that people made for certain objects, how these objects are appropriated, how they relate to concepts present in a society, and how the integration of ‘foreign’ objects work on a local level. What the deconstruction of Aegyptiaca will try to prove, is that material, objects, and space are always instable and unfixed phenomena; they cannot be objectively determined or subjectively imagined, but should rather be seen as processual and relational.

\textbf{3.7 Methodology II: Place-making}

Deconstruction, however, is not something that needs to be achieved, but something that needs to be overcome.\textsuperscript{284} Meaning is imminent in the relational contexts of people’s practical engagement with their lived-in environments, and it is the lived environments (and as lived environments) -

\textsuperscript{282} See Latour 2011, 796-810; Ingold 2000, 189.
\textsuperscript{283} Gosden 2004; Watts 2004; Knappet 2005; 2008. In order to study the use and perception of Egyptian objects in all their complexity it is important to include the meaning and associations evoked by means of the object itself as well as and its material properties; the human intuitive associations and interpretations. However it is also relevant to consider the conscious values, concepts and places that accompany an object, as this allows intentionality to enter into the interpretation process. What did the viewer have in mind when displaying certain objects versus its reaction among viewers.
\textsuperscript{284} See Latour 2004, 11.
the houses in which the Egyptian artefacts are used and become meaningful- that must be scrutinised. Egyptian objects cannot be isolated from anything else that takes place in the lives of people dealing with these specific artefacts. Therefore the approach to Aegyptiaca within this thesis should be twofold. After deconstruction, a re-placing of the artefacts in their use-context is required. Whereas chapter 4 will place artefacts in a broader perceptual framework that looks at the relations and connections to Egypt, not a priori regarding objects as Egyptian, chapter 5 will seek to provide a framework for these uses and perception by means of a contextual analysis of object and place. This will be carried out according to the principles of place-making, a strategy with a phenomenological basis mostly applied in the field of planning and design. For this thesis, however, it will serve a hermeneutic purpose and will be carefully modelled in order to fit the research’s aims. First however, the theoretical background of the use-context and of place-making will be briefly explained by means of the phenomenon of dwelling, along with the specific tools and methods it comprises.

### 3.7.1 Dwelling

Dwelling is an important concept to consider within the context of place-making, as it deals with the theoretical foundation of the most important contextualisation of this study: houses. The house as a material and psychological place is important as a focus, as it locates human existence and it unites things, people, and space in a micro-cosmos of human presence. Within this perspective, the essence of architecture centres on the qualities of human experience. A house is configured by means of human beings, but by its physical appearance it also configures people. This is tried to be grasped with the concept of ‘dwelling’. What is of special significance is that through this idea both the physicality of the construction and the activities and qualities of inhabitation are brought together. It is therefore an ideal theoretical point of departure, as dwelling brings together

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286 As the tools and methods that contribute to the study of ‘place’, see Seamon 1982; Casakin and Bernardo 2012; Seamon 1982, 119-149.
287 Dwelling in the sense of place, see Heidegger 1971. Once expounded in his ‘dwelling perspective’ (Ingold 2000, 189) Ingold now retreats from his earlier theory by means of stating that not place, both being along paths, is the primary condition of being, and becoming. He rather refers to inhabiting rather than dwelling, see Ingold 2008, 1809.
288 See Altman 1975; Altman and Werner 1985.
290 See Sharr 2007, 3.
the material agency and the social intentions in one framework. Furthermore, next to its people and its material the theoretical notion of dwelling also takes into account the invisible yet meaningful force in shaping and reproducing human ideals: space. The structure of space works, more forcefully even than the materiality of the house, as an ontological structure by which humans learn how to categorise their world and how to develop social relations, personality, and social status. Dwelling can be seen as an accommodation between people and their surroundings, it involves being at one with the world and accumulates the social and the physical world. The theory of dwelling can be elucidated by means of the example of a table. An object such as a table, its use, value and the way in which it draws in people together can be explained by means of the notion of dwelling but never just with building, as the latter only accounts for the physicality of a built structure and not its social and material complexities and agencies. Moreover, it is not only the table and its wood, or its place in the room which constitutes its being, but also the use of this table as such. It is the wood, its position in the room, and the shape of the table together that accounts for the specific way in which people enjoy meals. Dwelling thus depends upon building and vice versa. As to the method of place-making, the theory of dwelling is of utmost importance, for its power to tie together objects in context and looks at the way in which knowledge is produced. Dwelling as a perspective reviews human engagement within space. It studies the social forces of mutual relations and those with things by means of emphasizing the immanence of use and experience while sustaining a narrative of being with regard to a domestic context.

3.7.2 Place-making as a methodology of dwelling

Place-making next, can be considered a justified methodology concerning the manner in which houses, as the connection between people and environment, are conceived within the theoretical framework. In brief: place-making subsumes the human entanglement with his surroundings into a theory of dwelling. One significant dimension of the world is the human experience of place, which continues to be a major focus of

\footnote{Alofsin 1993; Mugerauer 2008.}

\footnote{According to Heidegger (1971, 143-61) a building is not just a construction. Hence it should not be regarded as an object or as the product of a construction management process, but rather as part of an on-going human experience of building and dwelling, see Sharr 2007, 46.}
phenomenological work in environment-behaviour research.\textsuperscript{293} Place is in fact the most fundamental form of embodied experience. It is the site of a powerful fusion of self, space, time and environment. Place-making as it will be applied here focuses on lived experience, the physicality of a house, on the way in which people perceive space and invest it with meaning, on dwelling and movement, the way in which we interpret space in order to make a place, and the way in which embodiment relates to emplacement.\textsuperscript{294} This means that place-making has a significant social component, as it engages in the workings of human interaction, group formation and community building but nonetheless pursues the way in which the physical world plays a role in this process. The applicable methods under the heading of place-making are manifold. However, they work from a similar principle: the attempt to connect the cognitive with the physical world.\textsuperscript{295} Furthermore, it takes into account an important theoretical proposition of agency and affordances, and the way in which the environment influences human beings, their perception, and their behaviour. The aim of place-making is to become aware of the way in which human behaviour, as well as its individual and group dimensions, affects and is affected by means of the designed environment and the objects that it, both as physical things and as a totality of things.

3.7.3 Methods of place-making

The methods of place-making as the exploration of the relationship between psychological and physical aspects of perception adopted in this research are: space syntax analyses, pattern analysis, and object analysis. All are aimed at analysing the complexities of Egyptian artefacts from the context in which they were used and regarded. The issues and the choices for specific strategies will be elucidated in 5.1; part 3.7.3 will briefly point at the various methods and the reason for choosing them.

**Space syntax (configuration, visibility, and movement analysis):** As 3.7.2 emphasised, space is of vital importance to study if one wishes to get a firmer grip on the use and space, and the social interaction within the house. The environment is a world that continually unfolds itself in relation

\textsuperscript{293} See Seamon 2000, 160-3.  
\textsuperscript{294} See Feld and Basso 1996, 8-9. On the way place(-making) is connected to experience, see Tuan 1977.  
\textsuperscript{295} E.g., space syntax, pattern language, environmental images, cognitive mapping, spatial behaviour, personal space, individual and group territoriality, defensible space, inclusive design, architectural archetypes, and environmental design.
to the beings inhabiting it. To be able to scrutinise the value of Egypt in Pompeian houses within the perspective of material agency and the theory of dwelling as explained above, means that space as an artefact is one of the central components to analyse. Methodologically speaking, space is significant because it forms the context where behaviour, guided by the body, the material around it, becomes structured. It can therefore be considered a relevant agent/actor, not only space as appreciated mathematically or topographically, but principally as space appreciated by means of human experience. This latter aspect is exactly that which space syntax as an approach attempts to examine. Space syntax (as developed in Hillier and Hanson’s *The Social Logic of Space*), is a method which aims to construct a bridge between space and behaviour, by illuminating the way in which the mind is reflected in spatial configuration, but also by illustrating the way in which space is an agent in structuring human behaviour and relations. It was thought that space created a special relationship between function and social meaning in buildings and that the arranging of space was in fact about the arranging of relationships between people. Although this is not a one-to-one relationship, its inferences have been proved helpful with regard to the analysis of the relation between space and social structure. It therefore forms a suitable tool to apply within a place-making perspective, because it relates closely to Gibson’s affordances and his ideas on direct perception and the environment and because it focuses on perceived space and its social implications. For the context of Pompeii, space syntax access analysis already served as a method when Grahame applied it in order to compare the domestic structures of Pompeii. Although the theories and methods which space syntax comprises are too manifold and complex to describe here in detail, the tools utilised in chapter 5 are briefly discussed below.

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296 Several features of social behaviour and built space are central to the study of space (e.g., territory, privacy, power, public space, interaction, control), see Altman 1975: Cassidy 1997, 137-8. On defensible space, see Newman, 1972.


298 Hillier and Hanson 1984. The original aim of space syntax was formulated as: “... To expound a general theory of what was inherent in the nature of space that might render it significant for human societies and how space might, in principle, be shaped to carry cultural information in its form and organisation.”, see Hanson 1999, 1.

299 Grahame 2000. It can be noted here that, the way in which space syntax analyses serve in the present thesis diverge significantly from Grahame’s views, as it is not applied in a comparative manner but to acquire more insight into not only how the Roman house functioned but also how people and objects relate to each other in a particular social space.

300 For general surveys, Hillier and Hanson 1984; Hillier 1997; Hanson 1999. For a more detailed description of the space syntax tools as applied in this study, see Mol 2011.
Configuration (also known as access-analysis or gamma-analysis) is designed to analyse the internal structures of buildings. In particular it is concerned with the manner in which space is structured and with the arrangement of space connected to people’s spatial investments in social and ideological values. The second tool is Visibility analysis (which comprises space syntax’ Visibility Graph Analysis and Isovist analysis). It informs specifically on the visual relationships between spaces as well as on addressing the relationship between the viewer and his immediate spatial environment.\textsuperscript{301} In this case graphs serve as a mental representation of the environment. What could be observed from a particular location, from where could specific spaces, objects, or wall paintings be viewed? This is notably of interest to the spatial analysis of the Egyptian objects in relation to their viewers. The final tool applied in this dissertation with regard to the space syntax approach is agent analysis. This space syntax computer model is primarily based on the affordance theory of Gibson and is aimed specifically on movement and perception within built space.\textsuperscript{302} Agents in this computer model can infer the affordances of the environment and traverse a graph-based context. This will result in illustrating the routes most likely taken through the environment, highlight spaces where people are expected to engage in interaction, or indicate spaces which are relatively secluded. Understanding the way in which people move and gather is relevant to the assessment of the social and economic function of buildings. Therefore all the analyses encompass an ideal way of studying perceived space as well as the social structures present in a household.\textsuperscript{303}

**Pattern analysis/language:** Pattern language, originally designed by Christopher Alexander in order to optimise building design in a phenomenological way, forms a suitable hermeneutic tool for the analysis of dwelling and of material agency in the context of houses. Pattern language

\textsuperscript{301} Isovist and Visibility Graph Analysis are both based on mutual visibility and created by means of the computer software Depthmap. The Isovist is defined as the set of all points visible in all directions from any given vantage point in space. The Visibility Graph Analysis, or VGA, has been developed in order to provide better information on larger open spaces. It presents us with a means to address the relationship between viewers and their immediate spatial environment. It replaces the line map with a grid of points within open space, and constructs a visibility graph in which points are lined if visible to each other. See Benedikt 1979 47; Turner and Penn 1999; Turner et al. 2001, 103-21; Turner 2003, 656-76; Franz et al. 2005 30-8.


\textsuperscript{303} Space syntax can serve as the basis for agent simulation in the form of an Exosomatic Visual Architecture or EVA. An EVA is a computer architecture that contains pre-processed visual information on the environment which agents access by means of a look-up table. It is called exosomatic visual architecture because it provides agents with a form of exosomatic (outside the body) memory common to all agents in an environment.
targets at bringing together the physical and mathematic presence of housing and decoration and the way in which it leads to experience. Therefore it shares its theoretical premises with space syntax, although this time focusing on decorative patterns within buildings.\textsuperscript{304} It attempts to scrutinise the way in which these patterns (e.g., within wall painting, thresholds, pavements, light etc.) are capable of influencing human behaviour. As yet not adopted by archaeology on such a large scale as space syntax, it is considered a helpful addition to place making, as it likewise allows taking material agency into account. Furthermore, pattern language presents the scholar with the opportunity to include both the structural components of wall painting and their iconography.\textsuperscript{305} Construction is determined by available materials and adapted to the local environment and climate. The house is therefore not only shaped by human, but also by physical topography. In this way the physical specifics of place-making work through the house as a way to shape a human being. The sort of timber that was used, the way the roof allowed space, the thickness of the walls, the warmth of the house and the light through the windows; they have a quality to both reflect, structure, and shape human presence. The material and natural nuances within perception of the process of dwelling is what pattern language will add as a tool. It therefore offers a way to connect all the aspects of a house from a phenomenological account of human experience. Moreover, it offers a way of describing materialities of the house as part of a totality, so within the concept of dwelling, because it analyses how different rooms relate to each other and how people used and experienced different conditions (such as light, space or differences in height) to create a certain experience and to understand the design of a single house. Within the discipline of archaeology, the approach of pattern language has been implemented by Watts': \textit{A pattern language for houses at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Ostia}.\textsuperscript{306} In a similar way to Grahame, she tried to look for patterns in order to establish if a general structure would emerge which would explain Roman building processes, this time focusing not on the space, but on painting, floors, and pavement of the houses. Although the functional analysis is a useful tool when one wishes to carefully and

\textsuperscript{304} Alexander 1974.
\textsuperscript{305} We read: although a study of ground plans proved to be very fruitful to get a grip on roman cultural and social identity, it is not the only way that leads into Roman society and it is wrong: “to swing the pendulum from 'the walls tell us nothing' to the 'the walls tell us everything.'”, see Grahame 2000, 98. For a materiality perspective on iconography, see Alexander 2010, 10-25; De La Fuente 2010, 3-9.
\textsuperscript{306} See Watts 1987.
systematically look at the affect of material culture in houses, when it is used to find patterning on a broad scale—just as with Grahame—it appeared not to be that successful.\textsuperscript{307} In contrast to Watts, therefore, this dissertation will use the method of pattern language not in a comparative but in a micro-hermeneutic way, in order to comprehend one house as a holistic socio-physical unit.

**Object analysis:** The last tool that will be used within place-making can be categorised under the heading of object analysis. It will consist of a contextual analysis of all the objects, not only as things with material properties but also as objects with an iconographical meaning and with the power to draw in people in a variety of ways, within a specific environment. What did the owners wish to express with objects? What does the object subsequently do in its environment? How will it be looked upon by people? How does it engage in social processes and interactions in the house? How does it work as a part of the totality of the house? How would it have been perceived by those observing its specific shape together with the totality of objects and surroundings?\textsuperscript{308} The analysis will scrutinise the pre-interpretative layers that shape the perception while dealing with objects: the material properties, their colour, polish, height, position, their relation to other objects, or background colours (everything gathered from the previous place-making analyses). This final object-focused analysis will study perception and objects from a materiality perspective as it was developed in this chapter, however, it will be balanced through place-making, because the agency will be reviewed in a use-context. Only in this combination it becomes possible to see what Egyptian artefacts as a thing and as an object in a world could have meant to the owners and the viewers in a domestic context, and how they acted out their agencies.

This means that although the analyses described above are used to carefully and systematically study and analyse house content and decoration, they are specifically meant to contribute to an emic understanding of the use of the house, thereby taking a distance from the functional analysis employed

\textsuperscript{307} As the Kind rightly argues, within her analysis Watts did not take into account enough some invaluable features, such as the wall constructions and she ignored building history, making much of her patterns ineffective. De Kind 1992/1993, 65

\textsuperscript{308} Instead of ‘totality’, the term atmosphere can serve to convey the way in which and where objects are located. The light and colours are applied in order to create perception and provide meaning. Atmospheres proceed from and are created by means of things, persons or their constellations. It is the common reality of the perceiver and the perceived where one’s bodily presence is changing due to certain ordering and objects, see Böhme 1993, 122.
in both space syntax and pattern language as used by Grahame and Watts. Although very important for the understanding of houses in Campania, reaching a typological understanding or construction analysis of a house through a formal comparative analysis is not a primary goal of this dissertation. The original theses of the creating effect of visual and spatial structures (as originally put forward by Alexander, Hillier, and Hanson) are at the forefront of the analysis and the analyses will therefore be used as hermeneutic tools in order to understand the experience of a house.

3.8 Conclusion
Chapter 3 discussed the theoretical foundations guiding the thinking about (Egyptian) artefacts as physical objects with material properties, its related concepts formed through the surroundings people grew up in, and has subsequently tried to develop a method to investigate objects at the level of perception. It was argued that perceptions emerge from a background of physical, aesthetic, social, reflective, and historical associations and is therefore inherently relational. This knowledge is furthermore grounded in cohabitation with the things around us, providing people with mental structures to understand the world. Being-in-the-world as it was explained in this chapter should be considered the core of human identity and the core of the construction of culture and society. By setting out a framework in which the importance of agency of objects and the perception of objects were acknowledged as central for the formation of object-meaning, it became clear how Aegyptiaca should be conceived and dealt with in this thesis. It was argued to focus on perception and on studying the objects within broader networks of material culture. Not only does it become possible in this way to overcome some of the preconceptions that influenced previous interpretations of the study of Aegyptiaca (because Aegyptiaca will receive a more balanced position within the totality of material culture and social interaction), it also becomes possible to say something about the influence that 'Egypt' as objects had (either consciously or unconsciously) on a Roman context. By studying objects and the way they were used or integrated in a

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309 Being part of a rich tradition of functional and comparative analyses of domestic spaces in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Examples of this tradition are, for example, Evans 1980, who pertained a formal analysis of the atrium house, creating a range of classification systems, de Kind 1992, who refined the typology to 8 different house types also taking into account wall construction for the houses of Herculaeum, Van Binnebeke 1991, focusing on houses and rooms, or Schipper 1992 127-49, who compared a sample of 33 atrium houses studying the relation between room functions and architectural orders.
environment carefully, it becomes possible to add something relevant to discussions such as romanisation or globalisation.

This methodology can refine the research to Aegyptiaca concerning how the perception of objects works, and how the agency they acted out in a conscious and unconscious way can function in a particular context. It was noted that by looking at how people perceive objects, two viewpoints are of importance: first is to examine the different layers of being of what makes up a perception, this means the properties of an object which are not present in direct perception but do nonetheless shape the direct perception (such as the colour, the material, the height, the surface treatment etc). This is the micro-scale of perception. The second viewpoint is the macro-scale of perception, which means that the object’s perception should be studied from the context in which it becomes perceived. Both scales are crucial to the way an object is seen by viewers. A detailed deconstruction of ‘things Egyptian’ therefore is the goal of the next chapter, focusing on how object, subject, and iconography in context relate to each other.