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CHAPTER 4: DECONSTRUCTING AEGYPTIACA

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Deconstructing Aegyptiaca, the concept of Egypt in networks of being and becoming

Recapitulating the above chapters, it was observed that the objects classified as Egyptian and Isiac with regard to the site of Pompeii are incredibly heterogeneous in form, material, style, and subject. The dataset of collected objects, based on their Egyptian and Isiac classification by scholars in the past, comprises of 202 objects. In that dataset a great variety of objects can be observed: jewellery depicting Isiac deities, statuettes in bronze, silver, or terracotta, sistra, wall paintings illustrating life along the river Nile, sphinxes, pharaohs, slabs engraved with hieroglyphs, domestic shrines including portraits of Isis, Anubis, and Harpocrates, Nilotic mosaics, and reliefs. An incredible miscellany of artefacts can indeed be accounted for. From a present-day scope of investigation, it can furthermore be delineated that objects in this case can refer to Egypt stylistically (because of a Pharaonic-Egyptian style) as imported from Egypt (e.g., the greywacke slab, see fig. 4.1a) or as locally produced objects (fig. 4.1b). They can also refer to Egypt in subject, for instance in the case of Nilotic scenes, but be stylistically Roman (fig. 4.1c). The contexts in which such artefacts are attested show no more structure than the group of objects, as they were found in large villa estates, but also in middle class houses, small dwellings, shops, bars, temples, and bath houses.

The aim of this chapter is to deconstruct and unravel the intangible category referred to as Aegyptiaca and the cultural epitaph 'Egypt' for Pompeii. It will therefore attempt to propose a fresh look at material culture, focusing especially on the full scope of experience surrounding the perception of material culture. It is not justified to classify the objects described above as similarly perceived artefacts. However, because this has always been the case until very recently, there is no clear view on any patterns and rules

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310 See Appendix A for a complete list of the objects. The main body of artefacts was collected from the catalogues of Tram tan Tinh 1964, de Vos 1980, Swetnam Burland 2002, and Versluys 2002. They were supplemented by individual scholars (such as Dellacorte 1931, or Zanker 1990) mentioning specific objects as being Isiac or Egyptian and by objects found in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli during visits in 2011 and 2012.
present within the use of these objects. If the multiple strands of content, style, material, iconography, and context are compared, can one discover conventions and values with regard to use and perception? This is the intended target of the present chapter. This attempt will be carried out in the full range of Pompeian material culture, not just of objects deemed Egyptian. Furthermore, in the methodological part it was argued to not only search for a frame focusing on the relational, dynamic and intersubjective processes concerning Aegyptiaca, but also to approach the label ‘Egyptian’ critically.

Fig. 4.1 a-c) Examples of Aegyptiaca. Above: (a) a greywacke slab engraved with hieroglyphs imported from Egypt from the MNN. Below left (b) a statue made of local clay representing an Egyptian styled sphinx from the MNN. Below right (c) a Roman-style mosaic depicting life on the river Nile from Casa del Menandro. Photos taken by the author.

Chapter 3 has already elaborated extensively on the theoretical part of relational thinking with regard to agency and perception, the introduction of this chapter shall touch upon the methodological implications of the approach and present a first survey of relational aspects of Aegyptiaca. In this introduction the category as it currently exists will be visualised within a network. Subsequent sections will attempt to capture specific Egyptian-related artefacts within their wider material and conceptual connections.
This approach is ultimately aimed at revealing the various concepts related to an artefact by means of inter-artefactual associations and the associations maintained with artefacts. Put simply, we wish to review Egyptian artefacts within a broader network than just ‘Egyptian’. As mentioned, the network theoretically draws on the way in which people experience their surroundings and how their environment affects them.\textsuperscript{311} What should the networks in this chapter examine? First of all, it is important to include the combination of iconology and materiality. It not only embraces direct perception stimulated by the artefact itself and the way it is shaped, it also allows conscious interpretation (human interpretation) and intentional behaviour created by means of cultural and social learning. This approach is characterised as ‘situated semiotics’.\textsuperscript{312} Within situated semiotics, direct affordances and indirect associations tend to articulate and interact in the generation of material culture. In a way this implies that the pragmatic and the significative come together. From this viewpoint the object can be scrutinised as symbol and material.\textsuperscript{313} Secondly, what should furthermore serve an examination of the complexity and dynamics of Egyptian artefacts is the perspective of concealing and un concealing, which will help to bring to light the way in which meaning is shaped and changed within an associational network.\textsuperscript{314} Even though an association with Egypt and a certain artefact exists, this can be concealed in perception because other direct perceptions prevail over the ‘Egypt-perception’. In other instances Egypt can again be revealed again, depending on the way in which the object is used and who is using or viewing it. The question then is whether the circumstances can be traced in which this occurs- the revealing and the concealing- and how this occurs for different artefacts and different settings. What will be actively traced therefore in the context of this perspective in the coming parts of this chapter, are the perceptive links that an object receives

\textsuperscript{311} The way in which we experience material culture and in particular its relational aspect is a challenge to analyse, because it takes place on various levels of human consciousness inducing mental and physical associations as well as actions. It is inferred from the human as well as its social occupation and the way in which he perceives and interprets the world. It is also inferred from the object itself and the way in which it appears to the human eye. The inductions of the objects are acquired from a multitude of sources (e.g., style, material, form, colour, context, other objects, value, state of the observer etc.) which do not present themselves as structured cognitive references in the human mind.

\textsuperscript{312} See Knappet 2012, 87-109.

\textsuperscript{313} ‘Semiotic networks’ should be created, where both humans and non-humans are present as nodes (as a complementation on Gell’s work on inter-artefactual networks), see Knappet 2012, 91. An example of this concept is illustrated by means of miniature vases.

\textsuperscript{314} Things are not merely visible phenomena, but are partly hidden from view. We can never acquire an exhaustive understanding of things, but can only gradually reveal them. This is an never ending process which Heidegger refers to as: Aletheia.
during its life span in Pompeii as a used object in relation to all other objects within the close environment. It is argued that the more such links an object receives, the more it can become enmeshed in the network and its meaning concealed. The networks created therefore are networks of being and becoming; being because they represent a meaning of an object as a snapshot within a continuous process. Speaking of a continuous process implies that a network is equally a network of becoming, as the links between nodes (the associations between humans, ideas, and things) disappear and new links emerge. Therefore the significance of an artefact within these networks is created and sustained by means of its material, contextual, and conceptual relations. In addition, they form the basis and catalyst with regard to the change of the meaning of the object. A drawback is, as mentioned, that due to a dynamic interface, networks form a highly unstable path to portray meaning and indeed merely represents a snapshot within the process of meaning-making. On the other hand this instability might reflect the world better than other models, just because it draws on instability; it allows chaos and is non-hierarchical by nature. The goal becomes to trace the possibility of associations and the meanings of objects, but also the way meaning can change and be concealed and revealed through its associations. In the case of Aegyptiaca from Pompeii this will lead to questions concerning its integration e.g., whether it is possible to discern how long the connotations to Egypt still cling to an object, when it is activated, how such connotations disappear, and what replaces it. This will ultimately provide a better view of both the agency of the material and the environment within perception, the complexity of different artefacts somehow related to Egypt, and to the way in which objects once perhaps viewed as ‘foreign’ are integrated into an environment. Moreover, it will be able to reveal insights on the underlying process behind integration.

Approaching the artefacts of Pompeii in this way is also attractive because it concerns a horizontal, not a vertical, analysis of the applications of artefacts and associations to Egypt.\footnote{See Knappet 2008, 104.} Prevalent in numerous object-centred studies (as mentioned in 2.6) is a focus on the life history of objects and its relations, also known as the study of ‘the biography of things’\footnote{This is vertical (or diachronic) approach claims that objects have the capability of accumulating histories and that the present significance of an object derives from the persons and events to which it is connected. Moreover, it concentrates on issues such as cultural transfer and objects in motion, see Kopytoff in Appadurai 1987; Meskell 2004; Gosden and Marshall 1999, 170.}. Constructing a so-
called cultural biography of objects, as has been proposed (by Kopytoff) might not be considered the most useful tool to study Aegyptiaca.\textsuperscript{317} Although a cultural biography approach claims to be processual and focused on change, due to its method it remains rather static in its final interpretation.\textsuperscript{318} The relational approach furthermore emphasises the totality of associations in the present context in which an object generates meaning. It ultimately combines not only a study of the role, materiality, and agency of an object, but also the way in which the object is appropriated by human beings, and presents information about the society in which the network functioned.

4.1.2 Studying proximate relations of artefacts and contexts: an initial exploration into Aegyptiaca relations

The remainder of section 4.1 is devoted to the results of a first survey of the relationality of Aegyptiaca in Pompeii carried out by means of an exploratory network. This means it will show the dataset as it currently exists in the form of a network. It does not yet include the broader material and conceptual framework Pompeii has to offer (the target of the coming subsections). Besides evading a categorical way of thinking, another great advantage of applying network approaches to material culture is that it can be heterogeneous, composed of various classes of nodes, and with various kinds of links.\textsuperscript{319} Due the scale and contents of the database in relation to the detailed information on find contexts within Pompeii, the networks in formal terms will look into the proximate interactions within micro-networks.\textsuperscript{320} While the micro-networks point to the scale of the undertaking,

\textsuperscript{317} See Kopytoff 1986, 64-91, in Appadurai 1986. This tool was also applied by Swetnam-Burland.

\textsuperscript{318} Studying a vertical transmission of objects again sets apart Egyptian artefacts without taking the category itself into account, while at the same time one does not get a proper grip on the relative position of Egypt within the Roman world nor is it able to elucidate choice out of availability. Due to its exclusively vertical approach a cultural biography lacks the proper analytical tools in order to study the internal properties of the integration process and subsequent view on the role of such artefacts in their ‘new’ context, which are based on many more associations than its former role in history. Within a horizontal and relational approach, the biographical aspect is only a part of that which provides a meaning to an artefact. As illustrated in 2.2. on the Egyptian artefacts in pre-Roman contexts, the choice for specific goods and artefacts allows us to learn more about a society. Thus a careful horizontal and contextual analysis is preferred.

\textsuperscript{319} As discussed in the theoretical framework, this implies they can be used in order to analyse relations between humans and non-humans which is of crucial importance for accepting agency from both parties and being able to observe how these affect each other, see Knappet 2011, 38; van der Leeuw 2008; Law and Mol 2008.

\textsuperscript{320} Knappet 2011, 61-97. Proxemics are often treated as a subset of nonverbal communication. However, it has been convincingly argued that spatial relations in the form
proxemic networks in the manner in which they are used (see below) focus on artefacts that are cognitively proximate for their users (its cognitive links are dependent on closeness), meaning that they become known within the immediate sphere of the human senses and the everyday interaction with objects (as occurs on a household level and on a larger but nevertheless micro-scale in the town of Pompeii). They thus represent the lowest level of human interaction with artefacts to be captured. In this way it ties in neatly with the theoretical framework discussed in chapter 3. In chapter 4, Pompeii and its material culture will serve as a perceptual micro-environment, a context existing as a visual framework in which the mind is situated. Employing such an approach for this chapter will bring about a better understanding of the reciprocal interaction between the mind and the physical-cum-cultural environment.

As two kinds of entities are explored here within the network approach (examples of Egypt-related artefacts) the micro-network should furthermore be labelled as a two-mode, or bipartite network. These networks involve relations among two sets of nodes (e.g., artefacts, places, events, actions, people). Two-mode networks also serve when investigating the relationship between a set of actors and series of events. Bipartite networks are affiliation networks, because the link between the various kinds of artefacts will be indirectly linked via a third party (the context). A key feature of such networks is that the focus is placed on the position of actors or nodes and their relations, the Egypt-related artefacts in different materialisations, as defined by means of the find contexts. The subsequent summary of such bipartite nodes and relational ties into a representation is called a graph visualisation. The graph will represent contextual links between Egyptian objects as nodes, whereas the links will consist of the connections between the various associations. The connections between them will be drawn by means of a contextual analysis of the material evidence. Other than with social network approaches this particular network excludes human beings or human activity as a node in the graph, but exclusively looks at material relations and their contexts. Of course, the parameters of use (i.e., objects

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321 See Moore 1996.  
322 In chapter 5, networks and relations will be aimed at a bounded socio-spatial unit i.e., the house (hold).  
and contexts) are all constituted by human actors. It is therefore believed that mapping their relations enables the acquisition of insights into the human actor; his concepts, ideas, and behaviour that he applies in relation to these objects.  

4.1.3 The network of Aegyptiaca

A graph visualisation in which all the objects from the database which could be related through proxemics (attested in the same contexts rooms, houses, temples, domestic shrines, gardens etc.) is shown in fig 4.2.

![Network Diagram]

Fig. 4.2) A two-mode micro-scale affiliation network visualisation of different kinds of objects related to Egypt and their contexts. These contexts are enlarged nodes, with no analytic value, but merely indicated.

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\(325\) This type of approach is based on a constitutive intertwining of cognition and material culture in a comparable way to cognitive approaches in archaeology as set out in the theoretical framework, see Malafouris and Renfrew 2010.
This network has been created as a first means in order to explore the dataset and infer issues to be examined below. The network, therefore, should not be considered a network analysis of Aegyptiaca, but a different visualisation in order to take a first step away from categories and introduce a new way of looking at Aegyptiaca and observing its complexities which will be scrutinised further. It will in so far be analytical, that it does not serve to answer any questions, but serve to ask new questions regarding the existing dataset. It is of great significance that this network is executed and explored in the introduction and not further on in this chapter, because the relations between these objects which are called Aegyptiaca are currently quite obscure. An exploration such as this can infer the right questions and structure the remainder of this chapter.

The connections presented in the network were all acquired from the site of Pompeii. They consist of objects obtained from the dataset in connection to the contexts in which they were attested. Only if physically connected (e.g., a portrait of Isis is found together with a statuette of Isis, or a portrait of Harpocrates is found in a domestic shrine) to a context a line between nodes was created, because these connections exist in contexts, the argument can be made that the lines drawn between the objects also carry a conceptual relation. This is why there are also unconnected dots, such as the pendants of Ptah-Pataikos and Bes for instance. In the case of the pendant a find spot could not established and therefore cannot be connected. This implies not only that the network is solely based on the relation between object and archaeological context, but also that the connections were more elaborate in the past. However, when assuming that such a connection did exist it would be based on preconceptions and projections. This would cause us to fall into the same pitfall as in previous studies. However, even in its most stripped down and elementary form the network is able to illustrate trends leading to directives for the coming part, as will be showed below. The network’s first success on a larger level with regard to previous attempts to analyse Aegyptiaca, is achieved by means of providing an initial glance into the complexity of various concepts present in the past and the way in which these concepts related to objects. Nodes unrelated in accordance to their physical contexts might point to a cognitive absence of associations. This pleads for a much more complex relation to Egypt or to Isis in
connection with objects than previously assumed. Therefore the network provides interesting ways to commence the investigation of this chapter even though they merely represent qualitative inferences. Looking at the details of connections present in the network, the interpretation can be assisted by means of descriptive terminology taken from network analysis approaches (e.g., centrality, betweenness, and cliques). First to be noted in this respect is that the network appears to be divided into two strongly separated subgroups, or ‘cliques’, that seem almost unrelated to each other (see fig. 4.3 for an indication of cliques). One subgroup is linked to domestic shrines (and also to a lesser degree to cubicula) and paintings and statuettes portraying Isis, Anubis, Serapis and Harpocrates.

Fig. 4.3) A network illustrating two clear subgroups, or ‘cliques’, with regard to different types of objects and find contexts. The above subgroup concerns paintings and statuettes of Isiac deities in relation to domestic shrines and cubicula; the lower subgroup deals with statuettes of Bes, Ptah-Pataikos, crocodiles, and frogs in relation to garden and bars.

326 Not only the contextual relations are therefore conveyed in this network. The edges represent the cognitive connections and associations.
327 A quantitative analysis (e.g., density measures, the total number of relational ties divided by the total possible number of relational ties) is impossible when merely applying the sample of Pompeii. The quantitative outcomes cannot be compared to other samples because the numbers would be unreliable. Moreover, comparing datasets on this level (with e.g. Herculaneum or Rome) would not be statistically trustworthy because the variations between the samples are too large with regard to meaningful statements on relations.
The other subgroup includes statuettes depicting the deities Ptah-Pataikos and Bes as well as crocodiles and frogs connected to gardens, water contexts, and bars. The network as a whole proves that the two groups are largely unrelated. The resulting question which follows from this is: was there an unequivocal concept of Egypt present among these groups? If so: in which way was it related to both subgroups? Was it present in the one subgroup and not in the other? Were there multiple and distinct concepts of Egypt to be found in different groups or even within different groups? Furthermore, questions concerning contexts and objects began to arise in regard to the subgroups. For instance: why are statuettes of Bes seen in bars and never of those of Isis? The answers to all these legitimate questions might be able to create a deeper understanding of the meaning and use of Aegyptiaca. What can furthermore be observed looking in detail to the two cliques is that there is a substantial amount of overlap among nodes within groups.

This implies that not only different types of objects are intimately linked to particular contexts; they are also closely connected to each other and are often found together in those contexts. For the node Isis temple it can be observed for instance that it connects numerous objects. This is not really a surprise, as representing one single context it means that all objects are attested together in that context. However, with the node domestic shrines (i.e., multiple contexts distributed through Pompeii) this does not necessarily have to be the case, as a domestic shrine could for instance also have contained only one of the statuettes. However, this node also includes a cluster of statuettes connected to it. This denotes that Isis and certain other particular Egyptian deities might indeed in certain cases have been experienced as a conceptual unity. Furthermore, it is interesting to observe, in this respect, that the statuettes and paintings linked to the domestic shrines (the upper subgroup) have an either-or relation. This means that no statuettes of Isis, Anubis and Harpocrates were found together with paintings of the same deities. Either paintings or statuettes are attested in domestic shrines. This means a difference existed within the use of painting and statuettes in this particular context, and raises interesting questions in relation to their use and perception. Were such paintings and objects regarded as similar means in order to display deities? Is this also the case with other Roman deities or are the Isiac gods unique in this respect? In which context (e.g., type or size of the house, location etc.)? are paintings
found in relation to statuettes? In which way do they relate to domestic shrines? Answers to such questions can lead to a better comprehension of the adoption of the material as well as the iconography of the Isiac deities in relation to other Roman deities in Pompeii and will therefore form one of the subchapters in this section (4.3).

Surveying the network further, *Centrality* is another relevant feature to consider. It identifies the most prominent actors in the network i.e., nodes extensively involved in relationships with other nodes in the network. The more connections a node has, the more important it is within the network. In the case of figure 4.2, centrality is indicated in colour range. Nodes with darkest colours have the highest centrality, the nodes with lightest colour the least. One can infer from this that the node *Isis temple* possesses the highest centrality degree. This implies it is the best connected node in the graph, closely followed by the gardens and domestic shrines.\(^{328}\) Again, the reason for the highest centrality degree for the Iseum may be because this node includes a single context while the others consist of multiple contexts. More houses contain domestic shrines, not all shrines contain statuettes and paintings. The Isis sanctuary has both. As to the non-context nodes, the Bes statuettes are the best connected features. This is significant, especially as not many have been found in Pompeii. Could this imply that this type of statuettes contain a central concept which is capable of connecting other related objects carrying weaker links? Could the Bes statuette, as it has more connections, have a stronger perceptual association with Egypt? As Bes statuettes also belong to one of the cliques and because it appears to be an important player within this group, a section (4.4) will be dedicated to Bes as a figure, concept, and object.

With respect to the network as a whole it can furthermore be noted that not all nodes and vertices are of a similar kind or quality. This means that a node with many links and a centrality degree does not necessarily render them well connected in terms of the complete network.\(^{329}\) Certain nodes may count fewer links but those links may be key bridges between subgroups in the networks. This measure is called *Betweenness centrality* and indicates an important degree potential for control. A node with a high betweenness degree is able to act as a so-called gatekeeper, a controller of the connections between different subgroups. What can be inferred from the network is that

\(^{328}\) Physical spaces presumably express a higher degree of connectedness in this case. Because the contexts are the parameters on which the relations are based, it stands to reason they are key players in the network.

\(^{329}\) See Newman 2003, 190-1.
there are in fact only a few gatekeepers with a very high betweenness degree. They are the only nodes connecting the two subgroups of the network. The first represents a context, shops, because sistra as well as Bes statuettes are found there. However, while these artefacts appeared in different shops this observation does not in effect constitute a very strong gatekeeper. Stronger are the Nilotic scene and the sphinx, which connect both subgroups as they are found in the cultic context of the Isis temple, and also in gardens. Nilotic scenes are even stronger in this respect, because the animals depicted on Nilotic scenery also occur in the form of statuettes in the other subgroup. Additionally striking is that the two object-gatekeepers themselves are unrelated. With the exception of the Iseum, sphinxes and Nilotic scenes are never found in one and the same context.

The gatekeeper represented by the Nilotic scenes seems to be of special significance. Without it there would be no connection between the two subgroups. This means that the concept of Egypt was either not apparent in one of the groups, or that the concept functioned on different levels. However, Nilotic scenes represent the connection between the garden group and the domestic shrine group artefacts. Why is this the case? Has it to do with the context in which Nilotic scenes are used or with the way in which they are created? What do they depict iconographically? And how does this translate to the way in which their users perceived them? The Nilotic scene as a seemingly central actor in the relations between the artefacts is worthy of further exploration. Their role could indeed point to Nilotic scenes functioning as some kind of a conceptual bridge between the concept of Isis and that of ‘Exotic Egypt’. However, it is at present not known in which fashion and context the Nilotic scenes played a role in both settings, and in which chronological frame. Another subpart will therefore be devoted to the concept of Nilotica and their particular place in the network of Aegyptiaca in section 4.6.

As to the network visualisation of fig. 4.4, the complexity witnessed between different objects and their iconography is informative. Although they appear to picture the same subjects, such as in the case of Bes paintings, the sistra, and Bes statuettes, they are far removed from each other in the network and therefore unrelated contextually. A shortest path between paintings and statuettes consists of four steps in the network, which calls into question whether they were conceptually related at all. Such inferences provide some
insight into the complexity of Bes as a concept and his relation to Egypt (see also 4.4) but also into the relation between concepts and object in general.

![Network displaying paintings and statuettes of Bes. Although concerning in our view the same subject, these kinds of objects are in fact quite far removed here.](image)

**4.1.4 Research objectives**

This first exploration into relationships, albeit representing a simplified and static image of something which in reality is far more complex, show that many issues can already be indicated from a network visualisation of Aegyptiaca and their contexts, leading to clear directives concerning the coming sections of this chapter. However, it must be noted in this respect, that not all issues relevant to the deconstruction of Aegyptiaca were clarified by means of the network. As argued in chapter 3, a clear disadvantage of networks is that while the analysis proves to be a powerful means of describing social or material interactions, it is less convincing when explaining interaction or accounting for change.\(^{330}\) For instance, it does not take any account of the actual quantity of objects which is important when agency is concerned on a larger level. The statuette of Horus from the network for example is well connected within the subgroup of Isis-cult.

\(^{330}\) See Knappet 2011, 49.
However, this example only concerns one statue found in a domestic shrine and is therefore conceptually actually quite a weak link. Another drawback is that the actor of ‘context’ is applied in this network in a too uncomplicated manner. The house is a multidimensional artefact in itself with its own dynamics composed of numerous artefacts, people and stylistic, physical and spatial features. This should also be reflected in a network approach if it is used in an analytical way. A further issue that did not become completely clear (because it was not taken up as a node) from the network as it was employed here, is the way in which style operates in relation to contexts and various kinds of objects. Some items, as stated above, were rendered in a Roman fashion. However, some were locally made in a distinctly pharaonic style (to the scholarly eye at least), others were imported from Egypt. Style should be considered a significant parameter regarding perception and cognitive associations, especially in finding out whether Pompeians recognised stylistic differences and treated those objects differently. This should be treated with the utmost caution, while separating Roman from pharaonic style in material culture seems to be the result of the perceptions and projections of the present-day observer not of the ancient Roman. Section 4.5 will therefore apply the contemporary label ‘Pharaonic-Egyptian Style’ as a heuristic device in order to look at perception and use in context.

A final drawback of this network and an argument to adopt the relational approach on a more detailed level is: time (use in a diachronic development) is not taken into account. Time should be considered an important factor in micro-scale networks, because meaning changes through the constant re-interpretation and change in use of objects. Especially those changes are considered to be important to trace as they not only provide information on the integration of an artefact but also on a concept into the visual, material and social environment of Pompeii (the so-called concealing or enmeshing as introduced above). Therefore, as mentioned, this particular network is dealt with in the introduction of this chapter, and not in its conclusion, as it merely indicates a way to start an explanation, and is not an explanation in itself.

Nonetheless these shortcomings, the network was in the way in which it was applied here capable of illustrating the way in which humans and non-humans are connected on an everyday micro-scale and gives a first hint on the way in which they perceived their surroundings in relation to Egyptian connected artefacts. It was able to reveal micro-scale interrelations and the
complexities of objects in relations to concepts. The network of this introduction is able to show different interactions and following from that the interactions could be described and interesting questions could be posed, which shows the usefulness of networks even in this static and basic form. These interactions will be provided with a proper dynamic interpretation thereby scrutinising categories five different categories: representations of Egyptian deities (4.2), statuettes (4.3), Bes in relation to blue and green-glazed objects (4.5), objects of Pharaonic-Egyptian style (4.5), and Nilotic images (4.6).

4.2 Representations and conceptualisations of Egyptian gods in Pompeii

4.2.1. Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deity</th>
<th>Wall painting</th>
<th>Table-ware</th>
<th>Statuette</th>
<th>Jeweller y</th>
<th>Mosaic</th>
<th>lamp</th>
<th>Sistrum</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>1 (relief)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 4.1) Material representations of the ‘Egyptian’ deities.

The first analysis in this chapter is aimed at the representations and conceptualisations of Egyptian gods in Pompeii. This category forms an initial exploration of the dataset which will focus on how and where the ‘Egyptian’ deities are located and portrayed in terms of material culture and on how they appear in comparison with each other and with other deities of the Roman Pompeian pantheon. The discussion of this subchapter (see also part 4.3) shall deal with the following issues concerning the Egyptian deities and religion: the first is whether they were still regarded as Egyptian - or as non-Roman- and the way in which this becomes apparent. The second issue, closely tied in with the first, is whether they were conceptually considered to
belong together. Within scholarly research, the Egyptian deities have always been regarded as a conceptual group, as one ensemble of ‘the Isiac family’.

However, such interpretations were made from a top-down perspective applied to the entire Roman world, and therefore did not take account of local situations. Such a thesis cannot be taken for granted, and needs yet to be determined for the houses of Pompeii. It is therefore deemed useful to analyse the objects and contexts in which representations of these gods appear from a bottom-up perspective. Seven deities said to belong to the ‘Egyptian gods’ can be witnessed in Pompeii: Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis, Anubis, Bes, Ptah-Pataikos, and Zeus/Jupiter-Ammon. As discussed in 2.4.1, scholars have interpreted the gods as Egyptian (or Oriental) by means of their appearance, but mainly because of their origin.

Would this also have been the case for Roman observers? Could that consequently have led to a different treatment when compared with other gods? This is a notably complex query to solve. With regard to Roman religions on a more general level, an important and even defining characteristic could be considered its extreme variation in origin of deities, in cult practices, and the flexibility and variety employed within the integration and adoption of these deities. It is thus impossible to a priori assume that Isis would have been treated differently than so many other ‘foreign’ gods incorporated in the Roman pantheon. On the other hand, it can also not be excluded that there could be situations or cases in which origin did matter, or that foreignness was experienced. Therefore, in 4.2, next to analysing the uses, qualities and materialisations of the Egyptian gods, parallels in use and conceptions shall be drawn from a broader framework of objects and deities. In order to get a better grip on these issues the Egyptian deities from the database shall be compared with each other in order to see if (and how) they could have been related materially and conceptually. Can any structure be discovered in the way in which they appear and where they appear? Subsequently, a comparison will be made between materialisations of Isis and Venus in order to establish if there is a difference in use and perception between that which has always been regarded a ‘native’ and a ‘foreign’ deity. A second parallel will be drawn between Isis and Mithras in order to review the differences in use between two deities always deemed ‘Oriental’. Such comparisons

332 As discussed in 2.4.1.
334 See Beard, North and Price 1998, 87-98; 211-44; Orlin 2010, 162-90.
arguably create a better understanding of how Isis was employed within Pompeian society. In addition, a deeper conceptual knowledge can be acquired concerning the way Isis (and other deities) were integrated in a place such as Pompeii, because more complexity is allowed within the interpretation by not regarding her as Oriental or non-Roman beforehand. It is the place Isis and other deities took up as a Roman deity which is of concern.

4.2.2 Egyptian deities?
Firstly the various deities from the database are compared, focusing on their representation, materialisation, and the context in which they are attested. The tables 4.1 and 4.2, and fig 4.5 illustrate that the deities not only show similarities but also differences in the way in which they were represented in Pompeii. As to the overall quantity, materialisations of Isis are the most numerous, together with those of Harpocrates. Characteristically both appear in the form of wall paintings or statuettes.

![Pie chart showing representations of Egyptian deities in domestic contexts.

Fig. 4.5) Pie chart of the material presence of different Egyptian deities in Pompeii based on the numbers in table 4.1.
Table 4.2) Egyptian deities and their find contexts in Pompeian houses. This time, instead of the total number of representations as used in table 4.1 and fig. 4.5, only those objects and paintings with a clear find context are taken into account.

Serapis, on the other hand, is hardly represented in any form. This is remarkable given the fact that, next to Isis, he was the most important Egyptian deity to be integrated into the Roman world. Serapis was a god of the Underworld but also to no lesser degree a god of (oracular) healing. As heir to Osiris he was a god of fertility, symbolising the agricultural cycle. For this reason he often carries a cornucopia, see Alvar 2008, 60-1. Serapis inherited the Pharaonic traits associated with the protector of the kingdom from Osiris. At the same time, he became the consort of Isis. This change of divine partner allowed them to be represented in a specifically Hellenistic iconographical form and explains the reason why they also shared temples, see Steurnagel 2004; Hornborstel 1973.

Initially revered as patron of the Ptolemaic dynasty and Alexandria, Serapis’s power became acknowledged and extended throughout the Hellenistic world, see Stambaugh 1972, 1-2. As many as 1089 ‘monumental’ finds of Serapis are listed, see Kater-Sibbes 1973. See also Hornbostel 1973; Takács 1995; Alvar 2008.

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Note that the context of ‘domestic shrine’ serves here to denote a general religious domestic location where household gods were venerated. These spaces can be regarded in various categories and with various appearances and applications (e.g., sacella, lararia, niches, aediculae etc). In 4.3 a more comprehensive definition will be provided. For further reading, see Laforge 2009, 19-42.

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was more important on a public level, as he was associated with the Ptolemaic dynasty, the underworld, and agriculture.\textsuperscript{338}

The deity Anubis next, has the head of a jackal and the body of a human being. Judging from the results of the database the god seems to be conveyed and displayed in similar contexts as Isis and Harpocrates. We see portraits of Anubis in paintings in the temple dedicated to Isis, on domestic shrines, and once on a lamp. Objects linked to Anubis only originate from cultic contexts, the lamp was found in a domestic shrine, too.\textsuperscript{339} We come across Anubis on a much smaller scale. Noteworthy is that he never shows up alone, but always in the presence of Isis and Harpocrates. Concerning his limited presence within material culture one could wonder if this had anything to do with his zoomorphic appearance. Was Anubis too deviant as an animal-headed god to be venerated without the presence of other gods from the Isiac pantheon?\textsuperscript{340} From various literary sources it was known that Romans were not accustomed to worshipping animals, as it was considered abnormal and uncivilised.\textsuperscript{341} Although clearly now and again present within cultic contexts, the minor role Anubis played within the Roman-Isiac pantheon may in part be explained this way.\textsuperscript{342}

In addition to the differences between Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis and Serapis there seems an even greater divergence between these three gods and the deities Bes and Ptah-Pataikos (as noted by means of the network visualisation in section 4.1 (especially figs. 4.2, 4.3). The two latter Egyptian dwarf deities are remarkably similar in both execution and in their find context. Both Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are never found on wall paintings within domestic contexts, but mostly in the form of statuettes and in a few instances in the guise of small amulets. When comparing the statuettes, their average height is considerably larger (c.40 cm.) than that of Isis, Serapis, Harpocrates or Anubis (c.12 cm.). Furthermore the statuettes portraying Bes and Ptah-Pataikos from Pompeii never consist of metal (as is the majority of the statuettes of Isis, Serapis, Anubis, and Harpocrates), but

\textsuperscript{338} Kater-Sibbes 1973 mentions many large statues of Sarapis. However, within Household religion, he is found less often when compared to Isis and Harpocrates. See also Dunand 1990; Bailey 2008.

\textsuperscript{339} i.e., the shrine of the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI 16,7-35).

\textsuperscript{340} Anubis only once appears outside a lararium context, in a Nilotic scene in Casa di Ma. Castricus (VII 16, 17), see Versluis 2002, no. 54, 133-4. This particular Nilotic scene is found in a room designated as a palaestra.

\textsuperscript{341} See Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984, 1852-2000.

\textsuperscript{342} For a further exploration hereof, see 5.2.
are instead made of terracotta and finished in a blue-green glaze.\textsuperscript{343} Their bodies are mold made and there is a strong suggestion they were produced in the same workshop or that a similar mold was used.\textsuperscript{344} Lastly, the use-locations of the two groups of statuettes also differ considerably. Whenever a clear find spot was located, Isis and Harpocrates (and in a lesser quantity Serapis and Anubis) were are all attested within a lararium context, whereas Bes and Ptah-Pataikos were found twice within garden contexts and twice in a bar, or \textit{caupona} (inn). As suggested in 4.1, judging from the contexts and objects it seems indeed to be a correct claim that these two gods were seen and used as a distinctly other category than the Isiac deities. For this reason it is considered suitable to analyse the appropriation and perception of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in a different framework of concepts and objects in Pompeii, as will be explored in a separate subchapter (4.4).\textsuperscript{345}

The last deity sometimes deemed Egyptian by scholars on the basis of its origin and found in Pompeian material culture is Zeus- or Jupiter-Ammon. This manifestation of Jupiter is characterised by means of ram horns and a beard and embodied an amalgamation of the Aethiopian-Egyptian deity Amun-Ra and Jupiter.\textsuperscript{346} As Zeus-Ammon he became adopted by Alexander the Great and the Ptolemies in Alexandria. The deity might have travelled to Rome in this guise, where he is frequently attested in lamps, medaillons, architectural elements, funeral monuments, as well as through inscriptions and theophoric names. Although his relation to the Isiac deities and to the concept of Egypt in the Rome is difficult, scholars studying Isiac deities and Egypt in the Roman world frequently included him as Egyptian or Isiac.\textsuperscript{347} For this reason it was decided to study the relation between Jupiter-Ammon and Egypt for Pompeii as well.\textsuperscript{348}

\textsuperscript{343} Two bronze statuettes of Bes were found in Herculaneum (not from a lararium context), but not one in Pompeii, see Tran tam Tinh 1972, 76.

\textsuperscript{344} See 4.4 for a more elaborate treatment of these objects.

\textsuperscript{345} The statuette of Horus had a similar size to those of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, but was found in a domestic shrine devoted to Isis. As this find is unique to Pompeii it was chosen to deal with its find context (\textit{in casu} the Casa degli Amorini Dorati) as a case study in chapter 5. Therefore it will not be discussed here in 4.2.2.

\textsuperscript{346} Although it is also sometimes stated that his image was influenced by Ba'al-Hamman, who had been worshipped in Carthage. Jupiter-Ammon is generally considered to be of Aethiopian or Libyan origin. His worship subsequently disseminated not only across Egypt but also into part of the northern coast of Africa and many regions in Greece. The Greeks referred to him as Zeus-Ammon and the Romans as Jupiter-Ammon.

\textsuperscript{347} According to Bonnefoy and Doniger he remains outside the circle of Isiac divinities, except for his rare association with Serapis. Bonnefoy and Doniger 1991, 251.

\textsuperscript{348} Malaise (2007, 27) includes Ammon as one of the ‘compagnons de la gens isiaque’. Bugarski-Besdjian, when discussing ‘traces of Egypt’ in Roman Dalmatia, interprets lamps
seems to have deviated from both discerned ‘groups’ discussed above, as both the materialisations and the contexts in which Jupiter-Ammon’s representations are found do not seem to bear any relationships with the other gods. His image is attested once in the shape of a bronze lamp. Furthermore, heads of Jupiter-Ammon now and again appear as minor and small decorative elements of wall paintings (e.g., in the atrium of the Casa del Menandro - I 10,4). Furthermore, within wall painting a difference between the portraying of other gods and of Zeus-Ammon is noted. Jupiter-Ammon paintings always comprises of a minor part of the wall decorations, while other deities (such as Venus, Dionysus, Apollo) when portrayed take in central positions. It should also be noted that as with Ptah-Pataikos and Bes and in contrast to Anubis, Jupiter-Ammon is never found within a cultic context. This renders the deity notably different from all the other deities from the database and in fact concurs with the arguments of Bonnefoy and Doniger that his role in a Roman context was decorative, apotropaic, and eschatological, but was largely unconnected to the Isiac cults. While Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis and Serapis never serve as decorative parts of walls, and Ptah-Pataikos and Bes are never occur in a wall painting, Jupiter-Ammon seems to have had an exclusively decorative function in Pompeii. This does of course, not say anything about the deity not being seriously venerated elsewhere.

From this brief overview the assumption arises that Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis and Anubis somehow formed a conceptual group for its Pompeian users. This is sustained when other material categories are consulted. For instance, whenever lamps were attested with one of the Egyptian deities they often depict three deities as a combination: Anubis, Isis, and Harpocrates (not Serapis). Table 4.2 illustrates that Isis, Serapis, Anubis and Harpocrates appear together in a wall painting in lararia on four occasions. Due to the difficulties in archaeological contextualisation, it can hardly ever be deduced showing Jupiter-Ammon as a ‘motif isiaque’ and ‘thème exotique ou orientaux’ (317), and architectural features displaying Jupiter-Ammon as egyptian motifs and pharaonic elements (322-23), Bugarski-Besdjian 2007, 289-328. DellaCorte includes the bronze lamp of Jupiter-Ammon (fig. 5.19b) found in the Casa di Octavius Quartio in Pompeii (discussed in part 5.3) as an Isiac feature.

Bonnefoy and Doniger 1991, 251.

Indeed, it seems that many Roman gods which were worshipped could also have served as decoration. For example, Venus, Apollo, or Dionysus, as will be discussed in 4.2.3.

In various combinations they are all found in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI 16, 7,38) and the Casa di Giuseppe II (VIII 2,39); Isis, Harpocrates and Serapis are found in the Casa delle Amazzoni (VI 2, 14) and Isis Harpocrates and Anubis in Praedia di Giulia Felice (II 4,1-12).
if statuettes are found together. However, in the Casa di Memmius Auctus (VI 14, 27) a statuette of Isis, Anubis (in fact the only statue of Anubis in Pompeii) and Harpocrates have been attested together. Anubis and Isis are of the same height, are executed in the same archaistic way (resembling the style of the Isis statue from the Iseum), and both were made out of bronze. The context strongly suggests that Pompeians experienced a connection between these gods.

Now that it can be established with reasonable certainty that Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis, and Serapis were indeed conceptually linked in Pompeii, questions concerning their function and use arise, such as a division between a cultic or decorative use of objects. This is an interesting subject to explore which might be able to offer further clues on the conceptualisation of the Egyptian deities. However, such a separation also counts for an extremely problematic issue. Is it possible to speak of a secular application of certain imagery as for instance, Dunbabin does? The distinction between a secular and spiritual world as it is implemented nowadays did not exist in the Roman world and such concepts such as ‘secular’ seem to have been absent. It is thus notably difficult to create this division. Religious practices in the Roman world formed a part of the cultural practices of nearly every realm of everyday life. This being said however, there does seem to be some kind of a disparity experienced between the two concepts, as the database shows a clear difference in the application of various ‘Egyptian’ deities with respect to that which is displayed in furniture and wall painting and that which was appropriate in lararium contexts. Certain material renderings do indeed seem to suggest that images of several gods serve in more decorative ways. The questions that arise is whether specific deities are more likely to have functioned as decorative

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352 Harpocrates is much smaller and consists of silver. They are found amongst many other statues, of which five are in bronze (Isis, Anubis, an old seated man and two Lares), one in marble (Venus Anadiomene), one in silver (Harpocrates) and one of terracotta: a female deity lying on a couch., see Boyce 1937, 53, no.202.

353 However, while all these examples of statuettes clearly show conceptual associations, many finds include only one of these deities. A related question now emerges in this case: if the deities together signified something else to an audience when they were found alone or with other deities than the Isiac ones. Therefore it is decided to devote a subsection to statuettes and their use; not in a broader comparative manner as will be carried out in this part, but especially focused on their contextual meaning.

354 See Dunbabin 1999, 137, 231.

355 Rüpke 2007, 5 characterises Roman religion as an “embedded religion”. It is also claimed: “at the way in which religion and society interacted, we do not find special institutions and activities, set aside from everyday life and designed to pursue religious objectives; but rather a Situation in which religion and its associated rituals were embedded in all institutions and activities.”, see Beard, North, and Price, 1998, 43.
representations and, more importantly, why? And does the observed dissimilarity between a decorative and a cultic use depend upon the object (the form in which the deity is depicted) or the subject (the deity itself)? What becomes apparent is, when looking at the objects and contexts in more detail, that the deities as they are represented in the database should not be considered one and the same conceptual group. Bes and Ptah-Pataikos seem to belong to one group, Isis, Anubis, Harpocrates, and Serapis turn up in similar guises and contexts, while Jupiter-Ammon seems to be an isolated feature seemingly unconnected, at least in Pompeii, to both groups. All gods except for Jupiter-Ammon seem to share their absence in the shape of furniture decoration and mosaics. They are also largely absent from tableware with the exception of one terracotta and one bronze vase depicting Isis. Finding a clear explanation for the above observations is not without difficulty. Discussing the database generates several issues, themes, and questions worthy of further exploration in this chapter. For example, when Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis and Anubis are really considered to be one and the same conceptual group, were they regarded as Egyptian? Could it be that the deities such as Harpocrates, Serapis, and Isis were conceived as more cultic-related phenomena and Bes, Ptah-Pataikos, and Zeus-Ammon as ‘secular’ decoration? A study of the deities in a broader framework should provide these answers, both by means of including other Roman deities as well as the range of objects and their contexts that expanded outside those objects scholars believed to be Egyptian. The first analysis consists of a comparison between the use of the goddess Isis and Venus.

4.2.3 Isis versus Venus

Venus and Isis are both prominent and important goddesses in Pompeii, who were worshipped in public sanctuaries and within domestic contexts (fig. 4.6). These two deities are selected for comparison in order to illustrate the way in which Isis and Isiac deities functioned in Pompeii, by studying how she might have been treated similarly or differently to Venus, a goddess that was never questioned to be ‘exotic’ within a Pompeian context. Furthermore, while these deities in scholarly literature sometimes seem to epitomize the contrast between ‘East’ versus ‘West’, Isis being the Oriental deity while Venus embodies the Graeco-Roman perspective, a comparison from a

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356 One cannot conclude from the object alone that because Isis, Anubis, and Harpocrates appear on a lamp together it has a religious purpose. Even if its owner was a follower or initiate of the Isis cult it might have served as a decorative item. Only contextual treatment can determine this.
bottom-up perspective might show a more nuanced image of this contrast. A comparison between the contexts and materialisations in which these two goddesses appear can therefore elucidate if and how Isis differed from Venus, which can subsequently provide valuable insights on the conceptualisation of Isis in Pompeii.\textsuperscript{357} By means of this specific comparison, the function and concepts regarding Isis become clearer because she is specifically \textit{not} regarded as an example of the ‘embodiment of the East’, but as a Pompeian deity (just as Venus) studied within a Pompeian network of values, concepts, and objects.

![Venus versus Isis. Two statuettes from Pompeian domestic contexts with Venus (left) and Isis (right). Pictures taken by the author.](image)

Venus, a time-honoured Italic goddess of vegetation and gardens, who became equated with the Greek Aphrodite, was known as the goddess of love and beauty during the Roman era. She was also considered one of the most important deities in Pompeii. Her temple and material manifestations are conspicuously visible and widespread.\textsuperscript{358} Venus was of special significance to the town of Pompeii in particular as she was the patron deity, the town being

\textsuperscript{357} Issues to be dealt with are: in which way do the two goddesses manifest themselves within these specific contexts and in which manner? In which forms are they portrayed inside houses? What material is used? Which contexts do we find the deities? How often do we see Isis represented in comparison to deities of non-Egyptian origin e.g., Venus and Dionysus (Greek origin), Jupiter (Italic origin), or Mithras (Persian origin)?

\textsuperscript{358} Venus was associated with the Greek goddess Aphrodite since at least the 5\textsuperscript{th} century BC. She also took on certain traits from the Etruscan goddess Turan, see Lloyd-Morgan 1986, 179; Schilling 1952, 160-1. Fusions between Aphrodite and Isis also exist, for instance, on Delos, see 4.3.4; Kleibl 2009, 111-25.
named: **Colonia Cornelia Veneria Pompeianorum.** **Venus Pompeiana** as is referred to was a special identification of Venus who became the official patron and received a celebrated cult ritual in Pompeii after the colonisation by Sulla in 80 BC. After taking the form of both Fortuna and Venus, her appearance differs from the Venus associated with Aphrodite. Both types, Venus-Aphrodite and Venus Pompeiana, were widely disseminated throughout the town and bear witness of a varied and dynamic way of visualisation and materialisation, as they were conveyed in diverse forms of material culture, such as marble statues, mosaics, wall paintings, and figurines. As to the contexts in which the representations of Venus occur they can be likewise characterised as heterogeneous. Objects and images related to Venus can be found plentiful in the living spaces of the Pompeian domus (e.g., in gardens, cubicula, triclinia, or peristyla).

Fig. 4.7) Pie-chart of the different material representations of Isis in Pompeii.

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359 After Sulla, the colony was named **Colonia Cornelia Veneria Pompeianorum**, derived from the Sulla family name (Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix) and from the deity to whom he paid special honours. See Swindler 1923, 304-5. About the date of installation and construction of the temple of Venus itself remains debate. Curti (2005, 2008), proposes a construction in the second or early first century BC, seeing the temple as a reflection in the as an expression of political self-presentation and economic prosperity in Samnite Pompeii (Curti 2005, 51-76; 2008, 47-60). Carrol however, believes that the temple was constructed after Pompeii became a Roman colony under Sulla in 80 BC (Carrol 2008, 37-45; 2010 63-106 especially pages 65-74). In the first century AD, the temple was refurbished in marble but remained its original orientation (Wolf 2004, 193).

360 Venus Pompeiana, the patron goddess of Pompeii, wears a long chiton and a cloak. Her body is completely covered. Now and again she holds a scepter and wears a crown of the urban goddess (**Mauerkrone der Stadtgöttin**). She can be found in domestic shrines as a wall painting (as many as six times, see Fröhlich 1991, 148-9), in the form of statuettes and once also on a gem, see Della Corte 1921, 87 no. 4. Fröhlich 1991, 148-9; For representations of Venus Anadyomene specifically, see Wardle 2010, 201-26.
In contrast to Isis, Venus occurs abundantly in wall paintings, more than 100 paintings feature her. However, when portrayed in domestic shrine contexts, Venus is attested only five times as Venus/Aphrodite and five times as Venus Pompeiana.\textsuperscript{361} 

Isis, as already stated, was as far as we know the only Egyptian deity to whom a sanctuary in Pompeii was dedicated. In addition, she acquired the largest number of material attestations within domestic contexts out of all the Egyptian gods. As can be extracted from the database, Isis is most profusely represented in houses in the form of statuettes (seventeen times). In addition, she appears on lamps (five), wall paintings (twelve), jewellery (four), and reliefs (six), see fig. 4.7.\textsuperscript{362} Two observations become notably apparent from an analysis of the database: she was never depicted on mosaics or in the form of larger statuary than a lararium statuette and she is hardly ever found outside lararium contexts.\textsuperscript{363} This fact does not seem to be restricted to Pompeii, tracing mosaics in the wider Roman Empire depictions of Isis on mosaics depictions are generally lacking. Venus was, on the other hand, apparently a popular subject used as decoration on mosaics. It seems that Isis could only carry out a cultic function. As to wall paintings depicting Isis, this can be confirmed, as only one example hereof these is attested outside a cultic context.\textsuperscript{364} In statuary there is only a single exception: in the garden of the Casa dell’Efebo (I 7, 10-12) a (headless) statue was found portraying an Isis knot.\textsuperscript{365} This would imply that Isis in at least one instance served as an element to adorn a garden, although it is not clear

\textsuperscript{362} Isis occurs twice as tableware i.e., in the form of two vases, in one of which she appears as a handle on a bronze and a bust. The bronze vessel originates from VII 7,5.2 14,15-Casa di L. Calpurnius Diogenes e di Cissionius.
\textsuperscript{363} One mosaic depicts a woman with a sistrum. It hails from El Djem, is currently on display in the El Djem Museum and measures 3,5x3,5 m.). However, this representation is part of an allegory of Rome and its provinces and the woman represents the province of Egypt, see Blanchard-Lemée 1999, fig. 6, 26-7, and fig. 9, 30. This mosaic is significant as it illustrates that such representations can serve to symbolize Egypt in the sense that a sistrum refers to Egypt, or that Isis is a reference to Egypt without being religious. It is furthermore interesting to learn from such images that a sistrum and Isis, although integrated as a Roman feature, are still recognised as markers of Egypt, see Dunbabin 1978.
\textsuperscript{364} In the atrium of the Casa del Duca di Aumale (VI 9,1), which will be discussed below.
\textsuperscript{365} Significantly, the house is more renowned for its Nilotic scenes as attested in the same garden, on the wall and on a stibadion (Versluys 2002, nos. 98, 101). The more ‘secular’ decorative Isis would fit within this context. However, a statuette of Isis also occurs. This interesting example informs us that the categories we have created are not exclusive.
if in this case it did indeed concern a statue of Isis, or a priestess active in her cult.

Not only the way in which Isis and Venus were used, but also their contexts differ significantly. Where could this difference stem from? Why are there so little decorative representations with Isis as a subject? To give an example, the *purgatorium* of the Isis temple in Pompeii was decorated with portraits of Mars and Venus alongside cupids. That was a perfectly acceptable way to adorn parts of temple. It had a primary decorative function, never associated with veneration. Why was Isis never attested the other way around? Such observations require further analysis. Therefore, this general overview will be followed by means of an investigation into specific categories (*in casu* paintings, mosaics, statuettes) in order to study these noted discrepancies in more detail.

**Paintings**

When compared to Venus, how is Isis depicted on paintings? As to the iconography of the wall paintings, the first remarkable difference is that while Venus not only expresses an incredible versatility within the context of her paintings but also in the way she is conveyed (to be dealt with in more detail below), Isis seems to uphold an image almost entirely opposing Venus.

![Fig. 4.8) A garden painting of Venus. Adorning the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia (II 3,3), it covers the entire rear wall of the garden. The picture on the right represents the same scene, but now conveyed in a mosaic in the top of the nymphaeum in the Casa dell'Orso Ferito (VII 2, 45). These are popular scenes in such contexts because of the connection with water. From *PPM* vol. III and VI.](image)

Isis had only a few depiction-types and was moreover always found in a cultic context, whereas paintings of Venus can be attested in numerously varied poses and with many attributes. The most common paintings portray
her naked and accompanied by one or more cupids.\textsuperscript{366} Notably, in addition to this common way of representation, the variety of ways to convey Venus in Pompeii is considerably larger. No less than eleven variations among a total of eighty-three paintings have been counted.\textsuperscript{367} All contain narrative scenes from the mythical life of Venus-Aphrodite and are found in all kinds of contexts, inside the house as well in the form of garden decorations. Taking the well-known portrait of Venus in the shell as an example (see fig. 4.8) the difference within wall paintings in which Isis appears (fig. 4.9) immediately becomes apparent. She is either nude or semi-nude, has a large and varied number of attributes, colours, in many variable body positions, and actively captured within a narrative context. When looking at wall paintings of Isis (fig. 4.9), these come across as much more static. According to the database, she appears on thirteen wall paintings in Pompeii (twelve are derived from a domestic context).\textsuperscript{368}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{images}
\caption{Examples of Venus paintings in Pompeii.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{367} We find: Venus as a fisher, Venus on a sea centaur, Venus putting makeup on, Venus in her shell, Venus with cupids, Venus and Adonis, Venus punishing Eros, Venus and Ares, Venus reaching the shore, see Hodske 2007, 321-2. The entire number of representations of central mythological paintings are: Apollo on twenty seven paintings in ten varieties; Dionysos in twelve varieties, totalling twenty-two; Hercules in fourteen varieties, totalling forty. Venus is attested in the form a statue or statuette in but a few instances e.g., in houses II 9,6 and I 8,16.
\textsuperscript{368} This number differentiates: Fröhlich notes only three for Isis (but more for Isis-Fortuna). On the other hand, according to Fröhlich, Venus only appears in five lararium paintings (whereas Venus Pompeiana appears in seven). Fröhlich 1991, 147.
Fig. 4.9) Representations of Isis, The portrait (above left) is a lararium painting of Isis Fortuna found in the corridor leading to the latrine of IX.7.21/2. Caupona of Tertius (Naples Archaeological Museum. Inv. no: 112285). The second (right above) representation of Isis originates from the lararium in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI.16.7, in situ). The scene (below) includes Isis and is from the Casa delle Amazzoni (VI.2.14) is part of a wall painting depicting a lararium. Illustrations from PPM vol. X; VI and Versluys 2002.

All these paintings depict Isis standing, wearing a long garment and holding a sistrum or a helm. In the case of Isis-Fortuna a cornucopia is included. Isis seems to have been portrayed in order to resemble a statue of the goddess, not a ‘living’ goddess. The absence of this liveliness within representations of Isis is confirmed by the fact she is never portrayed within a mythological or narrative framework. Even when Isis becomes part of a larger image, in the wall painting from the Casa delle Amazzoni in fig. 4.9 (see below), she is not a living goddess as is Venus in the shell, but portrayed as a statuette as part of a lararium.

Observations on the contexts and guises in which representations of Isis occur, have only one notable exception. In this case the painting was found in the sanctuary of Isis. Here she is represented as a living creature in a mythological composition which is worth a further discussion, as it might provide additional clues on the way in which she could have been received in relation to her portrayal. The painting visualises the myth on the arrival of Io in Egypt where Isis welcomes her at Canopus (see fig. 4.10). It is found in the so-called Ekklesiasterion on the centre of the south wall in the Isis temple,
together with a second mythological painting on the opposite wall. Here the frame on the centre of the north wall depicts Argus protecting Io and Hermes showing his syrinx to Argus. What is especially remarkable to observe in this respect is the fact that (a) this is the only mythological painting in all of Pompeii to convey within a Greek myth about Io, (b) a choice to portray Isis seems to be clearly linked to the context of the temple dedicated to Isis, (c) Isis plays only a secondary role in a myth revolving around Io. Of course, in Egypt Isis is endowed with her personal mythology. Nonetheless, even in this temple (housing priests with an intimate knowledge of Isis) this is not reflected on the walls. What is the rationale behind such a decision?

Fig. 4.10) The arrival of Io at Canopus. The painting on the left is derived from the so-called Ekklesiasterion in the sanctuary of Isis; the painting on the right was found in the atrium of the Casa del Duca di Aumale (VI 9, 1). Io is lifted out of the water onto the rocks by a river god (Nile), and taken ashore by Isis. Behind her we see a priest and the god Mercury. On her right sits Harpocrates and to his right an Egyptian sphinx statue consisting of red granite. Isis’s feet rest on a crocodile. From PPM vols. VII and VIII.

Could Campanian artisans not carry out an Egyptian mythological scene, or did the specific function of the room in this sanctuary not allow for this? The function of the Ekklesiasterion in the Iseum is not completely clear. However, because of its portico it is visually open and embodies the most publicly accessible space of the entire precinct. Therefore it is argued that the Ekklesiasterion most probably had a public character which was used for

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369 In contemporary Roman Egypt, references to Isis’s mythology are abundant. For instance in the adornment of temples and of tombs found in Alexandria, Dakeh, or Tuna el Gebel. Popular themes as to tomb decoration were: Isis mourning over the death of Osiris, Isis performing libations for the deceased, Isis and Nepthys venerating the sun disc, etc., see Venit 2010, 89-119; Kaper 2010, 149-80.

370 Which public this was also remains unclear. However, we should probably consider here a select public of followers and initiates. The interpretation on its function range from a general meeting place, initiation room to a space for ritual banquets.
ritual dining and other more community-related cult practices.\textsuperscript{371} Within dining contexts in general it was appropriate to showcase mythological scenes, as witnessed throughout Pompeii during this period. But why then not a myth about Isis? Although we are warned not to rely too severely on the \textit{interpretatio graeca} with regard to the risk of overseeing the Pharaonic aspects of this fresco, the paintings in the room centre on the representation of Io's life and only in one instance does Isis play a role.\textsuperscript{372} Regarding the room's public character it does indeed seem to be reasonable to argue that the specific way of referring to Egypt and Isis by way of Greek mythology could in this case be explained as a means to render it understandable to a larger audience: Isis became accessible thanks to the mythological framework associated with Io.\textsuperscript{373} Also, the myth of Io arriving in Egypt is not those among the very well known, meaning that it was specifically chosen in order to portray Isis. In this iconographical representation Isis initiates and non-initiated visitors would realise the myth dealt with Isis and Egypt, even if they did not recognise all the Egyptian elements.\textsuperscript{374} An explanation for this choice of myth may therefore be found in a mythological knowledge and conceptualisation. This is relevant as it informs us of the reason behind the limited presence of Isis in visual material culture and furthermore reveals the boundaries of material and visual integration of a deity such as Isis. In order to visually communicate stories or myths, they needed to be recognised and understood on a notably deep level. The reason for this is that the visual clues presented within mythological paintings that reveal specific characters, their states of being, and storylines were transmitted by means of very subtle clues.\textsuperscript{375} As knowledge of Io (and more generally Graeco-Roman mythology), in contrast to Egyptian mythology, was present

\textsuperscript{371} This painting thus crossed boundaries between cult and decoration by means of the function of social gathering. The social aspect of the paintings with regard to their functioning was the fact they portrayed the succession in power of the son (depicted as the young Harpocrates) of Numidius Popidius, the benefactor who financed the restoration of the temple, see, Balch 2003, 48.

\textsuperscript{372} See Bianchi 2007, 502-5. A landscape painting on the west wall includes the sarcophagus of Osiris. Isis and Io are represented on the central panel on the north wall of the Ekklesiasterion. On the south wall we see Io protected by Argus and Hermes showing Argus his musical instrument by means of which he will put Argus to sleep in order to rescue Io.

\textsuperscript{373} Initiates could comprehend Pharaonic aspects, while the non-initiated visitor could also grasp the image.

\textsuperscript{374} In contrast to the sacrarium, which was only meant for initiates or even just for priests living in the temple area. It is suggested that a believer instead of a painter created the frescos in the sacrarium, causing the decorations to have a distinct Roman and Egyptian face, see Moormann 2007, 152.

\textsuperscript{375} This will be further elaborated upon in 4.5. For more information on mythological scenes in Pompeii, see Hodske 2007; Muth 1998; Lorenz 2008.
within the collective memory of the inhabitants of Pompeii, it was the only visual way to transmit the story and make Isis recognisable. The portrait is chosen because it links to Egypt. However, the mythology could only be represented and recognised within the framework of Graeco-Roman mythology, not that of Egypt.

Another interesting aspect of this painting of Isis and Io is the fact there is an exactly similar version in one of the more modest houses of Pompeii: the Casa del Duca di Aumale (VI 7, 15) as depicted in fig. 4.10 (right). Unfortunately, we do not have much information on the context of this painting (allied forces bombed it during the course of World War II); however, it is known it was found in a room north of the atrium. A similar template was available, but being not only a copy (of the same example) of the painting of Isis, but also the only version of this myth ever found in Pompeii, one could suggest it was a deliberate attempt to create a link with the temple of Isis. The use of a version of the painting of Isis and Io instead of the one that depicts Isis being imprisoned by Argus may point to a specific cultic decision. This suggestion is a mere assumption and quite difficult to falsify, however, if this was indeed the case, it would imply that even if Isis is conveyed within the myth of Io, the focus in this particular context lies on Isis and not on the narrative. This example, in combination with the aforementioned, illustrates that Isis, within a domestic context at least, was not meant to serve as decoration, but that she always somehow carried out a specific cultic function.

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376 This implies that while the painting in the temple is chosen with an aesthetic view in mind, the same painting for the Casa di Duca di Aumale is chosen from a religious viewpoint. The opposition of aesthetic preferences in religious spaces is not uncommon. Moormann opts for an aesthetic interpretation when regarding the purgatorium, thereby following Egelhaaf-Gaiser. The Nilometer is adorned by means of Perseus and Andromeda, Venus and Mars as well as erotes. They seem to carry out a primarily decorative function, see Moormann 2007, 149-50; Egelhaaf-Gaiser, 188.

377 What can be said on contexts outside the domestic contexts of Pompeii? Ornamental portraits of Isis are present in the Villa della Farnesina (the so-called House of Agrippa) as well as the House of Livia on the Palatine in Rome (Mols and Moormann 2008). In both cases Isis forms a part of wall painting inside the representational parts of the house. Domestic contexts, however, also represent the only settings in which Isis is attested in a decorative manner. This example should be considered exceptional. In the context of the emperor Augustus, it appears there were various rules, and it was appropriate to utilise Isis in this way. However, this could only be carried out within the imperial context of Augustus and his inner circle. This imperial phenomenon, however, never disseminated. The reason presumably being the fact that Isis in this particular case (i.e., the context of Augustus) was not taken seriously as a cult deity. Instead it should be regarded within the context of her role as wife of Osiris and mother of Horus as a strong symbol of power in dynastic succession, as also occurred in Ptolemaic Egypt (de Vos 1980, 1984, 1999). In this sense, within the larger frame of Alexandrian aesthetic references as a symbol of political power, Isis should be regarded as particularly purposeful as an adornment. However, it is thereby
Mosaics

In addition to paintings, mosaics also form a category interesting to consider, as they represent a notably different form of material culture. It has already been noted that while Isis is never represented on mosaics, Venus is one of the most popular deities to be found on mosaic pavements in the Roman world where especially the theme of Venus rising out of the water and Venus fishing occur frequently as mythological motifs. In order to explain this divergence between the divinities it is helpful to first understand how mosaics were used and conceived in general. Scholars claim mosaics were a medium with a non-cultic and even a purely decorative function within domestic contexts. As a consequence, mosaics of deities should not be considered as carriers of a cultic meaning. As Dunbabin argued: “The argument that mosaics were rarely used in religious contexts has a further relevance from the consideration of the mosaics that show individual deities, It is not a priori likely that these would be used as cult images indeed I know of no examples anywhere of the representation in mosaic on a floor of the principal deity to whom a shrine was dedicated, on the other hand figures of the gods form part of the general traditional repertory and occur in a wide variety of settings of which some can certainly be considered secular.”

Although already discussed, applying the term ‘secular’ is highly problematic within the context of the Roman world. Reviewing the overall choice in motifs and iconography it can nevertheless be concluded that the medium of mosaics does seem to point to a use that can be regarded as ‘non-cultic’ or ‘decorative’. Considering the fact that they were both deities, why was Venus more suited to be playing a role in mosaics than Isis? This is not only the result of Venus’ supposed dynamics and ‘vivacity’ as observed in paintings, exclusively associated with the imperial, creating a boundary for social emulation. We find here a very fine line concerning the rules of social emulation. Although the elite copied the imperial house in order to adhere to a certain status, there were certainly limits. Another example, in the context of Egypt, is the obelisk. It becomes a very strong symbol, not merely imperial in this case but one of the emperor himself (even in a religious context), see Curran et al. 2009, 49. This made it impossible for the elite to copy, even in lesser forms. We thus do not come across any in Pompeii, neither as copies within a garden context, nor depicted on walls.

378 They frequently appear in mosaic pavements of maritime towns as well as in locations in the interior, see Blanchard-Lemée 1995, 147-8, fig. 108-9, 112, 113-5. In Pompeii, representations of the fishing Venus is the most popular, see Hodske 2007.

379 See Dunbabin 1987, 141. Although in a few instances mosaics can point directly to cult behaviour (e.g., the mosaic from the Caserna of the Vigiles at Ostia, including episodes from a bull sacrifice (Becatti, Ostia IV no.76, p. 61 207 AD) or the mosaic from the Kornmarkt (Trier) which combines mythological scenes with cult deities, a cult scene and a procession of figures with vessels (Parlasca 1959, 56), see Dunbabin 1978, 140-1. These are very rare examples. In addition to Venus, mosaics often include images of deities (e.g., Dionysus, Hercules).
the various aspects of her mythology and character also contributed to her popularity as a decorative theme. Moreover, her naked body and allusion to love and sexuality rendered her an appropriate choice as an adornment in the more leisurely spaces within houses.\textsuperscript{380} Furthermore, the image of Venus rising out of the water was very suited to embellish garden and water contexts.\textsuperscript{381} This again points to much more diverse and elaborate conceptualisations in comparison to Isis. Significantly to note with regard to the discussion of Isis’ ‘Egyptianness’ and if this may have mattered within the use of material culture, is that by means of this last example it seems that Venus’s nature and the way she was conceptualised within a narrative structure made her suited for these contexts, and not strictly the fact that she was a (more) Roman divinity.\textsuperscript{382} The other way around it can thus be argued that although Isis could never be an option when decorating gardens, this is not because she was considered to be non-Roman, but because of something more inherent to her character.

\textit{Statuettes}

A final comparison between Venus and Isis is established on the basis of statuettes. It seems to further confirm the arguments concerning the appropriation and use of these deities. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 depict the statuettes of Venus and Isis from Pompeii respectively. It is difficult to carry out any quantitative analyses, because in Fröhlich’s catalogue Venus statuettes only concern a selection of the finds and not the total number of statuettes found, the goal is to look at the stylistic, material, and contextual differences between the deities. The iconography teaches, as with the paintings, that Venus appears in numerous poses: leaning, as Venus Anadyomene, naked, or seated on a lion. Several representations are even modelled after renowned statues such as the Venus of Arles.\textsuperscript{383} Isis’s only

\textsuperscript{380} See Wardle 2010, 201-26.
\textsuperscript{381} Another option in water context and gardens is for example Nilotic scenes; this is imagery we do find in these settings.
\textsuperscript{382} Indeed strictly, as the suggestion might be raised that the way in which Venus has been conceptualised and subsequently materialised could have to do with a more intimate knowledge originating from a ‘deeper integration pattern’ because of the fact she has been around longer (and could be captured more intimately). This, however, needs to be further examined by means of the example of Mithras.
\textsuperscript{383} Venus Anadyomene (meaning Venus Rising from the Sea) represents the most iconic representation of Venus. The Venus of Arles is renowned marble sculpture on display at the Musée du Louvre. It is 1,94 m. high and dates to the end of the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC. However, this particular version of Venus is earlier. The Venus of Arles is even presumed to a copy of the Aphrodite of Thespiae by Praxiteles, see Ridgway 1976, 147.
variations occur when she is identified with other deities (such as Fortuna, Hygeia, and Demeter).

Her outward appearance and postures are always identical as also witnessed in the paintings. Her attributes clarify with what kind of representation of Isis we are dealing with. On average, the statues of Isis are smaller than those of Venus. However, the most striking aspect of the statuette comparison is that the materials applied in order to portray the divinities diverge profoundly. Whereas almost all statuettes of Venus are conveyed in marble (often with traces of paint), Isis is never made out of marble. The majority consists of bronze (65 %), and the remainder of silver. Not a single statue of Venus is cast in bronze. Although we find little

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384 This selection is assembled from Fröhlich 1991, Boyce 1937 and Giacobelli 2008. As these sources did not all specify the material, position or location of the statues, the table is incomplete. As to the table of Venus statuettes it must be noted that it comprises only a selection of those statuettes with a clear find context, whereas the table of Isis provides all the finds for Pompeii, implying that the actual number of Venus figurines must be higher than indicated on the table.

385 One marble statuette in the the domestic shrine in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati was said to represent Isis. However, considering its iconography, it is more likely portray Fortuna, not Isis-Fortuna.
standardisation as to domestic shrines in Pompeii, generally speaking the statuettes manufactured for these contexts are mainly made of bronze.\textsuperscript{386}

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Table 4.4) Statuettes of Isis found in Pompeii, assembled from the database.

This led Dwyer to the idea that they were in the first place produced as decorative statues, and only later in their existence received a votive purpose in a lararium.\textsuperscript{387} Such a presumption, however, is difficult to maintain, as it argues that none of the statuettes were initially created with the intention of becoming cultic objects, as not a single Venus statuette was cast in bronze. This seems at odds with the popularity of the goddess with regard to cult practice, paintings, and temples. A more reasonable suggestion might be that marble was merely the manner in which Venus was perceived and thus the natural way in which she came to be venerated. The marble, paint, and size do not say anything about a ‘secular’ function per se. They are part of Venus’ traits. The marble and paint add to her erotic and visual appeal. Even when venerated Venus remained to be appropriated aesthetically.\textsuperscript{388} With

\textsuperscript{386} As can be seen in the lararium statuettes in the catalogue by Fröhlich, Fröhlich 1991.
\textsuperscript{387} See Dwyer 1982, 124.
\textsuperscript{388} On the other hand, the marble might not only have added to the decorative functions or erotic connotations ascribed to Venus; Venus Pompeiana, known for her more ‘modest’ and covered appearance as the town’s tutelary deity is also primarily attested in marble.
such a close cognitive association between marble and the concept of Venus, it would be difficult if not impossible, to venerate or even recognise her when rendered by means of another material. It is important to stipulate, as scholars often disregard this when studying such objects, that material in this sense forms a deity’s attribute equal to a cupid, cornucopia, or a helm. To conclude, after comparing the materialisations and contexts in which Venus and Isis appear, several striking differences have emerged. Whereas Isis, in all forms is mainly found in a lararium context, Venus is predominantly attested in leisure spaces and considered a popular decorative element in Roman houses. Her direct appearance was abundantly visible on mosaics and her marble statuary was often painted. The birth of Venus seemed to have been appropriate for a fountain context, whereas the nude Anadyomene frequently occurred in the form of statuettes. In wall paintings she could appear throughout the house in a varied number of mythological renderings. The difference could not be any greater when comparing the dynamic, animated, aesthetically appropriated Venus with the static, cultic, statue-like portrayal of Isis. Whereas Isis appears statically and seemingly conceptualised an icon of sorts, Venus is depicted as active, lively, and with human features. The static and principally cultic associations with Isis might be caused by the fact she never became a part of the mythological narratives present in the collective memory of the Romans of Pompeii. She therefore never had the chance to develop such characteristics. This disparity in the way in which deities were materialised and visualised in Pompeii however (with regard to the discussion on object agency as discussed in chapter 3) resulted in essential consequences as to the way in which deities were conceptualised within Pompeii. Should the cause of this be sought in her Egyptian character, her un-Romanness? Portraits of Apollo, Dionysus, and Mercury appear in contexts deemed decorative. Whereas Isis, Harpocrates, and Serapis were almost exclusively found in cultic settings. Then again, Apollo is not of Roman origin, nor is Dionysus. Is it the different function of the deities or the way in which Isis is integrated? This may have something to do not with the supposed Egyptianness, but with the integration process in conjunction with the way in which deities can be materialised. In order to ascertain whether a link can be established between the origin, integration into the Roman pantheon, and the absence of the gods in more ornamental ways, a brief and final comparison will be made with

However, this might be explained as marble became an intrinsic part of the broader concept of Venus, not only of Venus as a goddess of love.
another deity of an ostensibly ‘exotic’ origin as are Isis and her consorts: Mithras.

4.2.4 Mithras

As to the ‘Oriental’ aspects of Isis it interesting to compare representations of her with a deity belonging (as a scholarly classification) to the group of ‘non-Roman’, Oriental, or mystery cults.\(^{389}\) It must be specified here that it is not automatically assumed that Isis and Mithras both belong to the category of Oriental cults and that they, for that reason, were differently treated than a Venus or Dionysus. However, by taking Mithras as an example the difference in use and perception between a deity adopted relatively late during the Roman world (Isis and Mithras were integrated in around the 1st century BC) and a deity known to the area for a longer period (such as Venus) can become apparent. In this way it might be possible to establish a firmer grip not only on the concept of Isis, but also on the possible limits of her material integration. Mithras is a Roman adaptation of the historically Persian god Mithra, which became a popular Roman cult during the 1st century AD, especially within the Roman military.\(^{390}\) Significant aspects concerning the material culture of this cult are the specific cult buildings or Mithraea, which do not denote a real sanctuary but rather an underground, windowless, cave like structure notably different from any Roman temple form, and the fact he is worshipped not in the shape of a cult statue, but as a relief depicting Mithras slaying a bull.\(^{391}\) It is interesting to observe the way in which this god came to be established and blended into the material culture of the Roman world, although it is difficult to find any research focussing on representations of Mithras outside the study of Mithraea. It seems that the

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\(^{389}\) See 2.4.1 for the categorisation of deities as being Oriental. For a discussion or overview on mystery cults, see Burkert 1987; Boyden 2010.

\(^{390}\) Renowned for its complex and mysterious initiation system and the characteristic form of iconographical imagery and cult buildings, the so-called Mithraea did not consist of ‘usual’ Greaco-Roman temple styles, but cave like, underground and windowless structures. For general publications on the Roman Mithras cult, see Cumont 1894-6; Vermaseren 1963; Merkelbach 1994; Turcan 2000; Beck 2004.

\(^{391}\) In the centre of each Mithraeum a representation called the tauroctony (a modern term) of Mithras killing a sacred bull is located, see Beck 2006, 17. It basically depicts Mithras in the centre, kneeling near the bull (its tail consists of a sheaf of corn). He holds it by the nostrils with his left hand, stabbing it with his right hand. A dog and a snake jump up to the dying bull licking its wounds, while a scorpion grabs the bull’s testicles. On either side of the scene we see torchbearers (a cautes with a torch pointing up, a cautopates with a torch pointing down). All this takes place in a cave, the roof of which is above Mithras’s head. Woodland scenes occupy the space above the roof. In the top left we see the sun, Sol, with a crown of rays. A long ray streaks down in order to throw light on Mithras. A raven sits nearby. In the top right is the moon, Luna, is depicted. Side panels include mythical events from Mithras’s life.
majority of research on material culture aims at either the dissemination of Mithraea or on objects attested at Mithraea, and generally not consider the influence of Mithras as a decorative manifestation. Moreover, it is impossible to assess Mithras within an intra-site comparison, as this cult is not clearly present at the site of Pompeii (Roman Ostia counts at least eighteen Mithraea, whereas Pompeii so far counts none). This has most probably to do with the fact that the cult became popular amongst a larger audience after Pompeii was already destroyed.\(^{392}\) In order to ascertain the way in which Mithras was integrated within domestic contexts, other sites than Pompeii will be explored.

A first question to arise is whether images of Mithras were found within domestic contexts and in which forms. According to Richard Gordon Mithras is attested both in domestic and temple worship. Within the domestic contexts the material culture varies and its applications reach beyond the scope of pure cultic uses: “And many small images take the form neither of cult- nor secondary reliefs but function as markers or labels for cult-vessels and other property, the scene of Mithras bull killing came to be used for many other purposes than are covered by the conventional notion of cult-relief.”\(^ {393}\)

How large or small is the variety in objects in which the presence of Mithras is attested within these contexts? First of all, within this range reliefs could be found depicting Mithras or Mithraic attributes (such as the so-called *cautes* and *cautopates*, the torch bearers of Mithras, the bull killing ritual and smaller icons - e.g., lions, scorpions, snakes). These reliefs in all probability served as votive gifts, either as fixed into side walls of temples and shrines or used as reliefs inside houses for private worship.\(^ {394}\) Reliefs seem to a more common type of Mithras renderings, as the majority of the finds appear to consist of reliefs and plaques.\(^ {395}\) However, in other parts of the Roman Empire, the finds, although not always from a secured find context, seem to be more varied.\(^ {396}\) For instance, (glazed) reliefs, statuettes, and decorated vessels (*terra sigillata*), were attested in several Mithraea at Carnuntum, Rome, and Lezoux. Objects that could be ascribed to domestic contexts were found too. These latter contexts include artefacts with Mithraic imagery in bronze and terracotta (such as stamps, plates,

\(^{392}\) Between the 1\(^{st}\) and the 4\(^{th}\) centuries AD the cult is visible in the material record. However, its popularity began to rise only after the 2\(^{nd}\) century AD.

\(^{393}\) See Gordon 2004, 260.

\(^{394}\) See Gordon 2004, 260.

\(^{395}\) See Tran tam Tinh 1972, 177-84.

\(^{396}\) Therefore, as was done with Isis, it often taken as evidence for the existence of a *Mitræum* rather than a Mithraic find within a domestic context.
Jewellery depicting Mithras can be found throughout the Roman world in the shape of amulets and gems, which had led to the view that certain followers of the Mithras cult wore jewellery in order to reflect their belief. As to the iconography of Mithras it does not include imagery as varied as with Venus and solely depict either Mithras or the bull killing. This means that although in a way it could be argued that Mithras was worshipped in a more dynamic way (because the relief shows an action instead of a static interpretation), there is never an image found of Mithras that diverged from this very particular iconography. Never was a representation of Mithras found that diverged from this specific iconography. This constitutes quite a different image than could be witnessed in the example of Venus. In fact, it largely resembles the static manner that Isis and the Isiac divinities were portrayed in material culture. That material culture confirms this observation, which is not as varied as was observed with Venus. Being of a very specific nature, it is therefore more comparable to Isis. Mithras was also not to be found in mosaic renderings, but does occur in the shape of statuettes, reliefs, jewellery and wall painting. As with Isis, small finds do manifest themselves within domestic contexts. However, they never seem to lose their direct cultic reference and display only a limited iconographical variability. When reviewing the contexts in which Mithras is found and the variety of material culture in which he or his cultic attributes appear, it seems that they are indeed comparable to the portrayal of Isis within domestic settings.

4.2.5 Icons and idols
This first exploratory section on Aegyptiaca has brought to the fore interesting results regarding the adaptation and perception of deities with a historically Egyptian origin. It has become clear that objects belonging to the group: ‘deities with an Egyptian origin’ from the database, should be regarded and analysed within more conceptual categories than just one ensemble of Egyptian gods, for the use of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos and Jupiter-Ammon are crucially different from that of Isis, Anubis, Harpocrates and Serapis in terms of find contexts, objects, and material. However, not

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397 For the glazed reliefs and statues, see Wulfmeier 2004, 89-94; Hensen, 2004, 95-107. For other small finds e.g., the Mithras brooch from Ostia now exhibited at in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, see Weiss 2004, 319-26; Sas 2004, 359-62; Oikonomides 1975.
398 See Sas 2004, 259. This might resemble the amulets related to Isis found within the context of Pompeii.
399 See Gordon 2004, 259-78.
only was Isis differently regarded when compared with other Egyptian deities. Research into Isis and her representations in a wider material framework indicates she also notably differed in use from Venus, one of the other popular female deities in Pompeii.

Several valuable deductions can be made with regard to the concept of the Isiac gods by means of studying the contexts and objects. Having assessed paintings, statuettes, and mosaics representing Isis it can be stated that it is not her Egyptian origin which makes it unlikely she would appear outside the cultic context of the house altar. It is because of the fact Isis and her mythology are not embedded in the collective memory in a narrative way, as is Venus (and Dionysus, Mercury, Apollo, Jupiter etc.), that Isis remained more statically engaged. Because Venus was part of a narrative, she was recognised in different and more complex ways. Because of the narrative recognition she could be ascribed with a personality, a life story, and allegoric qualities. Venus could be more dynamically applied and was therefore appropriate in a larger number of contexts than Isis. Venus could be a kind of decoration, too, whereas Isis could not be conceived of outside a cultic context. Although it has been argued that Harpocrates was used decoratively in certain instances it is also argued that it always revolves around a cultic motif.400 This, as a comparison illustrated, is very similar to the way Mithras becomes used in material culture. The question as to why Isis and Mithras never penetrated beyond cultic materialisations is difficult to answer within the scope of this research. It might be linked to the rather late integration of the cult in the Roman world, after certain pivotal boundaries on the cultural and religious identity of the Empire had been established.401 Moreover, the fact that Isis and Mithras are both mystery cults only accessible to initiates (and Mithras much more than the Isis cult), had implications concerning the way they could be integrated into wider networks of material culture.402 The iconography was not widely spread, less

400 “Der Typus ist weit verbreitet und hat auch in die dekorative Wandmalerei Eingang gefunden, wie ein Fragment aus Pompeii in London (Tran tam Tinh 1964, 153 no. 71) und eine heute zerstörte Darstellung in VIII 4, 12 (Tran tam Tinh 134 no 26) belegen.” However even in these cases Harpocrates is depicted as a cultic image. See Fröhlich 1991, 156.

401 As argued in Orlin 2010, 162-90.

402 Mithras remained a mystery cult throughout its Roman existence. We read: “It is conceivable that there was a connection between the foreign origin of Roman Mithras and the fact that his cult in the Roman Empire was represented only in the form of a mystery cult. The case was different with the Metroac (Cybele and Attis) and Isiac cults. In the second century AD these solidly incorporated into the Roman religious nomenclature and could assume, in certain cases, the said characteristics of mystery cults. In the case of Mithras, in the Roman Empire, this background and long-lived familiarity with the Roman religious atlas was completely lacking.” Bianchi 1990, 9.
known, and therefore less manageable to serve as decoration. Furthermore, it might not have been appropriate to make both cults more ‘human’ and it may even have been considered important to allow them remain static in imagery. The limited number of representations of Isis also seems to be related to her role in Roman society and her function as a deity. Considered a goddess of fertility and marriage, she is often portrayed as a mother nursing her son. Bacchus/Dionysus was associated with wine, Venus with love and Apollo with music. They could therefore be integrated into the decorative scheme not only within leisure and garden contexts, but also into places concerning feasting.403

However, when taking the example of the integration of Venus compared to that of deities such as Mithras and Isis and their supposed foreignness further (although we cannot speak about un-Romanness), there are clearly differences between the materialisations of the cults which are not only explainable on a cultural level. Taking an interpretative leap forward it could be argued that something was able to become Roman when it developed into a narrative and could therefore be integrated more dynamically (and subsequently cognitively become stronger). This might however, not specifically have to do with Isis’ (or the Isiac) origin and her Egyptianness, as Mithras showed similar patterns. Nonetheless the experience of Mithras, it could be observed that the way in which Isis was understood in Pompeii differed from other deities there. This also partly answers the question why Isis could not be found as a decorative item on a temple part whereas Mars and Venus could. This does not imply she was not seen as a non-Roman deity. Isis was integrated, as was Mithras. However, their integration within Roman material culture knew boundaries. Even the Isis temple had a refer to a Graeco-Roman myth rather than anything with a pharaonic subject (see also 4.5). This phenomenon in material culture must have had an effect as to how Isis was Experienced and conceptualised in Pompeii.

While this part was able to create a more embedded picture of how materialisations of Egyptian were perceived and used in Pompeii, there are some unsolved issues left regarding this subject. For instance the context of domestic shrines and the different identifications of Isis in relation to the material, styles, and contexts require elaboration. The contexts of these

403 Furthermore, looking in more detail to the integration with reference to supposed Egyptianness, another argument against this (or at least making the matter more complex than just ‘Egyptian’) is that whereas in decorating watersettings such as fountains it was not appropriate to adopt Isis, Nilotic scenes were profusely utilized for this. They have a similar (or similar lack of this) ‘Egyptian’ association.
4.3 Statuettes of Egyptian deities within the context of domestic religion

4.3.1. Introduction

In 4.2 it was concluded that the material expressions of Isis and of deities belonging to the Isiac pantheon (e.g., Harpocrates, Anubis, Serapis) in Pompeian houses should be primarily related to cultic contexts. Studying the statuettes embedded in these contexts can therefore be considered an interesting target, because it is able to inform us about the preferences, choices, and traditions regarding the Isiac deities in order to subsequently add valuable insights to the existing knowledge of the domestic religion of Pompeii. Focusing on statuettes observed in wider social and cultural networks could provide another view on local preferences and perceptions of Isis and Egypt. Furthermore, it provides insights on the cultic and aesthetic values of the statuettes as discussed in 4.2.5.404 Section 4.3 will therefore analyse a specific category of material culture to then focus on statuettes and to wall paintings representing Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis and Anubis not only within the context of domestic religion, but also within the wider context of non-Egyptian statuettes and Egyptian statuettes originating from contexts other than Pompeii. Domestic religion is a subject widely discussed, as is the site of Pompeii.405 Within the discourse on domestic religion, however, statuettes seem to be somewhat taking a back seat in the discussion, especially when compared to lararia and wall painting studies. As yet no comparative research exists that targets statuettes in Pompeii. Nonetheless, valuable information can be acquired with regard to the current investigation taking into account figurines as part of the material culture belonging to domestic worship. Relevant questions are for instance how many statuettes of the Egyptian deities were found in comparison to the wider group of objects related to domestic religion. Did they vary in appearance or material? Which domestic contexts did Isiac statuettes

404 As was established here, Bes and Ptah are not regarded within the Roman framework of domestic religion, as they were never found in domestic shrine contexts. Their perception and use are discussed in 4.4.
405 For general studies on Roman domestic religion, see Orr 1978; Bodel and Olyan 2008; Lipka 2006, 327-58; Lafarge 2010; Clarke 1991, 1-29; Kaufmann-Heinimann, 2007, 188-201. For studies specifically aimed at domestic shrines, see Fröhlich 1991; Giacobello 2008; Brandt 2010, 57-117.
possess? Can we observe a patterning as to with which combinations they appear with other Pompeian deities? On a larger level, when statuettes are compared to other contexts (such as Egypt or Delos) can differences in iconography or style be noticed?

Analysing ‘Egypt’ within the context of domestic cult practices does not imply that the interpretation is carried either from a religious or a decorative framework; both concepts are heavily intertwined and it is primarily their interaction which plays an important role in the final use and meaning of the statuettes under discussion. Although the domestic shrines predominantly served as places of worship, the way in which they were decorated, the array of statues and other paraphernalia of high quality and their positions indoors also touches upon issues of representation.

4.3.2 Statuettes and Roman domestic worship

Statuettes in general constitute a category of objects made out of marble, wood, terracotta, bronze, or silver and provide a heterogeneous array of deities connected to household religion and specifically to domestic shrines. They were attested in nearly every house in Pompeii and are often referred to as ‘lararia’. The importance of these contexts, objects, and associated cultic practices is demonstrated by means of a profound number and variety of ancestral gods, offerings, and shrines in all Pompeian homes, modest or wealthy.406 Those involved with domestic ritual practices were members of Pompeian families, which comprised of a pater familias or dominus, his wife and children, and if he was able to afford it, his slaves.407 All upheld a relationship with the divine and certain ways to act this out on a daily basis in the harmony of their homes. As not each member of the houseful played a role in the public arena, a great portion of one’s religious activity was more personal and individually oriented within the walls of the domus.408 A central part of any Roman dwelling therefore was the household shrine, located either indoors or in the garden. Here the family prayed and offered small gifts consisting of food such as fruit or wine to the spirits every morning. The most important household gods were the lares, protectors of the house and the household, and the penates, protectors of the household provisions and kitchen. They were complemented by Vesta (Goddess of the Hearth), the genius (the family’s tutelary spirit), the manes (ancestral spirits) and Janus,
the spirit of doorways. Daily rituals were performed in order to keep the *Pax Deorum*, and special rituals were carried out at important events revolving around the household, such as marriage, birth, and death.\textsuperscript{409} The deities found at the domestic shrines in addition to the afore-mentioned general household spirits, reflect gods that were venerated in the community, but were limited to those considered appropriate for domestic worship.\textsuperscript{410} Not all were suited for this purpose, although the variety of deities is large. In terms of the statuettes within these contexts, it is interesting to observe that, while *lares* and *penates* are portrayed in a consistent way of portrayal, the other deities, heroes, ancestors, and cult objects adorning these shrines had quite a heterogeneous nature in combinations as well as appearance. Their selection seemed to be entirely subjected to individual choices and preferences of their owners. In any case the variety of house spirits, shrines, locations, and rituals gives a strong indication of a complex and embedded religious framework.\textsuperscript{411} In addition to using statuettes in order to venerate, shrines could furthermore include paintings of deities instead. Traditional views have always linked the difference between these two types of materialisation to wealth and status whereby the poorer families could not afford statuettes and therefore painted their lares on the wall. However, throughout Pompeii it could be seen that small houses contained architecturally complex shrines and statuettes and not only simply painted shrines, while the affluent households owned painted sanctuaries as well next to statuettes, or elaborate shrines.\textsuperscript{412} It seems that the use of paintings opposite statuettes is thus not a way of distinguishing oneself within social strata. However, studying the difference between paintings of the Isiac gods and statuettes may nevertheless be relevant when establishing the way in which they were regarded in various media.

\textsuperscript{409} The most significant studies on the subject of domestic religion and its materialisations are provided by Boyce, Orr, Fröhlich, and Foss. In their catalogues on the sacred spaces in Pompeii they created and epitomised the concept of the lararium.

\textsuperscript{410} See Bassani 2008, 33.

\textsuperscript{411} For gods to move from public to private worship was the practice of representing deities in the same way in public as in private contexts and in conceiving them in various fluid combinations and groupings in the household lararium, see Bodel 2008, 255.

\textsuperscript{412} The homes of the rich would have displayed statuettes as their domestic deities, whereas less lavish homes (or servant’s quarters in the homes of the affluent) had to settle with paintings. It is stated: “Painted lararia were not the real thing; they were the servant’s substitute of the sanctuary with bronze statuettes worshipped by the dominus ... the painted lararium served to stress status distinctions while being at the same time an effective means of ensuring the servant’s loyalty to the master and its house.” See Tybout 1996, 370.
A last point to consider within this general section on Roman domestic religion is the lararia and the contexts in which they appear. Firstly, applying the term lararium as the designation of domestic shrine has certain issues, as this is a rather particular term for what in fact consisted of a large variety of shrines (e.g., aediculae, altars, lararia, shrines, portable altars, paintings, niches).\textsuperscript{413} According to Giacobello, the Roman term and concept of lararium actually referred to a shrine primarily dedicated to the lares, and lararia were therefore only those shrines located within or surrounding kitchen areas.\textsuperscript{414} In order to allow the full complexity that such places of worship in houses this thesis will refer to them as ‘domestic shrine’, instead of lararium. The number of domestic shrines within the houses of Pompeii is large, according to Giacobello in Pompeii 114 ‘larari principali’ and 156 ‘larari secondari’ could be found.\textsuperscript{415} Their locations as table 4.5, illustrates were also notably wide-ranging. We find them throughout the house, although they are clearly more numerous in the atrium, peristyle, viridarium, and kitchen. These spaces seem to not only denote a separation between the more public and private rooms but also between work-related and representation rooms. The majority of domestic shrines are found in the more private spaces of the house. Therefore, although often publically displayed, they were largely a private affair concerning use and appreciation.\textsuperscript{416} Although the domestic cults might have predominantly private in practice, the locations where the domestic shrines and subsequent statuettes were mainly found, were often public and well visible, for example, at the ends of deep view axes through the house i.e., at the rear wall of the peristyle in which a view-axis emerges from the entrance to the end of the house.\textsuperscript{417}

\textsuperscript{413} See Boyce 1937; Orr 1978; Fröhlich 1991; Foss 1997; Bassani 2007; Laforge 2009.
\textsuperscript{414} Giacobello 2008; See also Mols 1999, 60-1.
\textsuperscript{415} Two types of domestic shrines are distinguished: lararia for lares specifically and so-called secondary shrines which housed deities in accordance to individual preferences, see Giacobello 2008, 65-7. Such a rigid distinction however, might be arguable.
\textsuperscript{416} This follows Wallace-Hadrill’s distinction between the public and the private within the social organisation of the house totalling 74% of which 62% falls under ‘private private’. Brandt 2012, 73 after Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 38. However, it must be noted here that although Brandt places shrines found in peristylium into the category ‘private’, they were frequently located in the view-axis of houses and therefore well visible to passers-by and visitors of the atrium. With this statement he somewhat contests the earlier made assumption by Fröhlich 1991 that: “Die große Mehrzahl der in Privathäusern gefundenen Statuetten stammt aus repräsentativen Räumen. Die einzige Verbindung eines einfachen Genius/Larenbildes mit einer Statuettenausstattung ist in VIII 5, 37 (L96) nachweisbar.” Föhlich 1991, 30.
\textsuperscript{417} Their number gradually grew in importance from the Imperial period on, see Brandt 2010, 93.
This does indeed imply the existence of an important visual and social aspect with regard to these domestic shrines, which is interesting to explore in connection to the Isiac deities. To which extent do paintings of Egyptian deities occur at these shrines as opposed to non-visible shrines placed in kitchens for instance? This may present us with interesting insights into the understanding of social preferences of the use of these deities. First, however, their position within the Pompeian community should be elucidated, as attempted below.

### 4.3.3 Isis and domestic religion in Pompeii

Previous research carried out on the Isiac deities and domestic religion in Pompeii is not very abundant. As to studies on the Egyptian statuettes specifically, the majority hereof is has been catalogued in Tran tam Tinh’s *Essai sur le culte d’Isis*, as was mentioned in chapter 2. Concerning the contexts in which the deities appear, Beaurin furthermore, applied a more contextual approach from which it was concluded that although paintings and statues of Isis and Isis-Fortuna were found in service areas of Roman houses, the majority of the finds originate from more public and representative spaces. These are valuable notions to start with, as they indicate that Isis possessed qualities rendering her unsuited for regular ‘kitchen-shrines’. Moreover, they illustrate that displaying Egyptian deities had a representative function in addition to their cultic importance. As with other deities, Isis played a role within a network of social value-making. A

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418 See Brandt 2010, 69, table 1.
419 On the contexts of Isis and Isis-Fortuna statuettes and paintings, see Beaurin 2008a, 267-94; 2008b.
420 It was also noted that in addition to the fact that paintings of Egyptian deities are largely found in representational areas, they also constituted a considerable 20% of the total. In Beaurin is following Tybout. See Tybout 1996, 360. However, this number could not be verified in the present research.
further significant observation made within the context of prior research concerns the forms in which Isis appears i.e., as the table and charts below indicate - is mainly in the guise of Isis-Fortuna. The shrine context in fig. 4.11 from Fondo d’Acunzo, Boscoreale contained seven statuettes found together in a lararium of a mixed combination of Roman deities, amongst which two statuettes of Isis-Fortuna. This creates an additional argument in favour of the afore-mentioned remark, that Isis and Isiac deities should be considered a Roman phenomenon as they were integrated into the Roman world and embodied a significant part of the pantheon and were not unfamiliar outsiders set apart from other household deities.

Fig. 4.11) Seven statues found together in a lararium. Among which two statuettes of Isis-Fortuna. Other statuettes include two figurines of Jupiter (one sitting on a throne and one standing), Apollo-Helios, a genius, and a statuette of a faun. Found at Fondo d’Acunzo, Boscoreale. From Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, fig. 145, 210.

Although this observation and the conclusions from the above section arguing that Isis should be considered a Roman goddess are accurate and important, the acknowledgment of Isis as a Roman phenomenon can only be regarded a first step concerning the exploration of the Egyptian deities, rather than that it provides a satisfactory conclusion. Although the ‘foreign’ identity of Isis within the domestic cult is rightly deconstructed, it still paints a rather static picture of the Pompeian community. Furthermore, it does not explain her presence nor recognises any variety in use and significance.

421 As also showed by Beaurin, noting: “Dans la majorité des cas cependant, les divinités isiaques sont intégrées sous forme de statuettes au sein de l’unique laraire en compagnie des autres divinités du foyer.” See Beaurin 2008, 267-94 and 2008b.
There is no such thing as the domestic cult, as stated by Barret.\textsuperscript{422} When Isis is to be taken seriously as something Roman, her use and perception must be scrutinised beyond a cultural level of Roman and Egyptian. A level of perception should be added which acknowledges the social dynamism in which Egyptian statuettes are regarded within various contexts, and which examines such artefacts within social frameworks of value representation, social status, and aesthetic choices. The next step in this analysis should therefore be to sketch a more detailed picture of the social diversity in the use of these statuettes. The interesting consequences of the above deductions is that, in the following step, the statuettes can be assessed not by means of their so-called ‘ethnic’ qualities (i.e., something foreign/Egyptian), but that the focus is placed on the inherent qualities of the gods and their specific functioning in a domestic context. The social significance is hereby placed on the foreground. This can provide a clearer picture on the way in which they were used. It must thus be realised, too, that although this section refers to them as ‘the Egyptian deities’ as a category, this should merely be considered a heuristic solution not an interpretative one.

Therefore, in order to get more grip on the social aspects of Roman Isis and the Isiac deities, an attempt will be made to reveal the way in which Isis functions within the context of domestic religion by means of analysing statuettes. Table 4.6 introduces all the statuettes of Egyptian deities found at the site of Pompeii.\textsuperscript{423}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
Genre & Subject & House Name & Location & Context \\
\hline
Statue & Horus & Casa degli Amorini dorati & VI 16, 7 & Domestic Shrine \\
\hline
Statue & Isis & Casa dei Dioscuri & VI 9,6/7 & \\
\hline
Statue & Isis & Casa del moralisto & III 6, 2 & Garden \\
\hline
Statuette & Anubis & Casa di Memmius Auctus & VI 14, 27 & \\
\hline
Statuette & Bes & Unknown & & \\
\hline
Statuette & Bes & Casa di Acceptus et Euhodis & VIII 5, 39 & Viridarium \\
\hline
Statuette & Bes & Casa di D. Octavius Quarto & II 2, 2 & Garden \\
\hline
Statuette & Bes & Casa di Marcus Lucretius & IX 3, 5 & \\
\hline
Statuette & Bes & Bar & I 14, 8 & \\
\hline
Statuette & Harpocrates & & V 3, 11 & \\
\hline
Statuette & Harpocrates & & V 3, 11 & \\
\hline
Statuette & Harpocrates & Casa di Memmius Auctus & VI 14, 27 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Statuettes of Egyptian deities from Pompeii}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{422} As domestic religion is a collection of practices which are differentiated between various households based on socio-economic values, religious preferences, and the roles they take up in society, see Barret 2011, 1-2.

\textsuperscript{423} Also when the exact find spots could not be determined.
Table 4.6) Statuettes of Isiac deities found in Pompeii.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statuette</th>
<th>Harpocrates</th>
<th>VII 3, 11</th>
<th>Shrine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Casa di Giuseppe II</td>
<td>VIII 2, 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>IX 5, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Villa rustica</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Villa rustica</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>Praedia di Giulia Felice</td>
<td>II 4, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>Casa di Sacerdos Amandus</td>
<td>I 7, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>Casa di Memmius Auctus</td>
<td>VI 14, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>Casa di C. Vibius Italus</td>
<td>VII 2, 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis bust</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>VII 3, 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis bust</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>VII 4, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Hygeia</td>
<td>Casa del Centenario</td>
<td>IX 8, 3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Panthé</td>
<td>Villa rustica di Cn. Domitius Auctus</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Demeter</td>
<td>Villa rustica</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis (priest)</td>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo</td>
<td>I 7, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>V 3, 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>V 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>IX 3, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Villa rustica</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Villa rustica of Asellius</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Villa rustica of Asellius</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Pompeian countryside</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Zeus-Serapis</td>
<td>Basilica</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What percentage did Isis and the Isiac deities constitute with regard to the total amount of statuettes in domestic shrines? The statuettes that could be attested to cultic contexts were listed by Fröhlich and are helpful when making a comparison on the wider scale of domestic deities have been listed.\textsuperscript{424} Fig. 4.12a, constructed after Fröhlich’s findings, illustrates that relatively speaking, Isis was not very abundantly present. Only 2\% of the statuettes represent Isis, whereas Harpocrates covers 6\% of the total. Although this may point to an insignificant role of Isis within Pompeian domestic religion, Fröhlich did not include all statuettes of Isis that were found, making the percentage concerning Isis in the pie chart an unrealistic one. The database indicates that Isis (in all forms) is attested at least thirty-six times, of which nineteen in the form of statuettes. This makes it difficult to say anything meaningful regarding Fröhlich’s catalogue in comparison with the database finds, although presumptions might be expressed on the basis of the relative numbers of his tables. The Lares, in this case, occupy

\textsuperscript{424} See Fröhlich 1991, 356-8 (Appendix 6).
the largest space. In addition to the Lares, one may reckon Venus, Minerva, Mercury, and Jupiter to occur most frequently within the contexts of Pompeian domestic shrines. Considering the category of statuettes from the database shown in the form of a pie chart in fig. 4.12b, Isis-Fortuna (thirteen), Harpocrates (eleven) take up the largest part of the total followed by Isis (without Fortuna’s traits - three in total).

Fig. 4.12a) The division of statuettes based on the catalogue by Fröhlich. Fröhlich 1991, 249-305.

Statuettes of Egyptian deities in cultic contexts

Fig. 4.12b) Pie-chart showing the presence of statuettes of Egyptian deities.
Anubis, Serapis and Horus are only found once in Pompeii. Observing the lower pie chart it is interesting to note that Isis-Fortuna occurs the most and not the ‘regular’ Isis.

After these general observations on the presence, use, and appearances of Isis and other Egyptian deities in Pompeii and the way in which they have been regarded thus far, there seems to be several specific subjects to explore further. In conjunction with the general aim of this chapter, an attempt will be made to analyse statuettes related to Isis within the wider networks of material, objects, and concepts, thereby creating a more comprehensive and embedded view of Egyptian statuettes in Pompeii. Three particular comparisons were chosen to extract the statuettes and deities from their restraining category of Egyptian deities and study them in the broader perspective of domestic religion and cult statuettes. Firstly, in order to ascertain whether the frequent appearance of Isis and Harpocrates is a common phenomenon, the site Pompeii will be compared to other places and sites, such as Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, and Hellenistic Delos. This comparison then will also serve to compare the various forms, sizes, and attributes shared between statuettes and will subsequently provide an idea about the local preferences, influences, and traditions of Pompeii. In this way it will engage with the difference between global availability versus local choice as discussed in chapter 2. A second comparison will look at these local choices in more detail by means of a studying the use of Isis and Isis-Fortuna. It has been noted that Isis-Fortuna was much more abundantly present than the ‘pure’ Isis. However, the question is whether there was a conceptual difference between the two or that they could be adopted interchangeably. A third and final comparison will therefore be devoted to a contextual analysis of the Egyptian divinities in Pompeii, their specific iconography and materialisation, and the shrines in which they were found.

4.3.4 Comparison I: form and function in a wider perspective: Isis from a global viewpoint

In this section statuettes from Delos, Campania (Pompeii and Herculaneum), and Roman Egypt are compared in order to acquire a clearer view on the wider availability of statuettes and the subsequent local reasons for particular choices and selections. With regard to the specific catalogues with which to carry out this comparison, Roman Egypt presents a somewhat
complex case, as the provenance of the majority of the Egyptian figurines from the museum catalogues used is largely unknown. However, it is nonetheless considered a useful undertaking, for its large corpus can provide valuable information on relative numbers, style, iconography, and the material of which the statuettes consist.\textsuperscript{425} In the case of Delos, a better contextual comparison could be realised, because the statuettes hailing from private contexts are known and studied in detail.\textsuperscript{426} It is argued that the three contexts, Pompeii and Herculaneum, Delos and Egypt, together form a geographical and chronological picture of concepts and styles in transit. Comparing them allows us to provide insights into the choices made locally, thereby creating a deeper understanding of the use of the statuettes, the integration of the Isis cult and its influence, and the concepts concerning Isis present in Pompeii. For the sake of presenting an overview and to see whether similar use and perception patterns can be observed within contexts other than Pompeian, the statuettes of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are included in the comparison between Delos, Egypt and Campania.

![Survey of Isis Statuettes](table_4.7.png)

Table 4.7) An overview of different types of Isis-statuettes and—if this could be safely retrieved—the number of their appearance in different contexts. As the types for Roman Egypt are gathered from museum collections with an unsure provenance except that they are derived from Roman Egypt, they function solely as a comparison of used types; the absolute numbers of finds are not used.

\textsuperscript{425} The catalogues consulted were: Dunand 1990; Fjeldhagen 1995; Török 1995; Bailey 2008, who made extensive studies to Roman Egyptian terracotta figurines originating from the large collections of the British Museum, the Louvre, the Museum of Cairo and from several Roman sites in Egypt.

\textsuperscript{426} See Barret 2011.

\textsuperscript{427} Composed from the studies by Allen 1985; Fjeldhagen 1995; Dunand 1990; Bailey 2008; Török 1995.

\textsuperscript{428} The entire catalogue served the case of Delos (not merely the finds from private contexts) in order to determine the total availability of Isis or Isiac statuettes. They are surprisingly small. As to Oriental Aphrodite, it is not clear whether a direct relation with Isis did exist. With regard to the other Isis statuettes (mainly fragments) it was noted they could either be statuettes of Isis or of Ptolemaic queens, see Barret 2011.
Comparison of the Different Types of Egyptianising Statuettes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>No. Pompeii</th>
<th>No. Herculanum</th>
<th>No. Roman Egypt Dunand/BM/Fjeldhagen/Török</th>
<th>No. Delos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>80 (40)/19/15(12)/5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52/40/24/46</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serapis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3/7/2/3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anubis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25/18/5/15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptah-Pataikos</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8 Comparison of the different types of Egyptianising statuettes in Pompeii, Herculaneum, Egypt, and Delos.

Tables 4.7 and 4.8 present an overview of the variety of statuettes. In table 4.7 include types of Isis with regard to the contexts, whereas table 4.8 introduces the diversity present in figurines within the wider group of Egyptian statuettes. The overall picture illustrates, expectedly, that the Isis types from Pompeii and Herculaneum lie closer together than the ones from Delos and Egypt. What was perhaps less anticipated is that the number of Isis types is notably large in Campania, much larger than for instance on Delos. Furthermore, even if the number of types is as large in Herculaneum and Pompeii as they were in Roman Egypt, they show completely different types. Of interest too regarding the Egyptian deities per find spot (table 4.7), is the fact that the pattern of similarity between Egypt and Campania does seem to repeat itself. In this case Egypt, Delos, and Campania show further similarities, for instance in the popularity of Harpocrates. When looking at the different contexts in detail, more aspects of availability and choice become revealed. To start with Roman Egypt, although absolute numbers from contexts cannot be provided, the assemblages scholars have collected appear to be remarkably consistent. It is noteworthy that, when the general array of statues found in Egypt is compared to that which is found in Pompeii, the presence of deities in form and number indeed display similarities. Harpocrates and Isis are, as in Pompeii, the most abundantly present statuettes.429 For Egypt, although their provenance remains in many cases unclear, it is quite certain that these figurines were derived from domestic contexts, as many figurines were actually found inside private

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429 See also Frankfurter 2010, 551.
houses and other house sites have provided evidence of wall niches.\textsuperscript{430} These niches in the walls served as house shrines, a familiar phenomenon since Pharaonic times.\textsuperscript{431} The statuettes all consist of terracotta (bronze figurines are seldom found during these periods) and were produced in large quantities by hand or casting. They are much cruder than the statuettes found in Pompeii, which were mainly made of bronze. Interesting, in the case of Egypt, is that the existing types of terracottas demonstrate that the most popular figures of gods did not reproduce the official deities worshipped in temples. The child god Harpocrates, for example (the mostly represented type of statuary in Roman Egypt), counted only a small number of cult centres. The same counts for Bes, also strongly present among the household statuettes, but never honoured with a temple and exclusively venerated within private contexts.\textsuperscript{432} On the other hand, numerous major gods such as Re, Amon-Re, the many forms of Horus other than Harpocrates, Thoth, Muth, Khnum, Ptah, Nephtys, Seth, and Montu, although officially worshipped in Egypt, were rare in the Graeco-roman terracotta repertoire.\textsuperscript{433} Regarding the specific types and combinations present in the contexts of Egypt and Pompeii several noteworthy observations can be made. In addition to Isis-Fortuna, sporadic finds of statuettes link Isis to Io, Demeter, Hygia, Panthea or Koutrophe.\textsuperscript{434} Only one Isis-Tyche has been found in Egypt, whereas Isis-Fortuna (i.e., the Roman form of Isis-Tyche) is amongst the most popular deities to occur within household context of Herculaneum and Pompeii.\textsuperscript{435} If compared to Egypt, it agrees with the relatively large number of types as seen above, but entirely diverges in the types themselves. In Roman Egypt, we come across Isis-Thermouthis (the Greek assimilation of the Egyptian uraeus-goddess known as Renenoutet in the New Kingdom),\textsuperscript{436} Isis-

\textsuperscript{430} Frankfurter 1998, 134. Karanis has yielded many niches which could all be dated to the Roman period.
\textsuperscript{431} See Fjeldhagen 1995, 22; Frankfurter 1998.
\textsuperscript{432} See Fjeldhagen 1995, 22.
\textsuperscript{433} See Bailey 2008, 8.
\textsuperscript{434} As to Herculaneum the finds are proportionally comparable, Isis-Fortuna being the most abundantly attested type. see Tran tam Tinh 1971. The proportional numbers apply to types of Isis types as well as to the overall dissemination of Egyptian deities. Apart from Isis, statuettes of Harpocrates are the most numerous (sixteen).
\textsuperscript{435} See Giardina 2000, 225-7. Fjeldhagen lists the Egyptian find: Isis-Tyche-Fortuna (no. 41). She carries a cornucopia, the distinguishable attribute of respectively the Greek and Roman goddess of fortune: Tyche and Fortuna. Both Isis and Tyche Fortuna were goddesses of individual destiny, of agriculture and women, their fertility and offspring. On Delos no statues of Isis-Tyche are found. However, two dedications to Isis Tyche Protogeneia occur in Serapeion C, see Coarelli 1994, 126 (ID 2072-2073).
\textsuperscript{436} During the Graeco-Roman period, Isis-Thermouthis was an important agrarian goddess who watched over harvests and storage of grain.
Aphrodite, Isis-Nikè, and Isis in the form in which she is feeding Horus (Isis-Lactans), which are completely absent in Herculaneum and Pompeii. Moreover, considering the amount of appearances, although the numbers lie close together, Isis statuettes occur more often than Harpocrates in Herculaneum and Pompeii, whereas Harpocrates is the most frequently encountered household deity in Roman Egypt and on Delos, where Isis is seldom found. Deities in Egypt who play a role in household religion but are completely absent in Pompeii are for instance Beset (the female version of Bes) Hathor and Osiris. Remarkably, again in the case of Pompeii, the Egyptian deity Anubis occurs as a statuette, while he was not attested in Egypt. The variety in the appearance of Harpocrates is also larger in Egypt. Unlike Pompeii and Herculaneum, which only possess the standing/leaning version of the god, Harpocrates counts a large array of variations in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. He is portrayed seated, standing, enthroned, in a solar boat, with a goose, ram, cornucopia, lotus, in arms, a chariot, with an enlarged phallus, or on a horse. Furthermore, although a similar popularity to Isis and Harpocrates can be observed, the position of Bes in Pompeii and Herculaneum differs from Egypt and Delos. Bes is attested in Pompeii, however, in Egypt he clearly forms part of the mass-produced household deities, whereas in Pompeii Bes (and Ptah-Pataikos) are never encountered in cultic contexts and seem to consist of specially produced and ‘luxurious’ garden decorations. According to the collections the figurines of Bes found on Delos and in Roman Egypt consist of simple terracotta statues and are more comparable to each other than to those attested in Campania. Bes in Egypt occurs mainly in the guise of the so-called ‘armed Bes’, a figure common in Egypt. He is also known to dance, hold a tambourine, or appear together with Beset. A similarity shared between all three contexts is the relatively small number of Serapis figurines in popular religion, such as Pompeii. They too are seldom attested in Egypt and Delos.

A closer look at the types and fusions on Hellenistic Delos presents an interesting picture as it is an island that was culturally, politically, and religiously influenced by many cultures (such as Greece, Phoenicia, Syria,

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437 See Bailey 2008, 9-11. Especially the absence of Isis-Lactans, one of the most dominant types throughout the Graeco-Roman world, is striking. In Herculaneum, only one statue from a shop (5, insula Orientale II) has been noted, see Tran tam Tinh 1973, 73, no. A-25. In Italy, Isis-Thermouthis is seldom found. One such image has been found on a marble altar from a Hypogeum in Porto Torres, see Iside 1997, no. IV 194, 214.

438 Dunand 1990.
and Egypt), thereby creating a highly ‘syncretic’ religious community. Presumably, as a cultural hub and important trading centre, ethnic identities played a more prominent role on Delos than was the case in Pompeii. On the other hand, although Delos might present a more concentrated case when cultural interaction is concerned, the processes and mechanisms behind objects in motion and of the material and cultural consequences of increased connectivity can certainly also be witnessed in Pompeii.\(^{439}\) Egyptian figurines were well integrated into the domestic community of Delos. In addition to Bes, the Memphite dwarf god Ptah-Pataikos is also attested at Delos (3 fragments), however, in all the different catalogues Ptah-Pataikos never appears in a Roman Egyptian context. Isis next, mainly appears in the guise of a Ptolemaic queen. She is further sometimes connected to a statue classified as ‘Oriental Aphrodite’ (also ‘Naked Isis’ or ‘naked type’), a figure with ample examples in Egypt, but completely lacking in Pompeii.\(^{440}\) This naked female with a rigid, frontal pose seems to continue a Pharaonic tradition of fertility figurines revered by women who wished to have children. Now and again adorned with the symbols of Isis and Hathor, these figures can be linked to Isis. However whether it was really perceived as such by the inhabitants of Delos cannot be determined.

Anubis furthermore is, as in Roman Egypt, not encountered amongst household deity-statuettes on Delos. A preference for Harpocrates could be attested however, just as in Egypt. However, compared to Pompeii, although present in both contexts, they diverge strongly when regarding form and attributes. For instance, on Delos Harpocrates is often represented as a solar deity. This is never the case in Pompeii or Herculaneum.\(^{441}\)

The great variety witnessed between the presence and appearances of these deities for the contexts of Delos, Egypt and Campania show interesting processes regarding local decisions and integration patterns. Witnessing the

\(^{439}\) The spread of finds suggests a comparable use by all social groups: “The broad distribution of Egyptianising figurines all over Delos, as well as their typical associations with otherwise non-Egyptianising assemblages, suggest that these terracottas were not the exclusive preserve of some small expatriate group.” See Barret 2011, 346.

\(^{440}\) Does the fact that Isis was as yet not integrated as a household deity to do with the dissemination the Isis cult. This would imply that the Roman Egyptian case and Campania dealt with a similar conception of a ‘Romanised’ Isis which did not yet exist in the time that the Egyptian cults were introduced on Delos.

\(^{441}\) See Barret 2011, 261. After an ancient Egyptian tradition, Harpocrates is related to the sun and is sometimes portrayed seated in a flower, an allusion associated with the sun god’s emergence from a lotus.
changes in use between the different sites, Pompeii creates the suggestion that the statuettes were incorporated in Pompeii within a tradition that already existed before Isis was worshipped on a large scale, resulting in an amalgamation of innovative Mediterranean-wide trends and local preferences. It seems apparent from the occurrence of types and ranges of deities that Pompeii had much in common with Egypt, but also with Delos, as both display a comparable presence and absence (relatively) of certain deities. As to Delos, the assemblage in style, material, and attributes seems to stand much closer to the Egyptian tradition than to the Italic. Whereas Delos was closer connected to the Egyptian and Ptolemaic tradition these resemblances in the collection cannot really be considered surprising.\textsuperscript{442} However, this implies that while the object might have travelled, it was subsequently shaped according to local preferences and within the incorporation of Isis on the Italian peninsula. Isis and all other Egyptian and non-Egyptian deities were conceived and integrated in existing material and conceptual networks already present in the socio-cultural environment. The concept changed, which subsequently shaped the object again. As a further consequence not every concept was transferable, as could for instance be seen with the Oriental Aphrodite type which was completely absent in Italy.\textsuperscript{443} This is probably also the case for Isis-(and Serapis)-Thermouthis, a form of Isis in which she is half human, half snake. Although serpents were also considered sacred animals within a Roman perspective, and well suitable for protecting domestic shrines (as illustrated by means of the many shrines in Pompeian domestic contexts), providing a deity with zoomorphic characteristics was less conceivable for Pompeians, at least to worship. This might also count for Anubis and Apis.

Why did Ptah-Pataikos end up in Pompeii while he was not a common deity the terracotta domestic figurines in Roman Egypt? The non-cultic adoption of Ptah-Pataikos may explain this (to be elaborated in 4.4). Although Egypt does not provide many clues concerning the archaeological context of Bes, on Delos two figurines were found in a private house (in the so-called theatre quarter). Of these eighty-two Egyptianising figurines, two terracottas

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{442} It is noted that statuettes did not travel only via Ptolemaic Egypt but also via Hellenistic Delos.
\textsuperscript{443} An presumption could be made that the iconic perception of Isis (as discussed in 3.2.1) and the local focus on purity which prevailed over fertility prevented the conceptual syncretisation of Isis with Aphrodite in this specific form. Therefore the ‘Oriental Isis’ together with ‘Isis-Aphrodite’, both often nude or semi-nude female figures with features of Isis could not be mentally integrated into the Roman world.
depicted Bes, and three represented Ptah-Pataikos. The increased presence and distribution of forms and subjects may thus be part of a similar impetus, of a larger trade network which became intensified during the Roman Empire. However, the use and conception of deities such as Bes were different in a site like Pompeii than in Egypt and on Delos.

As in Egypt and Pompeii, a similar absence of Serapis within domestic contexts on Delos despite his important role in public religion (temples) has been mentioned. This makes the absence of Serapis in statuette form apparent at all four sites and thus sheds an interesting light on the presumption of the absence of Serapis as noted in 4.2. In all probability, this absence is explained by means of the limited value Serapis had for household religion. Not all deities were suitable to function within domestic religion. Their characteristics typically had something to do with the house or with family and family virtues. Isis and Harpocrates possessed appropriate qualities and could therefore well be integrated in the households of different cultural contexts whereas Serapis was not suited for this purpose.

When Isis in Pompeii is observed in more detail it can also be noted that some of her ‘inherent’ qualities and characteristics remained the same (also for Egypt) – these were the characteristics that made both Isis and Harpocrates attractive to use in the context of the household. However, integrating the deities in a Roman Italian context they did become associated with different concepts than in Delos and in Egypt. This made the appearance of Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis and Serapis in Pompeii different, which again catered for a change in the character of the deities, as can be seen clearly in the identifications of the deity. Isis becomes mainly associated with Fortuna in Campania. In Egypt and on Delos she is merged with quite another range of deities. Noteworthy is that a domestic religion has its own unique dynamics, parallel to those of the public and official cults. This seems to be the case for all the analysed contexts. Moreover one could argue that, in addition to different networks and dynamics, the subtleties of domestic religion might be more subjective to an augmented cultural

444 See Barret 2011.

445 See Barret 2011, 415 where this is explained as a preference of Isis because of her authenticity. She was a millennia old goddess, while Serapis was regarded as new and an artificial creation of the Ptolemaic court. (416). However, this does not completely explain the divergence between his absence in private worship and popularity in the public sphere.

446 It thus seems that, from this specific example, in certain instances concepts and characteristics seem to have been differently experienced in different cultural contexts.
connectivity than that it would be for public cults, while domestic religion did not thrive on official rules or authorised structures but worked in a more bottom-up, intuitive, and flexible fashion.

Within the increased connectivity during this period in history, Hellenistic Delos can be considered an important nodal point, in which local traditions became meshed with innovative global (Mediterranean-wide) understandings of practices and ideas. Whereas Hellenism as a process initiated a shift in the spatial-temporal constitution of human societies, the consequence for religion was profound in its changes with regard of venerated deities, use, and perception.\footnote{Potter 2003, 407-30.} Within this process domestic religion in Italy was also affected, incorporating new deities and innovations within existing structures. This is the reason why combinations start to appear in which Isis is linked to Fortuna on the Italian peninsula, while she appears as Isis-Thermouthis in Egypt. Isis represents the global element in this process, possibly because of her transferability, being possessed with certain characteristics which could be shared on a global scale as social universals suiting a household deity (such as birth, family, and matriarchy). As to the context of domestic religion, there were more important qualities to pharaohs than her power. This perception made her appealing to domestic spheres. As can be observed, this latter notion of the rise of Isis within domestic contexts is a perfect example of the way in which the process of object and concept distribution works. It may even be the reason why Isis in particular was vulnerable to global fluxes, but it does not fully explain the cause of the local preference of Isis-Fortuna and its integration in Pompeii and Herculaneum. As this broader comparison with Delos and Egypt dealt with Isis as global phenomenon, the next comparison tries to bring a better understanding of the workings of Isis on a local level.

\textbf{4.3.5 Comparison II: Isis and Isis-Fortuna: Isis from a local viewpoint}

Three questions are central for the next comparison: first, why is Isis-Fortuna so popular in Pompeii and Herculaneum? Secondly, is there a conceptual difference between the two goddesses and is the ‘pure’ Isis in this respect differently perceived (i.e., as more Egyptian) than Isis-Fortuna by the inhabitants of Pompeii? Thirdly, can the contexts in which they were found shed any light on these issues? A graffito on the temple of Isis provides a first start in an inquiry into the perception of Isis in Pompeii. The graffito
reads: Εἰσιτύχη σώζοσα; which considering the location, links Isis to Fortuna (Tyche) in Pompeii.\(^{448}\) Although the graffito dates from after its reconstruction in 62, the connection between Tyche and Isis is probably of an earlier date.\(^{449}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Location code</th>
<th>house name</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isis bust</td>
<td>Terracotta</td>
<td>I 2, 17</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis bust</td>
<td>Terracotta</td>
<td>I 2, 20/</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis statue</td>
<td>Marble</td>
<td>VI 9, 6/7</td>
<td>Casa dei Dioscuri</td>
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<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis statue</td>
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<td>I 7, 11</td>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo/di P. Cornelius</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis statuette</td>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>I 7, 11</td>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo</td>
<td></td>
<td>142</td>
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<td>Isis statuette</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>I 7, 7</td>
<td>Casa di Sacerdos</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>Isis statuette</td>
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<td>VI 3, 7</td>
<td>Casa di Memmius Auctus</td>
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<td>Isis-Fortuna statuette</td>
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<td>Villa rustica</td>
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<td>___</td>
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<td>IX 3, 2</td>
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<td>Isis-Fortuna statuette</td>
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<td>V 3, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna Statuette</td>
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<td>V 6</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Isis-Fortuna statuette</td>
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<td>Casa degli Amorini dorati</td>
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<td>Peristylium</td>
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<td>Shop</td>
<td></td>
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<td>VI 16, 7</td>
<td>Casa degli Amorini Dorati</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>VII 9, 1</td>
<td>Casa di Duca d’Aumale</td>
<td>Triclinium</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>II 4, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Praedia di Giulia Felice</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>174</td>
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<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
<td>IX 3, 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pistrinum</td>
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<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>IX 3, 15</td>
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<td>Cubiculum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Casa degli Amorini Dorati</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>VI 2, 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Casa delle Amazzoni</td>
<td>Vindarium</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>VI 9, 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Casa di Duca d’Aumale</td>
<td>Triclinium</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
<td>VIII 2, 39</td>
<td></td>
<td>Casa di Giuseppe II</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
<td>IV 4, 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
<td>IX 7, 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Corridor leading to latrine</td>
<td></td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
<td>V 4, 3/5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td></td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Hygiēia wall painting</td>
<td>VII 9, 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Edificio d’Eumachia</td>
<td></td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9) The materialisations of Isis and Isis-Fortuna in Pompeii and their contexts.

\(^{448}\) See Tran tam Tinh 1964, 78-81.

\(^{449}\) The cult is dated to Republican period as the Fortuna cult has been attested in Rome, Praeneste, and perhaps also at Puteoli, see Coarelli 1994, 120.
Fortuna is originally an Archaic Latin deity who became identified with Tyche in the wider Mediterranean. Mediterranean-wide she is however shaped differently according to local preferences and artistic traditions.\(^{450}\) In Italy, important cult centres dedicated to Fortuna were attested at Praeneste, Antium and Rome.\(^{451}\) Especially in the Republican era she was a popular deity, however, with the passing of the Republican period in that of the imperial system, Fortuna soon became less customary in favour of Venus.

Why did Fortuna/Tyche become linked to Isis? This may go back to Ptolemaic Egypt. The Ptolemies promoted the idea that the Ptolemaic queens Arsinoe Philadelphos, Berenice, and Arsinoe II were associated with Agathe Tyche (the goddess who ensured the rule of the Ptolemies) and with Isis. These Greek models were followed in Rome because of the late Republican need to promote the idea of Fortuna as guarantor of dynastic succession.\(^{452}\) It might therefore have been the concept of successive power that linked Fortuna to Isis in Italy.\(^{453}\) Another connection is made by Coarelli, who specifically links Isis to Fortuna Primigenia, as they are both nurturers- Isis with Horus and Fortuna Primigenia with Jupiter Puer-, and as the Egyptianising finds in Praeneste— the Nile mosaic and the obelisk— would testify. A further theory specifically linked to the Pompeian conception of Isis-Fortuna which connects Fortuna directly to Venus and then to Isis is constituted by means of the association of Venus Pompeiana, (see 4.2) with Fortuna.\(^{454}\) Venus Pompeiana shared characteristics with both deities and through her, Fortuna and Isis could also be associated with Venus. This does however not explain the equally abundant presence of Isis-Fortuna in Herculaneum, a town not linked to Venus in the same way as Pompeii was. Further, although Isis is indeed connected to Fortuna, and Fortuna has a connection with Venus, this latter link is specifically restricted to Venus Pompeiana who seems to be in fact conceptually different from the other.

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\(^{450}\) See Barret 2011, 235 note 857. On Fortuna-Tyche, see Champeaux 1987, 132-69.

\(^{451}\) The cult of Fortuna Primigenia spreads throughout the Hellenistic world, including Delos, see Champeaux 1982, 119-23.

\(^{452}\) Arya 2002. See also Pollini 2003, 875-82.

\(^{453}\) Isis-Tyche might have played a role in the Fortuna cult, dating her syncretic form to Republican times. However, this is debatable and it seems to be more likely that Isis as Isis-Fortuna appears no earlier than Imperial times, see Arya 2002, 243-4.

\(^{454}\) Venus Pompeiana was the tutelary deity of Roman Pompeii. She was worshipped in the temple of Venus, the tufa-built principal sanctuary of the city built in c.50 BC, see Arya 2002, 91; Meyboom 1995, 89-90. The Venus of Pompeii had two features of Tyche, namely a rudder and a mural crown.
types of Venus, whereas Isis equally differs from Venus (see 4.2.2).\textsuperscript{455} Perhaps a more reasonable explanation for the presence of Fortuna in Pompeii than her link to the Venus temple is the general popularity of Fortuna in harbour towns. This also strengthens the connection between Fortuna and Tyche, because both were associated with seafaring and a common presence in the form of sanctuaries in harbour towns (e.g., Alexandria, Syracuse, Antioch, Delos, Praeneste and its port Antium, Ostia, Puteoli, Pompeii).\textsuperscript{456} Although this does not clarify her presence within domestic contexts, it may explain the availability of the concept of Fortuna.\textsuperscript{457} Ultimately it seems that Fortuna’s presence in the Roman world is principally characterised by means of a highly eclectic interpretation, she appears in many forms, different towns, and is used in very different social strata. Fortuna in the Roman world can for these reasons be considered to embody a broad concept of ‘fortune’ of which her ultimate identity, associations, and materialisations are highly subjective to the environment in which she was worshipped.

Because the Egyptian Isis possessed magical powers was able to see the future, and influence birth and death, this Isis type might have been considered to be somewhat impersonal, detached goddess.\textsuperscript{458} For this reason it can be argued that the Roman Isis-Fortuna was more suitable to play a role within household contexts, as she embodied a more personalised and familiar goddess. Fortuna with her power over individual luck, love, and good fortune, added qualities to Isis which did indeed make her attractive for household practices.\textsuperscript{459} But in which way does the materialised version of Isis-Fortuna appear in comparison to the ‘pure’ Isis? Fig. 4.13 depicts the two deities in the form of statuettes. Isis-Fortuna can be recognised by the fact she holds a helm (a feature derived from Tyche) in her right hand and a cornucopia in her left arm, with fruits hanging out. The Roman Isis loses her

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\textsuperscript{455} The connection with Fortuna might even be stronger at the temple of Fortuna Augusta (VII 4,1) - by means of the dynastic powers of Fortuna linked to the deified emperor - than the Venus temple. See also Kleibl 2009, 111-25.

\textsuperscript{456} See Arya 2002, 179.

\textsuperscript{457} A second reason why we still lack a proper explanation of the presence of Isis-Fortuna besides availability is: although Alexandria is a harbour town, Isis-Fortuna never seemed to have been very popular in Alexandria, nor Egypt. Albeit that appearances of Isis-Fortuna in Pompeii in Herculaneum are significant, Isis-Fortuna seems to have been prevalent mainly on the Italian peninsula. There is one statue from the Cairo Museum in terracotta, see Dunand 1979 189-1, no. 48.; See \textit{LIMC} Tran tam Tinh, \textit{LIMC}, V, 1990, s.v. for isis and Isis-Fortuna.

\textsuperscript{458} See Alvar 2008, 118 note 286. In Egypt Isis was closely connected with magical practice and could foresee and control the future. Apparently the magical healing powers ascribed to Isis, were hardly recognised outside Egypt, see Alvar 2008, 332-3.

\textsuperscript{459} See Tran tam Tinh 1972, 13.
crown, throne and the Hathor emblem consisting of a large solar disk with two cow horns. The Isiac emblem of the statues in Pompeii and Herculaneum is normally composed of a small solar disk topped by two large feathers carried by two small horns and ears of wheat. The character in this way forms a mix of symbols: the feathers stand for justice and truth, the disk represents the house of the sun and the ears are an agrarian symbol.

![Fig. 4.13] Bronze statuettes of Isis-Fortuna and Isis. To the left: Isis-Fortuna (from a Villa rustica near Pompeii, see Tran tam Tinh 1964 no. 92, 159 and Isis (right) from the Casa di Memmius Auctus (VII 4, 27). Pictures taken by the author.

This latter symbol is new to Isis. The ‘proper’ Hellenistic Isis without any features of Fortuna is portrayed in fig. 4.13 (right). She wears a Hellenistic dress, as Isis knot, has a stiff ‘hieratic’ posture with one foot before the other, wears a crown, and has corkscrew curls. In her hands she holds a situla and sistrum. Whereas the first question asked why Isis-Fortuna was especially popular in Pompeii, the second question was whether these two deities were conceptually interchangeable. Apart from the graffito in the Isis temple there is apparently little connection between Isis and Isis-Fortuna and the presumption could be made that they were experienced as

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460 Tran tam Tinh 1972, 14.
461 Tran tam Tinh 1964, no. 75, 155.
different deities. Comparing the two alleged types several notable dissimilarities can be observed. The first thing to be discerned is that statuettes representing (pure) Isis compared to those of Isis-Fortuna are rare. Of the three instances where Isis is portrayed without Fortuna's attributes, two are not sure to represent Isis, to wit in the case of the Casa dell'Efebo (I 7, 11) which is a marble statue, and the Casa di Sacerdos (I 7, 7). The third instance concerns the bronze statue from the Casa di Memmius Auctus (see fig. 4.13) depicting the Archaic image of Isis, comparable to the statue in the Isis temple. It is evident that in the case of domestic worship and statuettes, Isis-Fortuna was predominantly employed in Pompeii, and that the Hellenistic Isis was an exception. Such a presumption subsequently indicates that the conceptual link with Egypt or even with Isis might be questioned in the case of Isis-Fortuna. This idea concurs with the fact that the Romans never applied the term Isis-Fortuna. Not a single notion has ever been made to Isis-Fortuna in either text or epigraphy. The name Isis-Fortuna is a modern invention. It is therefore not known whether Pompeians consciously identified her with the Egyptian Isis. Notwithstanding the mentioning of Tyche on the Isis sanctuary, it could well be that from a Roman viewpoint, Isis-Fortuna might not have been classified as a type of Isis, but rather as a type of Fortuna with certain additional traits of Isis. What would happen if Isis-Fortuna is regarded within the context of 'proper' Fortuna representations (i.e., paintings, statues)? Looking at the materialisations and contexts in which Fortuna and Isis-Fortuna appear, these do also not seem to carry overlapping features to an extent that one would presume they were experienced as similar concepts. Comparing Fortuna to Isis-Fortuna, sixteen paintings of Fortuna (against four of Isis-Fortuna) can be found, whereas we encounter only five statuettes of Fortuna against thirteen of Isis-Fortuna. It seemed to be more common to portray Isis-Fortuna in statuettes when compared with Fortuna, whereas Fortuna was portrayed more frequently in wall paintings. Moreover, the material applied for statuettes of Isis-Fortuna diverges from those of the 'pure' Fortuna. Isis-Fortuna is either made of bronze or terracotta (one instance even in blue-glaze) whereas Fortuna mainly consists of marble (as with Venus, see 4.2). Statuettes of Fortuna may have benefited

462 However, the marble statue from the Casa dell'Efebo may represent a priest of Isis instead of Isis herself.
463 On archaic images encountered in Roman statuary, see Fullerton 1990.
465 For more on these numbers, see Fröhlich 1991; Boyce 1937.
by adding qualities of Isis, but Isis-Fortuna was another deity. Was Isis-Fortuna unconnected to the concept of Fortuna and that of Isis? \[466\] Notwithstanding the possibly small connection there may be between Isis and Isis-Fortuna, they are not absent. In the Casa degli Amorini Dorati a shrine was located in the peristyle, of which the back walls are decorated with paintings of Anubis, Serapis, Harpocrates, and Isis in a Hellenistic rendering (without features of Fortuna). An alabaster statuette of Horus was placed in the shrine together with a marble seated statuette of Fortuna (without any characteristics of Isis). This means that even if Isis was presented in her Hellenistic form, she could be linked to Fortuna. In this case the deities were separated for aesthetic decorative reasons (i.e., in order to portray the Hellenistic Isis on the wall painting) rather than that a conceptual difference between Isis and Isis-Fortuna existed. However, in addition to this connection the evidence for a conceptual overlap is lacking. This leads us to the third issue of this part on the contextual analysis of the statuettes, because an even more striking observation was made by means of a contextualisation of the iconography of wall paintings depicting Isis and Isis-Fortuna (table 4.9).\[467\] In addition to the contexts in which Isis and Isis-Fortuna appeared, the accompanying deities on the paintings next to Isis and Isis-Fortuna were studied. From this comparison a quite remarkable divergence between the two goddesses became apparent. It seemed that all the wall paintings depicting Isis without Fortuna’s features also contained other deities with an Egyptian origin, such as Anubis, Serapis, and Harpocrates. On the other hand when shrine paintings of Isis-Fortuna were considered, they were either displayed alone, or together with other non-Egyptian deities (see table 4.10). Whether this is the same for statuettes is difficult to say, their exact find context can hardly be ascertained in Pompeii. Furthermore, the number of Isis statuettes is low. Notwithstanding the archaeological difficulties however, the theory does become endorsed by the

\[466\] Is this an exclusive interpretation? If it is the case in Pompeii and even in Herculaneum it does not seem to hold ground in other contexts. In Rome region V, close to S. Martino ai Monti, a large private aedicula was found. It housed a statue of Isis-Fortuna in addition to smaller statues and busts of Serapis and a Ptolemaic Egyptian import of a stela depicting Horus standing on crocodiles, see Vittozzi 1993, 221-43; Marroni 2010, 100-5. Looking at assemblages such as the Casa dell’Elebo (see also 4.2.1) which combines a statue of Isis, Nilotic scenes, and a statue of Isis-Fortuna this may not even be an exclusive feature in Pompeii. We must exclude here those who adhere to Isis or those who value Isis-Fortuna for Fortuna. The household practices are much more diverse than previously thought.

\[467\] All paintings from the database can be linked to a lararium context except (a) no. 189, the copy of the Isis and Io painting from the Isis temple and (b) no. 200, a painting on a frieze from the Casa delle Nozze d’Ercole, depicting a festival procession. Although both can be regarded in a religious context they are omitted from the lararia paintings.

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mixed domestic shrine context containing Isis-Fortuna and other non-Egyptian deities at the shrine in Fondo d’Acunzo, Boscoreale from fig. 4.11 and by the figurines in the Casa di Memmius Auctus (VI 14,27) that next to the archaising statuette of Isis also contained statuettes of and Anubis and of Harpocrates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISIS AND ISIS FORTUNA AND OTHER DEITIES IN WALL PAINTINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isis wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna wall painting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Hygidea wall painting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10) Wall paintings depicting Isis and Isis-Fortuna, and their location.

This comparison provides a valuable insight on the perception and the use of Isis in Pompeii. While Isis-Fortuna reflects the integrated Roman goddess, Isis without Fortuna’s traits seemed to have been applied as something Egyptian, as she was consciously linked to deities who also originated in Egypt. Could Isis really have been perceived as Egyptian or ‘more’ Egyptian? In order to clarify this further, the final part of this section will contextually analyse the deities and subsequent materialisations.

4.3.6 Comparison III: contextual analysis of the diversity of domestic religious practices and preferences

Not only did cult practices between communities differ, domestic religious behaviour had wide-ranging engagements within communities too. In order to get a better grip on the diversity and flexibility in the use of Egyptian domestic deities within domestic contexts, and to add an argument to the discussion on social differentiation within the use of paintings or statuettes mentioned in the introduction, the final part will contextually compare the use of deities within different forms of material culture. As a case study the two most frequently occurring Egyptian deities in Pompeii are chosen:
Harpocrates and Isis. In order to better understand the social applications and conceptions of the statuettes, it is considered helpful to look especially into the contexts of the paintings, while their provenances are much clearer than those of the statuettes. How did the house owner enact his household cults? The way in which shrines are distributed throughout the house varied as also indicated in part 4.3.2. The questions now rise: did the location in the house in any way prescribe the way in which these shrines were used. Did the deities and their positions of the deities alternate? Can we observe a social difference between the application of Harpocrates and Isis inside the opulent opposed to the more modest houses? Table 4.11 indicates in which contexts Harpocrates is attested. As to the results there seems to be no clear correlation with house size and wealth compared to the use of statues or paintings. For example, two of the most precious bronze statuettes within the database, representing the Archaic Isis and Anubis, were found inside the modest house of Memmius Auctus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>House name</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Size 468</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>IX 5,3</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>V 3,11/</td>
<td>Casa di Memmius Auctus</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>V 3,11/</td>
<td>Casa di Memmius Auctus</td>
<td>Lararium</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>VI 14,27</td>
<td>Casa di Memmius Auctus</td>
<td></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>VII 3,11</td>
<td>Casa del Doppio Larario</td>
<td></td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>Villa rustica</td>
<td></td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>VIII 2,39</td>
<td>Casa di Giuseppe II</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Extra large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates statuette</td>
<td>I 10,4</td>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>IX 3,15</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>195</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>VI 16,7</td>
<td>Casa degli Amorini</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>VI 2,14</td>
<td>Casa delle Amazzoni</td>
<td>Vridarium</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>VIII 2,39</td>
<td>Casa di Giuseppe II</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>Extra large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>VIII 4,12</td>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11) Different materialisations of Harpocrates in Pompeii.

In contrast, the small bronze statuette of Harpocrates which is attested in the Casa del Menandro is argued to be from a chest which fell from an upper floor from a room which could be designated as either a store room or a slave

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468 The houses are classified as follows: Small (51-150 m²), Medium, (151-450 m²), Large (451-850 m²), Very large (850-1800 m²), and Extra large (1801-6000 m²), see Brandt 2010, 96.
quarter. Moreover, statuettes are not only encountered in private contexts but also in shops. This means that there does not seem to be any correlation between the use of statuettes and paintings and the wealth of the owners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deities</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>House name</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Wall</th>
<th>H. Size</th>
<th>Pub/priv</th>
<th>Vis*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isis, Anubis</td>
<td>II 4,3</td>
<td>Praedia di Giulia Felice</td>
<td>Peristylem</td>
<td>Sacrarium</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Extra large</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis</td>
<td>IX 3,10</td>
<td>Pistrinum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna, Harpocrates</td>
<td>IX 3,15</td>
<td>House of Philocalus</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis, Serapis, Anubis, Harpocrates</td>
<td>VI 16,7</td>
<td>Casa degli Amorini Dorati</td>
<td>Peristylem</td>
<td>Aedicula</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis, Serapis, Harpocrates</td>
<td>VI 2,14</td>
<td>Casa delle Amazoni</td>
<td>Viridarium</td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis, Serapis, Anubis, Harpocrates</td>
<td>VIII 2,39</td>
<td>Casa di Giuseppe II</td>
<td>Atrium cubiculum</td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>Extra large</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>V 4,9</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>IX 7,22</td>
<td>Caupona</td>
<td>Latrine</td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Fortuna</td>
<td>V 4,3/5</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>Lararium niche</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis-Hygia</td>
<td>VII 9,1</td>
<td>Edifice d’Eumachia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lararium niche</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harpocrates</td>
<td>VIII 4,12</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lararium painting</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian attributes</td>
<td>I 13,12</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>Lararium niche</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12) Shrines found in Pompeii housing one or more Isiac deities. *The final column (vis. – visibility), indicates whether the shrine was visible from the street and entrance level.

469 See Allison 2006, 119. For a discussion on Room 35, see Allison’s ‘Pompeian Households: An On-line Companion’. The casket fittings of the chest suggested it was not of very high quality. Its contents, however, were all bronze and silver objects.
470 Two statuettes of Isis are found within a shop context but are quite different to the other statuettes, which consist of terracotta busts. I 2, 17 and I 2, 20 nos. 85 and 86 of the database.
471 One painting includes an image of Anubis Casa di M.A. Castricus (VII 16,19) was omitted from the table because it is not a religious painting, but part of a Nilotic scene.
472 The painting comes from shop IX 3,7, see Fröhlich 1991, 294, L101.
473 The Latrine painting portrays Isis-Fortuna next to a man who is seated between two snakes. She is giving advice to the person entering the toilet to beware of the danger of the pollution of defecation (the reason for this is an inscription found on the painting stating: Cacator cave malu(m). [CIL IV 3832]). It may, however, also concern a general warding off the evil eye while involved in a potentially dangerous act or as protector of cleanliness, see Hobson 2009, 111; Jansen, Koloski-Ostrow, and Moorman 2011, 167–70
474 The lararium is decorated with a floral motif in red in which isiac attributes are included (situila, sistrum). The mosaic timpanon also features a sistrum, cista, and situla. This is the only lararium displaying things in such a manner, see Fröhlich 1991, 262, L32.
Nonetheless, a correlation can be observed between the sizes of the house, the type of shrine, and the deities. The previous section indicated a difference between the employment of Isis-Fortuna and Isis concerning the presence of other deities (here Isis-Fortuna appears alone or with many other deities whereas the ‘pure’ Isis only seen with other Egyptian deities). Comparing these two categories contextually (i.e., Isis-Fortuna and Isis with other Egyptian deities) there seems to be another difference as well. As table 4.12 illustrates, although wall paintings and statuettes can be encountered invariably in houses, it could be noted that it were the richer estates in Pompeii which housed Isis in her Hellenistic guise accompanied by other Egyptian divinities, whereas the middle-class and smaller houses contained Isis-Fortuna types. Furthermore, the Hellenistic Isis category occurs in more elaborate domestic shrine settings, such as aediculae (the Casa degli Amorini Dorati) and larger shrines (Praedia di Giulia Felice), while Isis-Fortuna only appears on simple frescoes. Lastly, compared to the other shrines inside houses, in case there are more than one, the domestic shrines including Egyptian gods seem to occupy a less visible and therefore a more private space, either because they are located in a more private location (in the case of the Casa di Giuseppe II, Philocalus, and Amazzoni) or because they were moved away from direct sight lines. Even when two shrines are encountered in the same room, such as in the case with the Casa degli Amorini Dorati and the Praedia di Giulia Felice, the Egyptian altars were placed further away from the major visual axis of the house and from the main interaction areas than other altars, as is the case in the Praedia di Giulia Felice and the Casa degli Amorini Dorati. The ‘Egyptian’ shrines are more elaborate, and at the same time seem to be less publically visible.

These contextual notions of the use of Egyptian deities form an important addition to the above interpretations on the presumed dissimilarities between Isis and Isis-Fortuna. A dichotomy can indeed be witnessed between them, but they must be viewed in the social domain rather than that they represent cultural or religious differences. Isis without the physical characteristics of Fortuna seems to be a statement with respect to social distinction, status display, aesthetic appreciation, and self-representation for
a distinctive audience, and did not denote a strict conceptual difference.\footnote{This thought can be reinforced by means of the addition of a statuette of Fortuna in the shrine dedicated to the Egyptian gods in the afore-mentioned Casa degli Amorini Dorati indicating that Fortuna could indeed also be linked to Isis.} This observation first of all indicates a warning to be careful when labelling Isis and Isis-Fortuna as \textit{either} Roman or Egyptian. In whatever way they were represented, the dynamics of their employments is much more complex and should be studied from a social context and bottom-up perspective. In this respect it must also be noted that Isis or Isis-Fortuna should not be regarded as rigidly socially divided choices in the sense that the lower social strata venerated Isis-Fortuna whereas the Hellenistic Isis was associated with the elite. This seems to be purely a matter of representation. Though Isis was always considered to be a cult for the lower classes, recent research has proven that all layers of the Roman social strata included followers of the Isis cults.\footnote{Other material categories associated with religious preference, such as jewellery, are not encountered in very small houses, and once in a very large house (Casa dei Vetti VI 15,1) was a ring found depicting Isis. However, only little can be said about loose finds in Pompeii and jewellery. If preserved it is usually of such a high quality we may consider it a valuable object. In Pompeii jewellery related to Isis-Fortuna is found as well.} In spite of a supposed preference for Isis-Fortuna in the more modest houses, this only counts for paintings as Isis-Fortuna statuary is found in larger houses as well.\footnote{The Casa degli Amorini Dorati housed an alabaster statue of Horus and the Casa di Giuseppe II three silver plaques depicting Isis. The Praedia di Giulia Felice possessed a silver amulet of Harpocrates.} This could also point to a difference in utilisation of statuettes of Isis-Fortuna and paintings, and it adds to the argument that similar looking gods might be perceived and applied differently within domestic religious practices. A painting of Isis-Fortuna on a wall painting in a kitchen does not function in the same ways as a statuette of Isis-Fortuna in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati. However, it does mean that displaying Egyptian deities in the fashion of the Casa degli Amorini Dorati or the Praedia di Giulia Felice (in a particular style, elaborate shrine, and with other Egyptian deities) was a statement of the elite. It can be noted, in addition, that the three largest houses in this category also had supplementary objects in their shrines such as imported or expensive and precious artefacts, expressing both prosperity as well as a personal preference for Isis.\footnote{Petersen 2006; Gasparini (forthcoming 2015).} Isis in the Hellenistic fashion emitted a strong social message: a household’s wealth (it could dedicate an entire shrine to a typical form of a deity), but also maybe a sign of intellectual stature (knowledge of Isis and her Egyptian origin). However, what remains unsolved is the issue concerning the audience such messages were communicated to, and why the
shrines dedicated to the Egyptian divinities were seemingly located in more private areas of the house. In order to contextualise and unravel these last issues the Casa degli Amorini and its shrine was chosen as a separate case study in part 5.2.

4.3.7 Conclusion
First of all, it can be concluded that it has proven helpful to analyse the Egyptian deities in wider material, social, and conceptual networks instead of only observing them from the rather restraining ethnic category ‘Egyptian’ or from the category of ‘Aegyptiaca’. From the survey of statuettes and domestic shrine paintings it has become evident that Egyptian gods were used in diverse ways. On a general level this points to a view which argues for more dynamism in private religion than is yet accredited for Pompeii. Furthermore, an important observation made was that there were clearly rules apparent regarding what was appropriate to display in domestic shrines. Whereas Bes was never displayed in cultic contexts, Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis and even Anubis could be found. Isis and Harpocrates form the bulk of the Egyptian deities used in domestic religious practices, which concurs with other sites in both Roman Egypt as in Hellenistic Delos. Isis had global potential within domestic religion, and local preferences shaped her form, identity, and function between different sites.

In Pompeii and Herculaneum an inclination towards Isis-Fortuna can be witnessed, which she may have lost her Egyptian connotations and become more associated with her powers and the specific uses within a household context than with her cultural identity. Lastly, an important finding was made regarding the aesthetic appreciation and social use of Isis and the Isiac gods. The Pompeian elite could very well employ the Hellenistic Isis as a means of self-representation. They gave voice to Isis with her original Egyptian/Hellenistic context, either because they had the room to make this (aesthetical) decision or wished to flaunt knowledge and wealth.
4.4 Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in networks of being and becoming

Fig. 4.14) Statuettes of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos. To the left: a 33, 8 cm. high portrait of Bes from Pompeii (MNN Inv. no. 22583). Its exact find location is unknown. To the right: Ptah-Pataikos (MNN Inv. no. 22607) from a Caupona (VI I, 2) It is 48 cm. high. Illustrations from Di Gioia 2006.

4.4.1. Introduction

Table 4.13 includes the objects found in Pompeii connected to Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, examples of the figurines of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos can be seen in figure 4.14. They consist of three sistra displaying Bes on the handle, two necklaces with one of the deities as a pendant and several c.50 cm. high statuettes executed in a blue-green glaze (as fig. 4.14 shows). The meaning of Bes in the Roman world was summarised as follows by Tran tam Tinh: “En dehors de l’Egypt, à l’époque romaine, on rencontrait ses [Bes] images surtout dans les villes où florissait le culte d’Isis, ce qui permet de croire qu’il fut vénéré comme un ‘sunnaos theos’ aux côtés de la famille Isiaque.”479 Bes unquestionably belonged to the Isis cult according to Tran tam Tinh – because Bes originated from Egypt although it was admitted that the deity could not have been a fully accepted member of the Isiac family, but only a secondary god of sorts.480 Nonetheless the two concepts were confidently

479 See Tran tam Tinh 1986, 108.
480 Malaise 2004, 266-92; 2005; 2007. This was similarly noted for Ptah, Ammon, Thoth and Sobek. A problem with the function of this deity was noted: “S’il est clair que Bès a été associé à la gens isiaque, il est plus difficile de savoir s’il mérite vraiment le titre de sunnaos theos, objet d’un culte. Le silence des sources épigraphiques n’est guère favorable à cette hypothèse. Bès fut plutôt un compagnon de la souche isiaque. Il reste que sa présence sur un site n’est pas négligeable pour les isiacologues dans la mesure où elle peut être l’indice de
connected. Hence, following from this theory, each material attestation of Bes in Pompeii was linked to the Isis cult. In fact, reviewing the material evidence for the Italian peninsula, only one object in featuring Bes seems to confirm this idea: a relief on a vase depicting Bes on one side and Isis, Harpocrates, and Serapis on the other.\textsuperscript{481} The lack of material evidence for the connection between Bes and Isis calls for reconsidering their conceptual relation. What will be the goal of this part therefore, is to break down the \textit{a priori} connection between different categories of material culture and cultic behaviour. Even when Bes is related to Isis as a god, which in some instances is the case as Tran tam Tinh’s vase relief proves; does this imply that the green-glazed figurines in Pompeian gardens can automatically be conceptually connected to Isis as well? The reason for this hesitation is based on the contexts in which statuettes of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are attested and their material appearance. Section 4.2.2 has observed that Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are never encountered together with the other Isiac deities within the same context. When a secure find spot could be deduced, they were found in garden settings or in \textit{tabernae}, whereas Isis, Harpocrates, Serapis and Anubis characteristically occur within domestic shrine contexts. Moreover, there is not a single house in Pompeii with figures of all the Egyptian deities; they either include Isis and Isiac imagery or Bes and Ptah-Pataikos.\textsuperscript{482} Looking at the style, material, and execution of the figurines of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos it can be determined that they deviate from the Isiac category. This is first and foremost visible in the way in which they are decorated, namely by means of a blue glaze (see fig. 4.14) other than the small bronze figurines which made up the bulk of the Isiac statuettes.

\textsuperscript{481} Tran tam Tinh 1972, 328-32; LIMC III, I, 1986, no 12, 99. The original find spot of the object (currently on display in the Museum of Brussels) unknown.

\textsuperscript{482} Except perhaps in the house of Acceptus and Euhodia (VIII 5, 39) Its south wall of the kitchen includes a lararium painting of the deity Fortuna, or Isis-Fortuna, together with two statuettes of Bes and Ptah found in the viridarium (Inv. nos.: 117178 and 116666). At present, the painting has almost entirely disappeared. Boyce interprets it as Isis-Fortuna (see Boyce 1937, 78). Fröhlich believes it to be a painting of Fortuna (see Fröhlich 1991, 293, tab. 46, 2). Mau 1902 also states it is Isis-Fortuna.
The Bes and Ptah-Pataikos figurines are also significantly larger than those in the other group of statuettes, which confirms their absence from domestic shrine contexts. Thus even if the popularity of Bes was somehow fostered by means of the presence of the Isis cult, the deity seems to have been conceived in another way. It was therefore decided to not only deal with Bes and Ptah-Pataikos as a separate category of Aegyptiaca, but also analyse it within different material and contextual networks as well as with a different set of questions. Because there are notable difficulties in the contexts where we find Isis statuary together with Bes, what exactly was the connection between the two cults?

The average height of the statuettes associated with domestic worship contexts is between 12 and 15 cm. The height (which is difficult to establish as many are damaged) of the Bes and Ptah statues varies between 30 and 50 cm.

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483 The average height of the statuettes associated with domestic worship contexts is between 12 and 15 cm. The height (which is difficult to establish as many are damaged) of the Bes and Ptah statues varies between 30 and 50 cm.
between Bes, Ptah-Pataikos and the Isis cult? Did the connection between Bes and Ptah-Pataikos and Egypt actually (still) exist in Pompeii? Concerning use and perception, could the find spots of Bes statuettes in a garden or peristyle point to a more secular appropriation? Were they considered exotic to a Roman audience? As in the above sections, the objects and concepts of Ptah-Pataikos and Bes are again reviewed in wider networks of material culture and concepts.

Enlarging the material and conceptual networks in order to explain the presence of these objects can immediately be proven useful when the category of statuettes is concerned. The statuettes of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos belong to a larger group of objects which can be characterised as 'blue/green-glazed terracottas'. These comprise, for example, lions, rams, iguanas, frogs, crocodiles, statues of females, a negroid figure, a pharaoh, and elderly people. Within the material spectrum they also accounted for lamps and drinking vessels. Di Gioia, in _La ceramica invetriata in area vesuviana_ (2006), made a detailed study and catalogue of all the so-called green-glazed objects found in Campania. She deals with the types as well as the manufacture, and discusses the provenance of the objects. Di Gioia classified the manufacture of the statuettes to which Bes and Ptah-Pataikos belong as either faience-imitation ware or blue/green-glazed ware. As scholars considered the material in this case to be a faience imitation, it poses an additional question concerning the material with regard to the central research query of the present thesis. If all these blue/green-glazed did belong to the same conceptual category, was a connection between Egypt and these objects created by means of the material? Did the blue glaze itself did already evoke a sense of Egypt and would this make the category

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484 Di Gioia 2006. Technically, there is a difference between traditional Egyptian ‘faience’ and ‘glazed terracotta’ found in Pompeii (although the designation faience remains to be used for these objects). The glaze of the former includes natron in the glaze and a sintered-quartz ceramic displaying surface vitrification which creates a bright lustre of various colours, with blue-green being the most common. It is therefore not properly pottery, until later periods it contains no clay and, but the major elemental components of glass (silica). Faience manufacture declined in quality during the Third Intermediate Period (21st to 25th Dynasties: 1069-664 BC), with a return to the traditional methods and the loss of much of the technical knowledge. Although the Late Period (664 BC until 332 BC) saw a revival in faience production in the Greco-Roman era faience production shows close relations with regular pottery manufacture which includes throwing faience vessels on the wheel and applying glaze as slurry. The latter late faience production, consists of a combination of either lead or alkalis in order to obtain the glass-like finish. The faience link to pottery in the Roman period probably caused a shift towards glazed pottery production and gradually led to the decline of faience. For a detailed discussion of Roman faience production, see Nicholson 2013. In order to avoid a direct connotation to Egypt, in this dissertation the decoration will be referred to as green or blue glaze, instead of using the term faience.
Aegyptiaca even larger than previously thought? In addition to the contexts, objects, and iconography used to discuss the concept of Egypt in the above sections, this section will also study material properties in relationship with the perception of something Egyptian. In order to answer these questions the figurines and other materialisations of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos will be reviewed on several levels, i.e., as material, as concepts, and within contexts.

4.4.2 Bes and Ptah-Pataikos and the Isis cult
First, more clarity is required on the assumed connection between Bes, Ptah-Pataikos and the Isiac cults. The contexts of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos statuettes seem to point to a different use and therefore different perception of these gods than when compared with concepts of Isis. However, certain objects are link with the cult and Bes. This must be scrutinised first in order to get a better grip on the role Bes played within the cult. Michel Malaise, following Tran tam Tinh, considered Bes associated with the so-called ‘gens isiaque’ and as was already briefly pointed to above, although they are few, connections between the Isis cult and Bes are not completely lacking. In Egypt Bes was a popular household deity with a long history as a god that warded off evil in the home. Furthermore Bes was connected to music and dance, and to Hathor the goddess of childbirth, dance, and music. In ancient Egypt Hathor was strongly linked to Isis as she was associated with her, there is however, no material or visual evidence that this was also done in Pompeii. The connection between music and Bes is however, attested in Pompeii in one example, within the category of sistra, where the figure of Bes

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485 To start with Bes, he was known as a dwarf god in Egypt but concerned a rather complex type of deity or demon conceptually. Next to his apotropaic qualities as a fighter (portrayed with swords) and protector in warfare, he was also a patron of childbirth and the home, and associated with fertility, sexuality, humour, music, and dancing. Bes became very popular amongst the Egyptians because he protected women and children. He seems to have had no temples until the Graeco-Roman period, the sanctuary at Bawiti in the Bahariya Oasis discovered in 1988 and the shrine of Bes in Abydos are one of the very few attested (on the Abydos-shrine, see Frankfurter 2006, 549). No priests were ordained in his name. Nevertheless Bes was one of the most popular gods of ancient Egypt and often depicted on household items (e.g., furniture, mirrors, cosmetics containers and applicators, magical wands, knives), see Dasen 1993, 55-83.

486 Although Malaise admits the iconographical evidence is scant, see Malaise 2007, 27.

487 Bes was responsible for killing snakes, fighting off evil spirits, watching after children, and assisting women in labour. He never received an official cult or sanctuaries. In Egypt, because of his apotropaic qualities, he was often depicted on household items such as furniture, mirrors and cosmetics containers.
in three cases (out of eleven sistra found in Pompeii) forms part of the decorative part of the handle.\textsuperscript{488}

In addition, a painting of Bes decorates one of the walls of the \textit{sacrarium} (fig. 4.15), the most inner part of the temple of Isis.\textsuperscript{489} In this particular room the paintings are said have been created by an adept of the cult, probably an initiate or a priest, not by a professional painter.\textsuperscript{490} The reason for this assumption is the detailed level of rendering Isiac elements together with the poor quality of the paintings depicting Isiac deities (e.g., Isis in a boat, a seated goddess accompanied by cobras), and several kinds of sacred animals (e.g. an Apis bull, snakes, ibis, lion).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.2\textwidth]{bes.png}
\caption{A portrait of Bes. It is from the \textit{sacrarium} in the sanctuary of Isis in Pompeii. MNN Inv. No. 8916.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{488} Nos. 149, 150, and 156 of the database, found in Casa di C. Vibius Italus (VII 2,18): a shop (VII 4,13), a shop were three other sistra were attested and the Pompeian countryside respectively. Another three are known from Rome, rendered differently but with similar attributes: a cat seated on top of the sistrum, the handle consists of a Hathor head below which a Bes figure. See Manera and Mazza 2001, nos. 18, 19, and 21 (19 and 21 are identical, 18 also has a Harpocrates figure on the handle), 61-3.

\textsuperscript{489} Malaise further mentions the so-called \textit{Ariccia} relief: a marble fragment from a tomb on the Via Appia with Isiac cult scenes (dated c.100 AD). The upper frieze of the relief probably represents the interior of an Isis temple dedicated to an enthroned and crowned goddess (Isis). The side chapels are dedicated to the dwarf god Bes, flanked by the seated baboons of the god Thoth. From Museo Nazionale Romano - Palazzo Altemps Inv. 77255.

\textsuperscript{490} A clear connection can be made between the Isis cult and therefore to the Egyptian reception of Bes who may even serve to enhance the Egyptianness of Isis, see Moormann 2007, 152.
As to Ptah-Pataikos (in scholarly literature either referred to as Ptah-Pataikos or Pataikos—although the connection to the official Ptah-Pataikos is difficult to understand), the connection with Isis is even more obscure. The name Pataikos is first mentioned by Herodotus (Historiae 3.37) in order to differentiate him from the normal Ptah-Pataikos, the demiurge of Memphis, or referring to the temple of Hephaistos. In Egypt Pataikos, just as Bes, was considered a protector of the house, children, and pregnant women. Also similar to Bes he never became part of an official cult. Any evidence about him is even scantier as there is no Egyptian text or myth that speaks of Ptah-Pataikos nor does he ever appear in official iconography. Ptah-Pataikos can be recognised by means of his achondroplastic dwarf appearance with bandy knees, small genitals, and a large head. His head was furthermore shaven or covered by means of a skullcap, the traditional headdress of the official public Ptah-Pataikos. In the New Kingdom he mainly appears in the form of small amulets, in which manner he also becomes popular in the rest of the Mediterranean from the Bronze Age onwards. First in Phoenicia and then into current Palestine/Israel, Rhodes, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Sardinia. From the 7th century onwards Ptah-Pataikos can be encountered in Italy, predominantly in Etruria. In Pompeii Ptah-Pataikos is attested in the form of statuettes resembling Bes, and also appears once in the form of a pendant. A precise date for the appearance of Ptah-Pataikos in Pompeii is difficult to determine as the statuettes cannot be dated accurately, they fall somewhere between the 1st century BC and 1st century AD. Whether the Ptah-Pataikos necklace has to do specifically with the Isiac cult or that it served as a more general protective amulet is also difficult to say, although the necklace included a pendant in the form of Harpocrates, Aphrodite was present on the necklace as well.

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491 Herodotus described Pataikos as the dwarf figure connected to the temple of Hephaistos. In book 3.37 he describes the encounter with images of dwarfish deities which he related to the images of the Phoenician Pataicoi (which the Phoenicians carry on the prows of their boats) during a visit of Cambyses to the temple of Hephaistos in Memphis (Egypt).

492 See Dasen 1993, 84-98.

493 Dasen 2008, 1-6, entry in the Iconography of Deities and Deamons online pre-publication, University of Zürich.

494 See, Höbl 1979, 101-3; 112-8.

495 The pendant belongs to a necklace which includes other Egyptian deities: Harpocrates and a cat (Bastet) found in house V 3, 11. This necklace had been placed in a chest in a small room located to the left of the entrance corridor of the house. This chest also contained two statuettes of Harpocrates and one of Venus Anadyomene, see Boyce 1937, no. 2, 108. Bes is also encountered once in this way, i.e., as a pendant in a necklace with Isis-Fortuna, Harpocrates, and a lotus flower in I 10, 7 (database no. 102). In fact two necklaces were found with Egyptian imagery, the other (no. 103) consisted of pendants of Isis-Fortuna and a snake.
Looking in more detail at the connection between Bes and Isis, the evidence appears to be difficult to generalise with regard to more universal meanings of Bes. While there is a link between the painting of the figure Bes in the sacraarium of the Isis temple, the room where he was housed was not meant for public eyes. In fact, it was the storeroom for sacred cult objects and probably only utilised by priests living on the sanctuary terrain, which makes it unlikely that an average Pompeian would have learned of the connection between Bes and Isis by means of this painting. Supposedly, although knowledge concerning the connection between Bes and Isis existed, Bes was never conveyed to domestic worship the way that Isis, Harpocrates Anubis and Serapis were. Regarding the specific category of figurines representing Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, the link with Isis appears to be completely absent. There are no figurines (or paintings) of Bes or Ptah-Pataikos found in domestic shrines. Not a single house exhibited figures of Bes in combination with a clear veneration of Isis in the form of domestic shrines. The figurines of Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis, and Serapis are made of another material and vary in size when compared with the figurines of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos. The only supposed link is derived from the catalogue of Tran tam Tinh, who lists two Bes figurines found at the temple of Isis in Pompeii.\footnote{According to Tran tam Tinh 1964, two green glazed statuettes are found in the area of the Isis temple (no’s 115a and b), not taken up in the catalogue of Di Gioia 2006.} According to Tran tam Tinh both the statues are made of ‘\textit{porcelaine verdâtre}’ a description which might point to the green glazed wares. However, the objects that Tran tam Tinh refers to - deduced from the notes made by the excavators of the Iseum which were published by Fiorelli in 1860 in the \textit{Pompeianarum antiquitatum historia} – appear not to concern statues of Bes, but are actually two faience statuettes of naophori. It is unclear why Tran tam Tinh identified these as being Bes statuettes, neither of the descriptions of Fiorelli mention the word Bes, the statues were referred to as an ‘\textit{idolo Egizio’}. Tran tam Tinh most probably based his conclusions (for 115b) on the green paint and on the annotation Fiorelli made of the object: “\textit{Questa figura e molto informe e ridicola}”.\footnote{See Fiorelli, 1860, \textit{Pompeianarum antiquitatum historia} vol 1, 192. Fiorelli notes the following concerning the figurine found at the temple site: “nello stesso sito [the temple of Isis] si è trovato un idolo egizio di gesso, o di qualche al- tra mistura bianca dipinto di verde, alto on.8 Vs, e rotto nel- la parte superiore.} The other alleged statuette of Bes, found in the \textit{sacraarium} of the temple, appeared to actually be a faience statue of a male divinity currently displayed in the \textit{Museo}
Nazionale di Napoli (inv. no. 430), a piece dating from the Ptolemaic period and one of the imported artefacts from Egypt that were stored in the sacrarium. Reviewing the evidence it can be established that although a connection between Bes and the Isis cult is present in a few instances, it seems to have concerned only a small and very specific audience not existent by the larger community. Moreover, although there existed a link between a painting of Bes and the Isis cult, the green glazed figures that depict Bes and Ptah-Pataikos at least did not have any direct connection to the cult. In order to obtain a more embedded knowledge of the interpretation and uses of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in Pompeii and their presence in domestic contexts one must carefully disentangle the image, the objects, and concepts of Bes.

4.4.3 Subject: the concept of Bes and its perceptual networks
Whenever the iconography of the materialisations (paintings or statues of Bes) did not have a conceptual link, in which way did the objects representing Bes and Ptah-Pataikos develop and how were they perceived? As discussed in chapter 3 and in 4.1 this trajectory can be explained as conceptual networks of categories or indexes in which the object becomes of relevance to the viewer. This can be obtained by means of studying the physical context, the type of object, the people applying it, the material of which it was made, its value, style, concept, or the manner in which it was portrayed (iconography). All form a part of the perception of an object and the components of the network interact with one another. It is not within the scope of the present research to look for the significance of Bes, but rather to establish the way in which the components of his being and materialisations interact and to study the way they formed a cognitive link with each other and with Egypt within perception. The first component we will discuss within this context is the concept of Bes. How well known was Bes in Pompeii? He was said to be present in several types of objects. However, was there a cognitive connection between these objects because of the subject of Bes? Was this image equal in significance and meaning when compared with the statuettes found in gardens, in other words: did Bes have a univocal meaning as Bes and did it therefore transcend its material embodiment?

498 Fiorelli describes a figurine (height unknown) found in one of the rooms in the temple of Isis (probably now known as the sacrarium) which was made of marble and coloured with a green paint, of which the eyelids and lashes were painted turquoise. The figurine is in a seated position and kneels down, on its head it wears a large cap and a beard that falls down in a cylindrical way on the middle of his chest. In his hands he holds instruments (not specified) and is completely covered with hieroglyphs and (made of) green stone. See Fiorelli 1860, 180
Moreover, did Bes create a cognitive link to Egypt? These questions deal with Bes and his appearance within material culture as a concept.

A valid first pragmatic issue related to the idea Bes and conceptual connotations to Isis and Egypt are whether people actually even knew this was the Egyptian god ‘Bes’ and whether they referred to him as such. For modern scholars the dwarf deity is easily classified as Bes; however as an unofficial deity of the Egyptian pantheon he became widespread throughout the whole Mediterranean and often lost the connection to Egypt. Furthermore, within Egypt itself Bes was not a name commonly used, and it is a designation typically applied by modern scholars to actually refer to a multitude of dwarf-gods.\textsuperscript{499} According to Dasen, the identity of the dwarf god was quite complex and his name originally pointed to a general connotation for a range of deities with a dwarf-like appearance.\textsuperscript{500} Although the name seems to have occurred once in Roman literature (according to Wilson 1979, 75 without any reference), no single inscription exists which carries his name.\textsuperscript{501} Consequently ‘Bes’ is a concept which should be used in a plural form and it seems unlikely that the word Bes was ever used within the context of Pompeii. This has serious consequences for the concept of Bes as it was experienced by a Roman audience, making apparent the difference between the present-day observer and the past user. It testifies once more the weak link between Bes and Isis and it also once more calls into question the connection between Egypt and the deity. Because if Bes did not existed as a name (not even in Egypt itself), and his conception was plural, on what accounts should he be associated with Egypt?

4.4.4 Form: cultural transmission

In order to obtain a clearer image of the complexities of the concept(s) of Bes as mentioned in the above section, a brief sketch will be composed of the history and the diversity of Bes. A distinction was made between the several ways Bes is iconographically represented by means of no less than thirteen types, of which some occur from the Middle Kingdom onwards, others are only known since the Ptolemaic period, or only appear outside Egypt.\textsuperscript{502} The

\textsuperscript{499} See Bonnet 1952, 101; It is stated that the name Bes appears more frequently in the Ptolemaic and Roman period. As to Roman literature which records ‘oracles’ of Bes no references are provided whatsoever, see Wilson 1975, 77.

\textsuperscript{500} See Dasen 1993, 55-7.

\textsuperscript{501} See Malaise 2007, 27 for Bes in literary accounts; See Bricault 2005 for the epigraphic evidence. The word ‘Bes’ only appears referring to coinage. In this case bes was a bronze coin (two-thirds of an as) produced during the Roman Republic.

\textsuperscript{502} Wilson 1975.
most common type is the naked, frontal, squatting Bes often with a feather crown and a lion or panther skin around the neck. This rendition is known since the New Kingdom (16th to 11th century BC).503 Other iconographical types portray Bes dancing, holding one or two swords above his head, winged, playing a tambourine, protecting or suckling Horus as well as a pantheistic Bes and Bes with various animals (as a protector of animals).504 Some of these types occur mainly in relief form, others in the form of amulets or statuettes. Already in the earliest stages of Mediterranean connectivity in the second millennium BC, different outlines of expansion can be seen concerning these dwarf figures. Some cultures seem to have developed dwarf god-figures independently from Egypt, such as in Babylonian Mesopotamia, others modified the Egyptian figure according to local taste such as occurred on Cyprus, and sometimes Bes was seen imported with its Egyptian features still intact, such as an example of Hittite AlacaHöyük shows.505 According to Wilson it was the so-called Meggido-Bes type in the form of ivories which firmly established the Egyptian dwarf-god ‘Bes’ within Syro-Phoenician iconography. Adaptations and subsequent spread of this type can also be witnessed. For instance, a Bes version appears somewhat later in the form of a bronze figurine which shows Bes upright instead of its usual squatting position, and his arms are bent over his chest. This is an early example of a pose which becomes particularly popular on Cyprus.506 On Cyprus Bes and other dwarf related images become very popular and they are consistently attested from the beginning of the Late Bronze Age onwards, persisting as far as the third century AD.507 Although the figure resembling Bes appears in the Levant and Cyprus from the 2nd millennium BC on, it does not reach the Aegean region until the 1st millennium BC.508 Several forms become more widespread and develop around the Mediterranean into other hybrid forms with functions according to local preferences and tastes. Moving forward in time, the Phoenician Iron Age presents a further good example of the way in which Bes was adapted to

504 As listed by Wilson 1975.
505 During the first Babylonian dynasty (2017–1595) a bearded dwarf god is known with bended legs and a frontal depiction which seems to have developed independently of Egypt, Cyprus on the other hand shows many locally adapted forms such as found on the Malloura wall-bracket or the Limestone cippus with the head of Bes from Palaikastro (Counts and Toumazou 2006, 29809); lastly an example from Anatolia shows a Bes bone sculpture in Middle Kingdom Egyptian guise which was probably imported from Egypt.
507 See Counts and Toumazou 2006, 598.
508 See Aruz 2008, 137.
local preferences while remaining an Egyptian figure at the same time. Bes amulets found in West Phoenician centres were considered to be Egyptian imports; however, more recently it has been argued that those amulets were actually manufactured in Carthage, from which they spread out to Sardinia, Spain, Ibiza, Sicily, Malta, and the rest of the West Phoenician sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{509} This implies that amulets and figurines were locally produced in an Egyptian and in a local style at the same time. Another case concerns three figurines from Marathus on the Phoenician coast of which one was imported but the other two were locally produced.\textsuperscript{510} Bes was thus perhaps not only an adaptable widespread phenomenon, but also clearly an actor moving in other networks than Isis, and did not arrive at the Italic peninsula together with the Isis cults, but was distributed by means of trade between Phoenicia and Etruria, where Bes had become popular after contact with Punic culture.\textsuperscript{511}

In sum, the cultural transmission allowed for the import of statues and iconography of Bes, implying that different cultural centres, reaching from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} millennium BC Levant to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC Phoenicia, all copied the Egyptian style adapting Bes to their own style even millennia before the Bes scholars so confidentially call Egyptian arrived in Pompeii. Furthermore, from the earliest phase of his existence onwards, Bes has supposedly always been part of a much larger spectrum of dwarf figures. In this light, he represents a global concept appreciated for its internal qualities rather than a distinct cultural product of Egypt. Should so many years of adaptation be discarded when looking at Roman Pompeii? Could Bes not as easily have had a Punic association? Or was the subject re-Egyptianised? Reviewing objects encountered at Pompeii in relation to the iconography and find contexts may present us with a better understanding of this subject.

\textbf{4.4.5 Object: materialisations of Bes}

\textit{Coins}

As to objects, the network leads to a variety of types of materialisation of Bes. In Pompeii, he can be found in the form of pendants, applied on sistrum handles, and as statuettes (see the above introduction). However, there is another category of objects which is also linked to Bes concerning its connection to the armed Bes image known from the Phoenician world and

\textsuperscript{509} See Wilson 1975, 129.
\textsuperscript{510} See Wilson 1975, 130.
\textsuperscript{511} See Rupp 2007, 52.
Egypt. As mentioned, this armed Bes-rendition does not occur in Roman Italy. Nevertheless excavations in Pompeii have brought to light many coins originating from Ebusus depicting exactly this iconographical type on the obverse and reverse.\textsuperscript{512} The images on the products of the original and locally minted coins portray Bes wearing a tunic, his left hand is raised and holds a knife or a sword while a snake rests on his right arm (Campo’s group XVIII, see fig. 4.16a).\textsuperscript{513} The Ebusan coins were attested at many Italian sites, but predominantly at Pompeii, representing the majority of the non-Roman monetary stock here at the turn of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC.\textsuperscript{514} These Ebusan coins, or pseudo-Ebusan coins, as they are called when a local Italian production, occur from the late 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BC onwards. Here they soon were locally minted to become part of the bulk of the monetary stock during the Republican era and Social War in the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd}, beginning of the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BC.\textsuperscript{515} This is confirmed by means of a find, consisting of the contents of a purse found in a bathhouse, which clearly points to the coins as everyday local currency. The Pseudo-Ebesus coin even seems to be an altogether Italian phenomenon which is not found in the Balearic Islands.\textsuperscript{516} The find proves that the representation of Bes was both a wide-spread phenomenon and a daily visual encounter by the Pompeians of the Republican period.

Fig. 4.16a An example of the coins with Bes figures found in Ebusus (\textit{Ebusus} Group XVIII, 50-60, 62-70, c. 200-100 BC, unit 42 \AE 17 mm - 3.13 Pompeii sporadic 59016 \textit{Monetary stock} 7 from Stannard 2005, 63-4).

Fig. 4.16b Classified in Stannard 2005 as pseudo-Ebusus type VIII, a later local mint of the same type where the figure of Bes is more crudely depicted.

\textsuperscript{512} Ebusus, i.e., present-day Ibiza, allegedly acquired its name from the Punic people, who called it the island of Bes. As indicated above he was also a popular deity in the Carthaginian pantheon.

\textsuperscript{513} Campo, 1976.

\textsuperscript{514} See Stannard 2005, 47-80.

\textsuperscript{515} See Stannard 2005, 76.

This means that the presence of Bes as imagery might predate the arrival of the Isis cult in Pompeii.\(^{517}\) The conceptual connection of Bes and Egypt during the 1\(^{st}\) century AD may therefore be more complex, as a Punic connection can now also be established for Bes. However, would this mean that Bes in material and visual culture was not regarded as Egyptian at all? Would the people of Pompeii handling these coins have realised Bes was depicted, let alone connect any cultural associations to these coins? Most probably this was not the case. As can be seen from the local minting (fig. 4.16b), the image of Bes is not well recognised and the urge to make an exact copy of the original did not exist. Furthermore, the image was most probably not regarded to be Bes, as the iconography consists of a type of the armed Bes, which was unknown in Central Italy. It never set foot in the iconography of the visual and material culture of Pompeii where only the squatting type of Bes was present. The imagery and the concept of Bes were thus most probably conceptually unrelated. This does not imply that not a single Bes-materialisation was ever experienced as Egyptian, in certain instances Bes was related to Egypt, but the versatility of the figure should be acknowledged, both conceptually and iconographically. It should be realised that the local perception of dwarf gods in Pompeii could occur in diverse guises, functions, and uses. These could be conceptually unrelated and without any cultural connotation. Once more it provides us with an argument in favour of accepting more complexity within the perception and application of objects in relationship with concepts.

**Sistra**

A further relatively small category in which Bes appears are the sistra, of which only three of the eleven portray Bes in his typical squatting position, always in combination with the goddess Hathor. In Egyptian iconography, Hathor is often depicted as a cow, a woman with a cow head, or with stylised cow horns holding a solar disk. The sistrum in Egyptian mythology is closely connected to the cult of Hathor. It was incorporated into the Isis cult at a later stage, rendering the association with the cow goddess not unusual. In

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\(^{517}\) Depending on the date of the first Isis temple which only informs us of the time the cult became official and remains a topic of debate. Although Zanker opts for a date in the 2\(^{nd}\) century BC (Zanker 1998, 52-3), it is most commonly assumed the first temple was constructed in c.100-90 BC (based on the presence of tufa architectural elements). Hoffmann 1993 (PhD-dissertation), Tran tam Tinh 1964, 135-46. There is also evidence of an additional Augustan construction phase. Blanc, Erstov and Fincker 2000, 227-309.
the other examples there are four plain sistra. Only three include cats attached to the top. Outside Pompeii, sistra depicting Bes were found in Rome and Taranto.518 It is argued that the other Bes-handled sistra (with a dancing Bes) of which one originates from the Iseum Campense whereas the other was found in the Tiber, were produced in Egypt.519 The handles depicting Bes could thus stylistically be traced back to Egypt, but it is not known whether the undecorated handles were produced locally or were shipped from Egypt.520 Although decorated handles could indicate an aesthetic choice amongst the available sistra, it seems unlikely that Bes was purposely added to handles when concerning a local Campanian production.

It might even be unlikely that handles with Bes were purposely traded, because the connection between Hathor and Bes seems not to have been widely known in Roman Italy.521 However, notwithstanding the encounter of Bes as a side effect of a sistrum decoration, it did allow for a connection between the dwarf and Isis, at least with regard to the group of people who used the sistra during rituals.

Figurines
The final category featuring Bes and Ptah-Pataikos took the shape of the already mentioned glazed figurines. Di Gioia noted five statuettes of Ptah-Pataikos and seven of Bes, all consisting of a green or blue coloured glaze; Herculaneum counts two more recorded finds of Bes statuettes (no Ptah-Pataikos).522 Interestingly, these figurines are notably different when compared with statues found in Pompeii, which were significantly smaller (21 and 22 cm.) and made of bronze. It is believed the green-glazed were produced by means of the same mould.523 Although Pompeii and Herculaneum are not that well comparable because of the larger amount of

520 Two bronze regular (identical) sistra were found in Herculaneum and three sistra amulets of which two consisted of wood, and one of silver. Not one depicted Bes, see Tran tam Tinh no. 53-56, 80-1.
521 At least in Pompeii and Campania, no depictions of Hathor exist beside these handles in Pompeii. In Rome two Hathor cows are found near the Iseum Campense, see Roulet 1972, no. 266. One is assigned to the Iseum in Region III, see Roulet 1972, 276.
522 Di Gioia 2006. The Herculaneum Bes statuettes are made of bronze and of exceptionally high quality, see Tran tam Tinh 1972, 22-3; 76-7, see nos. 45-6 for the the two figurines.
523 Respectively no. 46, Ant. Herc. No. 1429 no. 45 MN coll. égyptienne inv. 184 (autres nos. d'inv. 272-390). Following von Bissing 1925, it has been remarked that the statuettes illustrate the collusion of two artistic traditions i.e., of Egyptian and Greek art, as can also be observed in the Ptolemaic temple of Mut in Karnak.45. (fig. 22), see Tran tam Tinh 1972, 76.
excavated terrain in Pompeii (4/5 compared to 1/3 in Herculaneum), it is striking Pompeii has not a single bronze statuette of Bes, while Herculaneum does not contain any green glazed wares. This may have to do with the difference in wealth between the two locations, or with different trade connections. However, as to the larger group of green-glazed statuettes that the figurines of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos seemed to belong to (see above), their material connections is a subject requiring further attention. The context, provenance, and material of the objects may provide more clarity to the networks of perception of these objects.

4.4.6 Further down the network of perception: blue-glazed figurines

_Figurines: provenance_

It has been suggested that the statues of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, because of their specific manufacture and subjects, were not produced in Campania or Rome, but imported from Egypt.⁵²⁴ Although Tronchin stated that given the fashion for Egyptian and Egyptianising products during the 1st century AD, a Roman industry in the production of these statuettes would not be unexpected, the presence of kiln remains and reject glazed terracotta statuettes of the same type attested at Mit Rahina (Memphis) in Egypt suggested Memphis was the major centre for the industry of these statuettes.⁵²⁵ Until recently this could only be presumed, but never confirmed. A recent study dealing with provenance determination based on chemical analysis however, was able to determine that several of these statuettes (at least nine from a sample of thirteen) hailed from a location in the close vicinity of Memphis. A multi-analytical analysis was carried out in order to trace their origin, comparing Egyptian faience with thirteen other blue/green-glazed objects found at Pompeii concluded: “_The scatter plot of the scores ... groups in the same cluster of most the finds from Pompeii and Egypt...These results strengthen the archaeological hypotheses of import from Egypt of all faience from Pompeii except sample 1._”⁵²⁶ This means that these nine artefacts were indeed imported to Pompeii from Egypt. Considering not only the sample size, but also the resemblance in material, form, and size of the mould, many other statuettes within the category of green-glazed wares

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⁵²⁴ See Rossi 1994, 319. It is also stated: “_La preponderanza di soggetti egittizzanti, nonché la diversa consistenza dell’impasto, a base silicea, e della vetrina, in realtà una vera e propria faïance, lascia ipotizzare una produzione non locale, ma presumibilmente egizia._” see, Di Giaia 2006, 140.


⁵²⁶ See Mangone et al. 2012, 2866, figs. 7 and 8.
may have originated from Egypt too. Of interest to consider with regard to perception is not so much the established provenance of the deities Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, but those of the other iconographical types and forms less likely to be linked to Egypt by means of their subject, for instance an *aryballos* and two cylindrical glasses. Could a conscious link to Egypt have existed for the consumers of such objects? This poses an interesting suggestion with regards to linking specific forms or specific material to the concept of Egypt. It is quite common to connect the concept of Egypt to objects on the basis of iconographical features (such as Bes); however, this might have been different. These objects seem to be linked because of their decoration in a green glaze, meaning that if there was a connection to Egypt, it may have reached much further than scholars have accepted thus far. It could even be that the green glaze *in itself* established the conceptual connection to Egypt.

*The category of blue-glazed objects: figurines*

The category of blue/green-glazed objects in Pompeii consists of cylindrical vases, globular jars, statues of various animals and human figures, and lamps. Interestingly enough, at least quantitatively, they hardly share any parallels on the remaining part of the Italic peninsula. The globular vases are encountered in various places in Rome. However, Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are not attested anywhere within this specific production outside Pompeii. Table 4.14 introduces all the blue-glazed objects from Pompeii.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Inv. no.</th>
<th>Di Gioia cat.</th>
<th>Find spot</th>
<th>Height in cm.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green/blue-glazed figurine</td>
<td>Perona and Micone</td>
<td>MNN 124846</td>
<td>9.1.1</td>
<td>Pompeii, VI 15,5; Casa di M. Pupius Rufus; garden</td>
<td>36,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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527 See Grimm 1972, 71-100; Rossi 1994; Di Gioia 2006; Tronchin 2006.
528 The abbreviation denotes the current location of the artefacts: MNN = Museo (Archeologico) Nazionale di Napoli and PMS= Pompei Magazzino degli Scavi.
529 The secured provenances are established according to Mangone et al. 2011.
530 Mistakenly described as being found in area VI 12 (following the notes presented in NSc 1895, 438), see Di Gioia 2006. However, the exact find location is in the peristyle garden at the west wall at the rear of the tablinum. In the aedicola niche here several statuettes were found: “There were various statuettes nearby. A terra-cotta statuette of a tipsy old woman [MNN Inv. no. 124844] was adapted to serve as a jug... A terra-cotta elephant ridden by a Moor and carrying a tower on its back [MNN Inv. no. 124845] also served as a jug, the liquid being poured into the tower. There were also a number of objects finished with green glaze: a family group; a little vase in the form of a Silenus [MNN Inv. no. 124847]; a little vase in the form of a cock; two small vases in the form of ducks; another in the form of a goose.”, see Jashemski 1993, nos. 279, 156.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dark green-glazed figurine</th>
<th>Perona and Micone</th>
<th>MNN 22580</th>
<th>9.1.2</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>34,8</th>
<th>1st c. AD</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glazed figurine</td>
<td>Old woman</td>
<td>MNN ?</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>30,2</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown-glazed head</td>
<td>Female head of a bust or Greek style (?)</td>
<td>MNN 129400</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>18,1</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark blue-glazed figurine</td>
<td>Ptah-Patakos</td>
<td>MNN 22607</td>
<td>9.4.1</td>
<td>Pompeii, VI 1,2 Caupona</td>
<td>47,8</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-glazed figurine: a fountain</td>
<td>Ptah-Patakos</td>
<td>MNN 116666</td>
<td>9.4.2</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>27,3</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue-glazed figurine</td>
<td>Ptah-Patakos</td>
<td>MNN ?</td>
<td>9.4.3</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of figurine in blue/green glaze</td>
<td>Ptah-Patakos</td>
<td>MNN ?</td>
<td>9.4.4</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>10,1</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of figurine in blue/green glaze</td>
<td>Ptah-Patakos</td>
<td>MNN ?</td>
<td>9.4.5</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>10,1</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in blue glaze</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 22583</td>
<td>9.5.1</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>33,8</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in dark green glaze</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 116665</td>
<td>9.5.2</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in dark green glaze, no head</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 117178</td>
<td>9.5.3</td>
<td>Pompeii: VIII 5, 39 Casa di Acceptus et Euhodia</td>
<td>21,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in green glaze, head missing</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 13586</td>
<td>9.5.4</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in blue/green glaze</td>
<td>Bes with a baboon head</td>
<td>PMS 10613 B</td>
<td>9.5.5</td>
<td>Pompeii, II 2,2, the house of Octavius Quarto in the viridarium (alle spalle del recess a Sud del tridino).</td>
<td>34,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in blue/green glaze</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 2897</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Pompeii, II 2,2, the house of Octavius Quarto, n-w corner of the small peristyle garden</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of a figurine in bright blue glaze</td>
<td>Bes</td>
<td>MNN 22589</td>
<td>9.5.6</td>
<td>From IX 3, 5, Casa di M. Lucretius (?)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangular base of a</td>
<td>Base of a Bes statuette, feet</td>
<td>PMS: 12087</td>
<td>9.6.1</td>
<td>Pompeii I, 14, bottega 8 (in situ)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statue/Artifact</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Museum No.</td>
<td>Pompeii, Period</td>
<td>Century</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Round base in blue/green glaze</strong></td>
<td>Base with griffins, floral motifs</td>
<td>MNN 113021</td>
<td>Pompeii, IX 7, peristyle of a domus</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Round base in blue glaze</strong></td>
<td>Base with a gazelle, a cat-like creature, floral motifs</td>
<td>MNN 113022</td>
<td>Pompeii, IX 7, peristyle of a domus</td>
<td>13,5</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Round base in green-blue glaze</strong></td>
<td>Human figures separated by means of columns</td>
<td>MNN 113023</td>
<td>Pompeii, IX 7, peristyle of a domus</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fragment of a base in blue glaze</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Pompeii, dal recinto ad Ovest della tomba di Esquila Polla</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td>Egypt, but not from Memphis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine in blue-green glaze</strong></td>
<td>Pharaoh</td>
<td>MNN 2898</td>
<td>Pompeii, II 2,2, the house of Octavius Quarto n-w corner of the small peristyle garden</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine in green glaze</strong></td>
<td>Silenus</td>
<td>MNN 124847/103</td>
<td>Pompeii, VI 15,5; Casa di M. Pupius Rufus; garden</td>
<td>14,7</td>
<td>1st century AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine</strong></td>
<td>Silenus</td>
<td>MNN 117291</td>
<td>Pompeii, VII 7, stanza a sinistra del portico.</td>
<td>21,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine, no head, in dark blue glaze</strong></td>
<td>Crocodile</td>
<td>MNN 121324</td>
<td>Pompeii, V 2, I, Casa delle Nozze d’Argento</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine in light blue glaze, no head and tail: a waterspout</strong></td>
<td>Crocodile</td>
<td>MNN 121325</td>
<td>Pompeii, V 2, I, Casa delle Nozze d’Argento</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine in dark blue glaze: a waterspout</strong></td>
<td>Frog</td>
<td>MNN 121323</td>
<td>Pompeii, V 2, I, Casa delle Nozze d’Argento</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statuette in bright blue glaze: a waterspout</strong></td>
<td>Frog</td>
<td>MNN 22608</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>25,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figurine in dark green</strong></td>
<td>Frog</td>
<td>MNN 22609</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>26,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

531 “Rinvenuta in associazione con il vasetto monoansato a forma di anatra (vasi no 15.6) askos no 15.9 e il gruppo raffigurante Pero e Mikon no 1.1 rispecchia anch’essa quel gusto della reca decorazione di giardini ed esterni che si diffonde a Pompeii a partire dalla fine del I secolo AC, quando, in seguito alla conquista dell’Egitto, comincia a diffondersi la moda ellenistica”, see Di Gioia 2006, 123.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glaze Description</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Museum Location</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in green-blue glaze: a waterspout</td>
<td>Frog</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>Pompei, V 2, I, Casa delle Nozze d'Argento</td>
<td>22,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine on rectangular base in blue-green glaze: 'Iguana'</td>
<td>PMS</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>Pompei, I 12, 6 sul podio della cucina nell'angolo SO del peristilio</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1st c. AD Local production, not from Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statue in dark blue glaze: a waterspout</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td>9.11</td>
<td>Pompei</td>
<td>26,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in dark blue glaze</td>
<td>Ram</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>Pompei</td>
<td>24,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in ochre glaze, ring attached to water as an amulet</td>
<td>Grotesque negroid figure</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurine in light green glaze</td>
<td>Seated boy, naked</td>
<td>9.14</td>
<td>Pompei IX, 8</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>1st c. AD Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globular olletta dark blue glaze</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1st c. AD Local production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globular olletta in dark blue glaze</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>Pompei</td>
<td>11,5</td>
<td>1st c. AD Local production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globular aryballos in blue glaze</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>Pompei, Bottaro</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>1st c. AD Memphis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentary cylindrical glass in green-blue glaze</td>
<td>Decorated with gazelles, goat-like animal, floral motifs</td>
<td>7.13.1</td>
<td>Pompei</td>
<td>17,4</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD Memphis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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532 Identified by Di Gioia as an Iguana. We read on this object: “Statuina di iguana poggiante su base rettangolare, l'animale è rappresentato secondo uno schema che richiama l'arte egizia”, see Di Gioia 2006, 127-8. This is particularly interesting when realizing this statue is the only object of which a local production was confirmed by means of chemical analysis, see Mangone et al. 2011.

533 Statuine probabilmente di divinità a doppia gibbosità, seduta, con foro ad anello sul capo. E descritta come figura scenica negli inventari. I tratti marcatamente negroidi, sottolineati anche dal colore marronico dell'invecchiata, fanno pensare sempre ad un repertorio esotico, di provenienza presumibilmente egizia. Di Gioia 2006, 130-1

534 La capigliatura a grani fa pensare alla pettinatura riccia, tipicamente Africana; anche questa figuretta, dunque, potrebbe rappresentare un riferimento all'Egitto, tanto di moda in quegli anni a Pompei. Di Gioia 2006, 131

Was this category of objects associated with Egypt by means of its material? At least there seems to be a connection between iconography and the green blue glaze. Concerning the iconography, it cannot be denied that, at first glance, a certain taste for ‘the East’ might be suggested. The reason for this is that the majority of the statues represent frogs, crocodiles, statues of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, creatures often associated with Egypt. This category included a statuette of a pharaoh. However, whether a conscious link was present needs yet to be determined. A start is made with one particular object from this category: a reptile-like statuette designated by Di Gioia as an iguana. From the chemical analysis it was established to be one of the two objects resulting from local production. Iconographically however, it has no clear parallels in Pompeii, except that the pose (i.e., the ‘Egyptian guarding pose’) is identical to many other animal statuettes from the collection of green-glazed figurines. The parallel for its iconography, strikingly enough, was actually found in Egypt, eliminating the determination of the statuette as an iguana. In Egypt this composite reptile-like creature is known as Horus-Sobek (or Soknopaios), a manifestation of Sobek, the crocodile deity, with the body of a crocodile and the head of the falcon god Horus (see fig. 4.17). Soknopaios was worshipped between the 2nd century BC to the 3rd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cylindrical glass in turquoise glaze</th>
<th>Gazelle, swan, floral motifs</th>
<th>MNN 117115</th>
<th>7.13.2</th>
<th>Pompeii</th>
<th>16,5</th>
<th>1st c. BC-1st c. AD</th>
<th>Memphis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentary cylindrical glass</td>
<td>Similar to 13.1 and 13.4</td>
<td>MNN 5260/355</td>
<td>7.13.3</td>
<td>Pompeii</td>
<td>6,6</td>
<td>1st c. AD</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragmentary cylindrical glass</td>
<td>Similar to 7.13.1</td>
<td>MNN ?</td>
<td>7.13.4</td>
<td>Pompeii, VIII 2,7</td>
<td>9,8</td>
<td>1st c. BC-1st c. AD</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.14) All the green-glazed figurines from Pompeii and their find contexts.

536 Parallel found in Egypt in the form of a small situla from the Roman period, also decorated with leaves, fruit and beads in relief. The object is now displayed in the Windsor Myers Museum at Eton College. In: *Egyptian Art at Eton College: Selections from the Myers Museum*.

537 References to lions in Pompeian houses can be found on the marble statues in the Casa di Loreius Tibertinus (II 2,2), where a marble statue in a dynamic position kills an antelope. The lion is represented in a mosaic in the Casa del Fauno (VI 12,1). In wall paintings we see lions in hunting scenes as in the Casa della Caccia Nuova (VII 2,25). All portray moving animals linked to (Imperial?) hunting scenes. The statuette in green glaze, however, takes a static and classical reclining pose as we see in Egypt.

538 See Di Gioia 2006, 127.

539 Parallels of the statue can be found in the Cairo Museum (Inv. No. E 21868), The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (no. 22.347) and the Egyptian Museum in Berlin. Similarities between the statues of Horus-Sobek found in Egypt and our artefact are numerous: the base, the crocodile body and falcon head with nemes-like headdress. However, the Pompeian
203

century AD throughout the Fayum. A temple dedicated to this deity has been unearthed at Soknopiou Nesos.\textsuperscript{540} To have this produced locally is extraordinary, as Soknopaios is a completely unknown concept in Roman Italy. However, the similarities between the Egyptian parallels (see fig. 4.17) are too striking to dismiss the qualification of the statuette as a form of Soknopaios. This leads to interesting issues concerning its use(\textit{r}). No comparable examples of the statue could be found outside Egypt. Yet, the clay suggests a local production. What would have been the maker’s intention and conceptual reference? Where was it produced? Was it from a local pottery workshop, or traded from Puteoli or Rome, both consisting of places with a larger number of ‘foreign production’ capacities (i.e., knowledge, technique, resources, etc.) and a larger demand for such objects?\textsuperscript{541}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{statue.png}
\caption{Fig. 4.17) Left: a statue of the falcon-headed crocodile god Soknopaios (Metropolitan Museum). Right: the ‘Iguana’ statue from house I 12, 6 (PMS 12960).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{540} The present-day Dima, see Bongionanni and Sole 2001, 556.  
\textsuperscript{541} The context of the find lies in a small unidentified house (I 12,6) excavated in 1960–2, see \textit{Notizie degli Scavi} 22/09/1960.
Could the buyer of the statue also have made the error in interpreting it as an Iguana? On the account of these findings one can even start speculating about the owner's ethnicity. Displaying such intimate and specific knowledge, he could even have been an Egyptian from the Fayum in need of his own local deity. The statuette was found on a podium of the kitchen in the southwest of the peristyle of a small house. Therefore it could also have functioned as a so-called apotropaic figure, in which his specific identity was not particularly necessary (being interpreted as a strange animal or monster would have sufficed); such were often found in these contexts (see part 4.4.8). A last issue concerning this object leads back to the finishing in green glaze; was it especially made in this way to make it more Egyptian? All the evidence concerning the production, context, and iconography seems to suggest that it did. Whatever can be said on the identity of the owner, the object not only gave voice to an explicitly Egyptian iconography and was intentionally produced locally in a green glaze.

This example, as do a large number of the remaining subjects of the blue/green-glazed wares, illustrates a link between the perception of something Egyptian and the glaze. Not only were gods displayed, and a pharaoh, but also frogs and crocodiles. The latter two were associated with the Nile and often included in Nilotic scenes. Figurines of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, crocodiles and frogs were the most numerous to be encountered among the blue-glazed wares in Pompeii. The suggestion that the green glaze in itself could furthermore refer to Egypt can be strengthened by means of another object category i.e., lamps and pottery. The former supposedly now and again provided imagery linked to Egypt.

The category of blue-glazed objects: lamps and pottery

Figurines were not the only objects that could be manufactured in green glaze. More than twenty green-glazed lamps were attested at Pompeii.

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543 This conceptual correlation between Egypt and blue-green glazed items is furthermore endorsed by means of the figurine of a pharaoh in green glaze (sadly excluded from Mangone 2011, implying its specific provenance could not be determined) found in the garden of the Casa di Octavianus Quarto (II 2,2).
544 According to Di Gioia 2006, the lamps included here provide a very interesting view on the application of form and style. The scope of shapes, for example, seems to be rather small. The Nos. 1 to 27 all represent the so-called Loeschke III type/Bailey type D i.e., a lamp with a double nozzle and a large handle in the shape of an acanthus leaf. Several portray figures in the centre, often animals or masks. Exceptions are: a handle consisting of palmettes (no. 16 has a stylised palmette and a cow placed in the centre: Apis?). Another type portrayed in green glaze is a simple one (Bailey type P, Oand C/ VIIIa,b and V Loeschke). It consists of a round lamp with only one nozzle and no elaborate side or handle.
According to Tran tam Tinh (followed by Di Gioia) the lamps were not made in Egypt, but locally produced somewhere in Italy. Relevant to the current research is that the green-glazed lamps now and again also include 'Egyptian’ themes. Analysing the themes on this specific type of lamps in connection to Egypt in more detail, it could be established that they always portray Isiac deities, never Bes or Nilotic imagery. The database counts three lamps originating from Pompeii presenting images of Isis. This implies that three lamps (see fig. 4.18 a-c) with green glaze are attested, to wit from: (a) the Casa degli Amorini Dorati, (b) the house VI 16, 40, and (c) an unknown location at Pompeii. Their images stemmed from an archetype of which other samples were attested in the collection of the British Museum. An example (Bailey’s catalogue: inv. no. Q968-9) is discussed created in the same workshop in Campania.\textsuperscript{545} As lamps depicting the Isiac triad and Isiac figures can be considered quite a widespread Roman development, it is rather difficult to confirm parallels within material execution.\textsuperscript{546} An additional difficulty is the fact that most publications on lamps illustrating the Isis-cult or Nilotic scenes solely focus on the iconographical portrayal or the shape and decoration such as glaze are not included in the description.\textsuperscript{547} However, it is clear that the green-glazed-ware does not cover all the Isis or Nilotic lamps, nor does Di Gioia’s catalogue merely consist of green-glazed lamps with an Egyptian theme; the majority of the lamps provide different iconographical themes.\textsuperscript{548} From the forty-five green-glazed lamps Di Gioia published, only six depict Isiac deities (although that many display crescent moons and lotus flowers perhaps related to the Isis cult). Nilotic scenes do not appear at all.\textsuperscript{549}
The lamps from Pompeii lead us one step further into the conceptual network. Lamps were manufactured in green glaze, but not with an exclusively Egyptian theme. Whereas a number of lamps (locally) produced and include a green glaze as well as an Isiac theme, they do not directly point to a cognitive link between green glaze and Egypt. We know of one instance indicating that at least in this case the link was made. This is again connected to the Casa degli Amorini Dorati. It housed one of the green-glazed lamps portraying Isiac deities in the shrine exclusively devoted to the goddess (fig. 18a). As to all the other references (i.e., the alabaster statuette of Horus, the marble statuette of Fortuna, the paintings of Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis, Serapis, and various cult objects) to Isis and considering the cognitive connections between green glaze and Egypt already established, it seems safe to argue that the green-glazed lamp in this particular example was intentionally selected. The green glaze might have formed an additional reference, and it is interesting in this respect, that a lamp was chosen, and not a statuette. By displaying a lamp showing Isiac deities in green glaze the connection to became even stronger, at least for those people with knowledge of Isis and her origin.

Acquisition and taste

Whereas the lamps are locally produced, a considerable number of figurines had an Egyptian origin and travelled to Pompeii. Questions rising from this observation concern the degree of difficulty met with when obtaining statuettes from Egypt, the prices to be paid, and the networks through which they arrived in Pompeii. Did such items travel by means of their own
trade routes and companies? Were they privately and independently traded or just a byproduct imported through the large organised cargo routes from Egypt to Rome such as the grain- and stone trade? And, in relation to this, did they arrive directly in Pompeii, via the port of Puteoli, or from Rome? Within the scope of this dissertation it is not possible to obtain a comprehensive overview of Roman trade routes and their cargo. However, it can be stated with considerable certainty that the possibility existed of acquiring foreign imports, even with regard to inhabitants of smaller towns such as Pompeii and Herculaneum.\textsuperscript{550} The quantity and distribution of pottery was large during the heyday of the Empire, as witnessed for instance with the \textit{terra sigillata} trade. The ease in which forms and vessels of \textit{terra sigillata} spread all over the Roman Empire has been widely acknowledged.

Thus it should not come as a surprise to find imported ‘exotic’ objects moving through these networks with similar ease. An example hereof we see with another kind of glaze: the so-called glazed \textit{skypboi} with relief decoration, mainly imported from Anatolia, to be specific: from a workshop located in Tarsus, the ancient capital of the Roman province of Cilicia.\textsuperscript{551} The type is both locally manufactured and imported and spreads out all through the Mediterranean area. Only the imported wares are attested at Pompeii. In fact, Pompeii contains the largest finds of exported glazed \textit{skypboi} outside Tarsus.\textsuperscript{552} This is of course for a large part due to the way the site is preserved; however, it can be concluded that it must have been relatively easy to obtain foreign objects for private use. When the Tarsus-cups are compared to the blue/green-glazed cups from Memphis, would these have appealed to a similar taste of glazed wares or were they experienced differently? Figure 4.19 shows that the two types of glazed wares appear very similar when it comes to colour, decoration, form, and (maybe also) use. Would people have been aware of the different provenances of such cups? Would it have mattered? If the wares were substitutable, it may point to a general wish for ‘exotic’ looking objects and that it did not matter whether it

\textsuperscript{550} The extent of any long distance trade is a matter of great debate. According to Carandini 1985, long distance trade formed the centre of Roman economy: it was cheap and fast to travel by sea. However, in recent years, this view has been moderated suggesting that (a) although long distance trade was present and important, it was mainly reserved for larger towns and (b) supplies mainly came from locally produced goods. For an overview of this discussion, see De Sena and Ikäheimo 2003 305-6.
\textsuperscript{551} See Hochuli-Gysel 1977. This category was also included in Di Gioia 2006.
\textsuperscript{552} Thirteen objects were found, see Hochuli-Gysel 1977, fig. 31. Other sites in Italy at which these wares were attested are: Herculaneum, Boscoreale, and Ostia.
was derived from Tarsus or Egypt. The substantial presence of such cups, however, may also question the notion of exotic altogether.

Fig. 4.19a-b) Imported glazed cups. To the left: a cylindrical glazed cup imported from Memphis, see Di Gioia 2006, 7.13.1, MNN 12607, and to the right: a glazed cup imported from Tarsus. From Hochiuli-Gysel 1977, T76 S154; MNN 22576.

Regarding the overall pottery trade and the presence and choices within Pompeian pottery, it seems one was aware of the difference between wares and their provenances and that it also mattered what was selected. This is demonstrated by means of a specific find from the tablinum of a Pompeian house (VIII 5,9): a wooden crate containing seventy-six *terra sigillata* bowls from Gaul, and thirty-seven lamps from northern Italy, all packed together and unused.\(^{553}\) There was a large *terra sigillata* production centre in Puteoli (here the largest percentage this kind of pottery encountered in Pompeii was manufactured) and lamps were locally produced in Pompeii itself, rendering it unnecessary to import Gaulish *terra sigillata*. This find suggests a taste especially for Gaulish *sigillata* and knowledge on the difference between the both kinds of red-glazed ware. It also shows personal preferences existing when choosing a type of ware. Furthermore, the Gaulish *terra sigillata* and the Memphite cups are not self-contained examples. Large quantities and forms of imported pottery found their way into Pompeii. A multitude of imported wares in Pompeii from all over the Mediterranean region has been listed.\(^{554}\) The town was part of an exceptionally intense Mediterranean


\(^{554}\) From the direct vicinity: Campanian Cookware (Cumae), Production A Sigillata (Northern Bay of Naples) Puteolian Sigillata, and Central Italian Sigillata (Arretine Ware). They were the most abundantly present categories of pottery. A smaller amount of imports consisted of Italian Glazed Ware (Central and Southern Italy), Firma lamps (Modena, Po Valley), South Gallic Sigillata (La Graufesenque in Southern France), Baetican Thin-Walled Ware (Southern Spain), African Cookware, African Utilitarian Ware, and African Sigillata Z (Tunisia); Aegean Cookware, Çandarli Ware (near Pergamon), Eastern Sigillata B (near Trales and the
connectivity because of its strategic location at the mouth of the River Sarno, its position between the rich villas at the Bay of Naples, appealing river connections with the hinterland, and the proximity to the centre of Campanian trade: Puteoli. Another argument in favour of an easy transfer of Egyptian goods specifically to Pompeii is the trade relations existing between Puteoli and Alexandria. The trade and commercial relations between these two towns had supposedly hugely intensified already during the period following the Punic wars. It has been argued that most if not all traffic from Egypt was concentrated at Puteoli, which would consequently render this harbour the most important centre for Egyptian imports on the Italian peninsula. This may explain the presence of a larger concentration of Egyptian imports in the town of Pompeii.

As to the other side of the trade route i.e., Egypt, it appeared that the specific origin to be established with regard to the statuettes was Memphis. What was the relation between this location and the imported statuettes? First and foremost, in the period between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD Memphis was still a significant Egyptian port town (although it significantly decreased in importance after the rise of Alexandria as a port) with a strategic position at the mouth of the Nile housing many workshops. Furthermore, while Bes was considered one of the most popular domestic deities in Roman Egypt (after Harpocrates and Isis), the majority of such statuettes in Egypt were not green-glazed, but were (as the result of mass production) carried out in terracotta (see also paragraph 4.3). Not one of such simple terracotta statuettes is ever attested in Pompeii or elsewhere on the Italian peninsula. Considering the production of Egyptian terracottas, if the inhabitants of Pompeii merely wished to own a Bes statuette from Egypt, it would have made sense to obtain an unglazed example, of which the largest production centres produced especially for domestic contexts. The fact it was glazed may therefore have been more important than the subject displayed. Either the consumer especially wanted faience-like

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555 Laurence 1994, 48. It has been argued that the towns of Campania, including Capua, Cumae, Neapolis, Pompeii and Puteoli, form a single socio-economic unit, see Frederiksen 1984, 321.
556 We read “dopo le guerre puniche le relazioni commerciali di Pozzuoli e di Alessandria recevettero un grande sviluppo. Tutto il traffico con; Egitto vi si concentrava; e là che arrivano gli oggetti di lusso egiziano.” See Dubois/Pisano 2007, 26 (repr. of Dubois 1902).
557 With the exception of a statuette which once belonged to the Museum Kircherianum which is more likely the result of a 17th-century exchange.
renditions which were then probably not selected to serve as ordinary figurines for domestic shrines. Or, by means of the nature of the existing trade between Memphis and Puteoli, these were the only types of figurines available. The answer would depend on the contexts in which the statuettes are found, and whether these were rich or modest. Nonetheless, even if the latter scenario was the case, being only limited choice in that which was imported, the statuettes must have been considered luxury items in Pompeii, or at least functioned beyond regular domestic shrine statuettes. The nature of the trade with Memphis could be an explanation for the reason why so many Pataikoi ended up in Pompeii. As Ptah-Pataikos was an important deity especially in Memphis (Ptah was its patron deity), the production of such statues would probably be larger as the chance they would be included in trade networks. This implies that the presence of Ptah-Pataikos in Pompeii may not have been a deliberate choice of the Roman consumer, but a consequence of a trade consisting of larger green-glazed statuette with Memphis.

4.4.7 Context: locations of Bes
The physical contexts in which Bes, Ptah-Pataikos and other blue-glazed objects occur will now be discussed. How many houses contain statuettes and which rooms are they found? Are they stand-alone not? In which kind of houses in terms of size and wealth are Bes and Ptah-Pataikos encountered? Can anything be inferred regarding the social position of their owners? Unfortunately, many of the objects of which the provenance was established with regard to Memphis do not know a clear find context in Pompeii. Table 4.15 introduces the contexts in which Bes and Ptah-Pataikos, and Nilotic animals were found. These present an interesting picture which deviates strongly from that of the other statuettes of Egyptian deities, as also concluded in 4.2. As with the taste for green glaze, the contexts reaffirm that the primary adoption of the Bes statuettes (as well as of the category of green-glazed wares) was not of a cultic nature. Whenever a find location could be established one context in particular contained green-glazed statuettes: gardens. The statues, both of deities and animals, were supposedly predominantly suited to be placed in garden settings. Three statuettes, however, have a different context e.g., an imported Memphite Ptah-Pataikos figure (no. 22607) found in a Caupona/Thermopolium (inn), the crocodile god with the Horus head found on a podium of the kitchen in the southwest of the peristyle of a small house, and a Bes statuette in a
The occurrence of the statuettes (both imported and locally produced) in such contexts suggest at least that they were not only available to upper class citizens. However, their location in gardens of the Casa delle Nozze d'Argento and the Casa di Octavius Quartio, and the specific way in which they adorned two large and opulent houses, indicates they are closely related to status display.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House</th>
<th>Loc.</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Objects</th>
<th>room</th>
<th>Other Aegyptiaca</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Casa di Acceptus and Euhodia</td>
<td>VII 5, 39</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Bes statue (117178); Ptah-P fountain (116666)</td>
<td>Viridarium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Octavius Quartio</td>
<td>II 2, 2</td>
<td>Very large</td>
<td>Bes statue (2897); Bes statue with a baboon head (PMS 10613b); Pharaoh statue (2898)</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Marble sphinx statuette; Painting: Isis priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di M. Lucretius</td>
<td>IX 3, 5</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Bes statue (22589)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Paintings: Personification of Alexandria; Egyptian figures (caryatides?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitium/bottega</td>
<td>I 14, 8</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Bes statue (PMS 12087)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 round bases decorated with floral motifs and animals (113021/2/3)</td>
<td>Peristyle</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Nozze d'Argento</td>
<td>V 2, 1</td>
<td>Very large</td>
<td>Crocodile statue (121324 Memphis); Crocodile statue (121325); Frog statue (121323); Frog fountain (121322)</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Nilotic scenes painted in a cubiculum and the peristylium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caupona/thermopolium</td>
<td>I 12, 6</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>'Iguana' statue (PMS 12960)</td>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear.</td>
<td>VIII 2, 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cylindrical glass (s.n. Memphis)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.15 Contexts of blue-glazed objects in Pompeian houses.

It is furthermore important to observe whether certain houses possessed other objects to be classified as ‘Aegyptiaca’. This was the case with the Casa di Octavius Quartio, which in addition to four glazed figurines, housed a marble sphinx executed in a Pharaonic style, and painting of an Isis priest inside one of the rooms. The Casa delle Nozze d'Argento contains both Nilotic

558 See Notizie degli Scavi 6 October 1770.
559 The houses have been classified according to size in Brandt 2010, 96.
560 Items without a reference number are kept at Museo Archaeologico Nazionale di Napoli.
561 Perhaps found at a passway, it corresponds to no. 11 from Mangone 2011. See also NdSc 17/04/1887.
scenes in the space where the green-glazed figures were displayed and in a cubiculum adjoining the atrium space. The Casa di M. Lucretius finally, housed paintings supposedly portraying the personification of Egypt and Egyptian caryatids. This confirms that their use and interpretation, even in the case of being positioned in comparable contexts, could vary.

4.4.8 Perception and use: the integration of Bes in Pompeii

Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in the context of apotropaic dwarfism

Now that the different components (concept, object, material, and context) of Bes and Ptah-Pataiko’s existence have been disentangled, the possibilities of their integration into the network of objects and contexts of Pompeii will be discussed and the possible functioning as an apotropaic dwarf will be dealt with. The contexts in which they were found confirm they were not only appropriated as garden ornament, but also might have carried an apotropaic function. Three statuettes of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos were encountered in a kitchen, a Caupona, and a bar context. The figurine of Ptah-Pataikos that was found in the Caupona was placed on a shelf, watching the gate, according to di Gioia probably had an apotropaic function. Furthermore, the particular example of Ptah-Pataikos in the Caupona also renders notable exposure, whereby the statuette’s colour and shape drew the attention of visitors to the town to the Caupona, important as it was one of the first bars one came across upon entering Pompeii through the Porta Ercolano. It could therefore likewise have served as a signboard in order to attract customers.

From the use-contexts it seems that Bes and Ptah-Pataikos were integrated into a long-standing tradition of apotropaic adoption of statues which included deformed figures and dwarf-like statuettes (e.g., grotesques, elderly people, Priapus figures, those with oddly shaped bodies (causing a comical and apotropaic effect) in order to ward off evil, as obscenity and humour were closely linked to apotropaism. Bes, already performing a primary function warding off evil in Egypt and the Levant, would therefore have fitted well within this tradition. However, in a Roman context the meaning of Bes

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562 See de Vos 1980, 66-7. Interestingly, none of the houses contained other objects directly linked to something representing Isis or the Isis cult. With the exception of the Isiac priest from Casa di Loreius Tibertinus, the cultic connotations of this painting might be questioned. See the discussion in 5.2 on the Casa di Loreius Tiburtinus. For an overview of the recent interpretations of the painting in this house, see Tronchin 2006, 119-220; 279.

563 “Fu rinvenuta sul bancone di mescita della caupona, con il capo rivolto verso Porta Ercolano, con evidente valore apotropaico”. See Di Gioia 2006, 111.

564 See Foley 2000, 275-311.
and Ptah-Pataikos statuettes was not exactly similar to that in Egypt, because his dwarf-form was unknown to Pompeians; he initially received an additional interpretation as strange (non-Roman). This perception of not understanding what it was assisted his task as an apotropaic statuette. A next question is whether the statuettes could have integrated in Pompeii in this specific manner. In the case of the kitchen/Caupona settings there seems to be an emphasised apotropaic functioning of the statues. In which networks were these statuettes appropriated, how did they become recognised, and why were they employed in such a fashion? This can be answered to another tradition within the wider scope of apotropaic objects: the so-called tintinnabula, which consist of chained bronze dwarf figures with oversized phallics that were suspended from the ceiling of houses, to specifically serve as lamps, now and again including bells.565 Furthermore, there was a link between applying dwarfs with comical and apotropaic tasks within tintinnabula and spaces such as thermopolia in Pompeii, rendering the specific locations of Bes, Ptah-Pataikos and certain other glazed figurines apparent. One of them was attested hanging above the counter of the thermopolium on the via dell’Abondanza (see Garmaise 1996, no. 181)566, whereas another was found in a smithy or foundry (Garmaise 1996, no. 176; house I VI,3).567 The custom of suspending dwarfs and absurd figures as apotropaica explains the framework in which Bes and Ptah-Pataikos could be integrated in this particular fashion.568 Because dwarfs in Egypt and in Roman contexts alike served to ward off evil, Bes and Ptah-Pataikos could function quite easily as apotropaic statues in the same guise as the dwarf tintinnabula. A connection with Egypt was therefore present, but through its specific use the association with Egypt becomes secondary in favour to its apotropaic association.

565 See Garmaise 1996, 114-8 (nos. 176-186). A study on the representations of dwarfs in Hellenistic Roman art concludes that most dwarf-related art is found in and stems from Egypt. The tintinnabula, however, are an Italian, or perhaps even an entirely Campanian tradition, as nine out of ten collected lamps are found in Pompeii or Herculaneum. The other example was found in Spain, and is currently held in Tarragona, see Garmaise 1996, no. 183.

566 Its original context was: above a bench of a thermopolium at the north side of the tratto at the via dell’Abondanza, close to the Casino dell’Aquila, to the right of the painting of the twelve gods. Its current location: MNN Inv. no. 1098. See Spano 1912, 115; Conticello De Spagnolis and De Carolis, 1988, 72.

567 Pollux (Poll.7.108) mentions this tradition: “In front of the smiths kilns there was the custom to fasten or plaster on something for the warding off Envy. They are called Baskania.”

**Bes in relation to Egyptian exoticism**

In an attempt to explain the presence of figures such as Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in a Roman setting in Pompeii, many studies have interpreted the objects as being a case of exoticism. They would add (with their foreignness and Egyptianness) to the atmosphere of the garden and thereby helping to create allusions to mysticism and exoticism. As argued in the section on Egyptomania (2.4.2) taking this view as an interpretative framework would imply that if this was an automatic response to the figurines, it would not only suggest a serious lack of knowledge on the side of the Romans but also a reluctance to integrate such objects.569 The issue is well argued for the case of Bes in the Levant, of which is stated: “The presence of Bes in Anatolia and the Levant may, of course, signal more than simply the transfer of an exotic object or exotic image. Rather, and more significantly, it may indicate the sharing of elemental ideas about the magical power of Bes and perhaps that of other Egyptian demons and symbols, which are found most profusely on Middle Bronze Age Syrian seals.”570 Exoticism remains a difficult way of interpreting objects because it constantly classifies them as being foreign to a society. On the one hand, Egypt, with its distinct cultural style, could play such a role in the Roman Empire, as it is different to Graeco-Roman style (see 4.5). On other hand, however, these ‘exotic’ styles were integrated into a network which reached beyond exoticism, but also called for a real, internalised and integrated perception of objects. The above analysis indicated the intricacies and complexities of a perception for the case of Pompeii. Bes is able to fulfill both roles very well, being the outcome of shared ideas on the apotropaic qualities of the dwarf and integrated in all its foreignness. His figure does not change into a stylistically ‘romanised’ version of an Egyptian original, because the non-Roman outlook is precisely what provides him with the apotropaic or exotic qualities.571 Alternatively, however, the statues are also encountered in the garden of the Casa di Octavius Quartio, together with other ‘Egyptian’ items, which were supposedly placed together in order to deliberately create an exotic garden atmosphere. Should this automatically be called exoticism? In these contexts Bes could just as well have carried out a protective task in a garden. We know for instance that the god Priapus had an apotropaic function in

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569 This should not be excluded as an explanation, but should not be the only interpretation of such objects.

570 See Aruz 2008, 148.

571 Utilising and perceiving such qualities within a local context is exactly what can be called cultural integration.
gardens as a guardian of the hortus. Priapus and Bes are comparable figures in this sense, because as with Priapus, Bes and Ptah-Pataikos are also considered as ‘lesser’ deities or ‘inanimate statues’ and therefore they could have functioned in a similar manner. It does not exclude exoticism as an interpretation, but does argue for the acknowledgement of a larger variety in use and perception and it provides a deeper comprehension of the application of these objects (and foreign objects in general) as intrinsically integrated material culture, not as something only appreciated for its strangeness.

Fountains and Nilotic scenes
A shared function of the Bes and Ptah-Pataikos figures as well as of the animal statuettes consisting of green glaze is as garden ornaments or water spouts. Which connection existed between these figures, the way in which they were created, and water? As to the entire array of fountain sculptures existing in the Roman world, its predominant characteristic can effortlessly be called eclectic. Human figures, deities, animals, and mythical beings are encountered, and each category contains many styles, forms, subjects, and attributes. A direct link with the exotic, or with water, and these contexts seems to be largely absent. Concerning the statuettes of deities in garden contexts, fountains of Aphrodite are the most abundant. Nevertheless, almost all deities of the existing in the Roman and Greek pantheon are present. This also counts for the animals depicted, which do not only consist of animals associated with water -although these do present the more common forms- such as dolphins, ducks, birds, frogs and crocodiles, but also hares, dogs, elephants, and eagles frequently occur. Elephants,

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572 Priapus, when compared to Venus in archaeology and in ancient literature are on opposite sides. They receive very different artistic treatment whereby Priapus is never more than a statue, whereas Venus is a vibrant presence captured in stone, see Stewart 1997, 577. This conceptual difference also exists for gods such as Bes. They too are perceived as inanimate statues of Eastern divinities rather than a vibrant presence.

573 Hygeia, Kyrene, Leda, Nereide, Nike, Niobe, Tyche, Apollo, Asklepios, Bellerophon, Bes, Dionysos, River gods (Nile, Tiber personifications), Hercules, Mercurius, Orpheus, Pan, Paris, Poseidon, Priapus, Theseus, Triton are listed as are statues of Fauns, Nymphs, boys or Cupids, see Kapossy 1969.

574 The complete list of animals consists of eagles, dolphins, boars, elephants, ducks, frogs, hares, dogs, hydra, crabs, crocodiles, cows, lions, hippopotami, peacocks, ravens, snakes, sphinxes, bulls, and doves. The origins of these objects vary from Pompeii and Tivoli to Ptolemais and Turkey, Kapossy, 1969, 47-53
hydrae, lions, crocodiles, hippopotami, or sphinxes could be listed as exotic but there are equal numbers of more ‘common’ animals.

It seems that fountains with figurative elements were not limited to exotic or foreign objects, as it was probably not necessarily the goal of every garden sculpture to create an exotic atmosphere. What was the reason that Bes and Ptah-Pataikos were considered appropriate as garden sculptures and fountains? Although they are not directly linked to water, a conceptual connection may have been the connection in Pompeii between Egypt and the Nile and Nilotic scenes. It could well be that the popularity of specifically Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in these contexts (together with a relatively easy obtainability by means of Mediterranean trade networks) was fostered because of the already abundant presence of Nilotic imagery in Pompeii. We come across Nilotic scenes in Pompeii from the 2nd century BC onwards, and may have not only have established the first reference to Egypt for Pompeians but also a conceptual framework in which the statuettes of crocodiles, frogs, Bes and Ptah-Pataikos fitted. In addition, the blue and green colour of the statuettes rendered them both appropriate to be utilised in aquatic contexts, reminding again of Nilotic scenes (whereas blue and green were also the prevailing colours in many Nilotic paintings and mosaics). This idea concurs with the second most attested subjects within the category of blue and green-glazed objects: crocodiles and frogs. These animals were associated with the Nile and featured in numerous Nilotic scenes throughout Pompeii. The interpretation of Ptah-Pataikos and Bes as dwarf figures (especially Ptah-Pataikos with is nude and bald appearance) could in this context therefore be visually linked with the pygmies figuring in Nilotic imagery. In the case that the garden statues were put up as group featuring especially crocodiles, frogs and dwarves, the suggestion could be made that they functioned as a three-dimensional version of the already popular Nilotic scene.

No matter how the material network is approached in order to search for the meaning of Bes in garden contexts, the fact that the glazed statues representing Bes, Ptah-Pataikos, crocodiles, and frogs served as fountains informs us of their social agency too. As a category in general the statuettes used as fountains had an important social role in the display of power, wealth, and (desired) social status because they were associated with

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575 An interesting notion in regard to 4.2 is that among many gods who found their way into the gardens as ornaments (e.g., Dionysus, Priapus, Aphrodite, Nike, Asclepius, Mercury) the more Oriental deities (e.g., Mithras, Cybele, Isis) never served as a water spout.
waterworks in a domestic context. When the aqueduct of Agrippa was introduced in 27 BC people suddenly had access to running water in both public fountains and baths as well as private use in houses, especially for garden fountains. However, as the private water supply in Pompeian houses was limited to only to a small number of people, fountains were restricted to the upper class. The strong correlation between a high social status and (number of) fountains can be verified by numerous examples e.g., the Casa dei Vetti (VI 15, 1.27) with its fourteen fountains, or the elaborate waterworks in the Casa di Octavius Quartio. As is argued: "The more and more excessive use of water for decorative domestic spaces in Pompeii strongly suggests changes in the nature of water use from the realm of pure utility to one of luxury." The statues of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in the form of a blue/green-glazed figurine therefore could also in a way be linked to an elite lifestyle. The way they were manufactured varied from the majority of other (white marble) garden statues, stood out physically, and pointed even more clearly to the fact the owner had a fountain and access to water in his house. Thus even if the form of Bes did not change, and he was not adapted in other types or iconographical forms, Bes, Ptah-Pataikos, and the other blue-glazed statuettes were presented with a new role in their new environment. This influenced their interpretation and use. In this way, as with the the apotropaic functioning of Bes and Ptah, the foreign finds a place in society.

4.4.9 Conclusion
Bes in a globalising society
After the analysis of the figure of Bes and its networks of perception, a more embedded conclusion on his appearance and integration can be provided for. The scanty evidence relating Bes to the Isis cult, and the observations made in the above sections, points to a more complex, if not a completely different image of the relationship between such objects and concepts. Although Ptah-Pataikos and Bes can be considered deities with an Egyptian origin as are Isis, Harpocrates, Anubis, and Serapis. Looking at the use, dissemination, material and the integration of Bes and Ptah-Pataikos in relation to Isis it seemed that for Pompeians they supposedly and conceptually to belonged to another category, or even to a multitude of categories. Bes is also not solely

577 See Jones and Robinson 2005, 695-710.
conceptually connected to Egypt, but only in certain forms and contexts. The relationships between Bes, the Isis cult, and Egypt appeared to be dynamic, not mutually exclusive, and not able to be captured in any hierarchical schemes. As in Egypt itself, Bes denoted a variety of concepts which could well have served various materialisations and contexts. Some established a connection with Isis while (the majority of the) others did not. The case of Pompeii similarly demonstrated, firstly, how easily Egyptian imports arrive at a rather mundane small town in the Roman world and secondly, how this, and other imports, influenced the perception of the concept ‘exotic’ in Pompeii. Pompeii was part of a network the lines of which stretched out as far as Egypt and the town of Puteoli (and its presumed intensive trade relationship with Memphis) was particularly important for the availability of Egyptian imports. This might both explain the presence of Egyptian objects in Pompeii and the large quantity of imports from Memphis. Although availability restricts choice to a great extent, it also stimulates choice. Once an object is imported, however, a process is set in motion integrating an object into a certain physical and cognitive environment. The environment and the object together are decisive for the way the process of integration will work out. The object induces a particular perception; the environment (by means of contexts, other objects, and people) will cater a fitting interpretation. The object is understood in an innovative way and will be applied accordingly.

Fig. 4.20) The conceptual network of Bes illustrating the way in which a figure like Bes and Ptah-Pataikos can become enmeshed.
This is a continuing process, as the uses will evoke new experiences and a new understanding leading to new uses. The point with the perception of an image such as of Bes is that its meaning is dependent on the environment it emerged from, not on the original context. All these factors play a role in the process of integration. Together with the conceptual associations created by means of analysing the material culture of Pompeii a network of Bes and his process of integration can be established (fig. 4.20). If the links of the physical and conceptual associations of Bes applying the contextual analysis of this paragraph are visualised in a network the individual connections with Bes and Egypt become clearer.

In which way was Bes connected to the Isis cult? Reviewing the diverse uses and manifestations of the concept of Bes, a suggestion can be forwarded that in the case of Bes in the Isis sanctuary a re-Egyptianisation did occur, where his image became intentionally connected to Isis, whereas in many other examples a mental connection to Egypt was absent. After the analysis it seems it was first and foremost the association with Egypt in Pompeii that caused Bes to be of interest to the Isis cult. However, there was a separate independent association in which Bes as an Egyptian phenomenon might be questioned. It seems that in Pompeii Bes was never considered as a real deity nor suitable to be placed in domestic shrines in the way it was done in Roman Egypt, testified by the incredible amount of terracotta statuettes attested there, but found a unique integration in Pompeii, due to local choices, preferences, and availability. This allowed for Bes to be used in contexts outside the Isiac sphere in a way that materialisations of Isis never did.

4.5 Egypt as style: ‘Foreign’ objects and images in Pompeii

4.5.1 Introduction

Style and archaeology: questions asked

This section will deal with objects and wall paintings which can be defined as having a recognisable Pharaonic-Egyptian style. They are occasionally imported from Egypt, but also produced locally and made to look Egyptian. All become recognisable nonetheless because of their style.\footnote{Style in this research will be defined anthropologically: in which units of style are defined not as individual artists, or schools of artists, or movements, but ‘cultures’ or ‘societies., see Gell 1998, 155-120. See also Neer 2005; 2010, 6-19 on the concept of style and the relationship between the artefact and the beholder.} It presents a
rather elusive category for its hermeneutical hitches; ‘Egyptian style’ is of course derived from our own modern perceptions of that what Egyptian style should entail and the way in which one would recognise it, that is to say, without knowing whether it represented a real and existing recognisable perceptual style to Roman viewers. However, it is argued that taking an etic position in this particular case has clear merits, because using stylistic properties as a heuristic device provides the opportunity to examine whether Egyptian style was in fact adopted as a conceptual category. Pharaonic-Egyptian styles in material culture are recognisable and do form a body containing perpetually identifiable and familiar relations. The methodological intention put forward in the present chapter that by means of not only analysing such homologous relations between artistic forms but also other structures and patterns of culture, referred to as axes of coherence (Gell 1998), it becomes possible to understand the cognitive significance of a cultural style within a certain context. The central overarching goal therefore, is to establish whether it is possible to retrieve the way in which Egyptian style was experienced by means of studying the context in which the objects were found. Having focused (see above) on Bes and Ptah-Pataikos as well as material and the relation to Egypt, the coming analysis will deal with style. In comparison to objects less distinctly Egyptian looking discussed above it was observed that first of all certain artefacts were able to become enmeshed in the associative network of its users in a complex variety of ways and (secondly, that the experience of Egypt in some instances became obscured within the conscious interpretation of an object. The reason for this is that it was foregrounded by means of other associations and perceptions (such as apotropaism, dwarfs, domestic religion, fountains, gardens, or water) dependent on the physical context in which it was displayed. Will this be different with regard to objects with a Pharaonic-Egyptian style that may have been meant to look ‘unroman’? Could a stele with hieroglyphs become entangled in the same way as the previously analysed objects? Are there any relations between objects of a certain style and the way in which they are used? Were such objects applied differently when compared with Nilotic scenes or Isiac related objects or with objects in a Roman style? The different themes present or absent in within the category of Egyptian style will be analysed with regard to Pompeii in order to acquire a clearer image not only on the perception of Egypt, but also on the specific integration structures employed to implement these objects in a local

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580 See Gell 1998, 167 on the stylistic analysis, as discussed in Hanson 1983.
stylistic framework. Furthermore, when a better grip on the use and perception of Egyptian style is obtained, it becomes possible to see the way in which present-day perceptions of Egypt have influenced the interpretations of objects or whether it also reflected the ways the Romans dealt with it.

Examples of objects belonging to this group (see table 4.16) are for instance paintings of Egyptian figures (such as pharaohs) depicted in the characteristic Pharaonic-Egyptian aspective manner, the portrayal of hieroglyphs, of Egyptian sphinxes, or of pyramids. These forms and subjects which remind us of Egypt may likewise have reminded the Romans of Egypt. It is significant to note in this respect, that both imported Egyptian objects and those locally crafted are included (although a distinction is made) in the category of Egyptian-Pharaonic styled artefacts. This is done partly in order to observe whether they were used in a different way (referring to the historiographical distinction made between Egyptian and Egyptianising artefacts as discussed in part 2.3.1.). As was stated before, although there is no indication to assume that Pompeians always made a conceptual distinction between Egyptian and Egyptianising objects, the possibility that something being imported could have carried a special significance with regard to its use and perception cannot be excluded beforehand. It all depends on the specific contexts in which the artefacts appear, and the way in which they are displayed.\footnote{It might be argued for instance that for cultic reasons, the temple dedicated to Isis would have cared more about original imports than non-cultic contexts.}

\textit{Egypt as style}

First however, some general notes on style and Egypt should be addressed. Because how does the concept of style in particular becomes able to contribute to the understanding of material culture?\footnote{See Gell 1998, 155.} Engaging with such questions requires additional knowledge on style and style perception on a broader level. This redirects the discussion towards style perception, cultural appreciation, and intersubjectivity. They constitute the basis of various concepts within art perception studies, such as Gombrich’ schemata, and Gell’s art nexus.\footnote{According to Gombrich’s schemata (see note 538) within Gell’s theory of art nexus, objects are reviewed as actors in a social web. The art object is regarded as an index of agency, within a complex of social relations termed the ‘art nexus’ which plays four basic roles: artist, art object (index), prototype (or referent) and recipient. They occur in a variety of permutations depending on whether they are either acting as social agents (i.e. the causal}
determination, but with the way in which style involves in a larger cultural network as well as its social and psychological implications. Style, in this case, can be regarded as an agent as were objects and material (see chapter 3). Is it justified to regard the perception of Egyptian style as being similar to our perception of it? This leads to the basis of the discussion on cultural perception. What can be said in favour of a comparable perception of Egyptian style between the Romans and present-day human beings may consist of the way in which art, visual culture, and perception developed until now, specifically aimed at the revolution in Greek art towards lifelike images and an entirely innovative way of representing the world. Styles not found within these schemata (e.g., Egyptian, Chinese, Meso-American) all styles that were not involved within the development of a style experienced as ‘normal’ or ‘capturing reality’ to Romans and to us) do not fit as intrinsic within perception, do not feel as if they are stylistically part of society, and are therefore perceived as ‘foreign’ or ‘deviant’. This might have been comparable to the Roman situation. There are of course, many things in Roman society influenced by Egypt that are or become perceived as an intrinsic part of the environment, this is in fact an important proposition this dissertation wants to advocate, however, does that also count for Egyptian style? The way of viewing the problem of style perception here confers with the suggestion that Gombrich developed in his book *Art and Illusion, a study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*. In this book Gombrich proposed that artists, before they ever dream of copying what they see before them, make pictures by manipulating inherited ‘schemata’ that designate reality by force of convention. With regard to the current research it would imply that the Romans created and viewed their art from conceptual schemata, internally based on the way in which they knew the world, what reality was, what beauty was; something which was for a significant part inherited from the Greeks. Thus all things perceived were understood in accordance with an internal frame of reference. Whereas the Egyptian style did not fit in these

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584 Gombrich 1960.
585 We read: …"it was an Egyptologist, Heinrich Schäfer, who extended Loewy’s findings and brought out the Greek achievement through his analysis of the Egyptian ways of rendering the visible world. Schäfer stressed that the ‘corrections’ introduced by the Greek artist in order to ‘match’ appearances are quite unique in the history of art. Far from being a natural procedure, they are the great exception. What is normal to man and child all over the globe is the reliance on schemata, on what is called ‘conceptual art’. What needs explanation is the sudden departure from this habit that spread from Greece to other parts of the world.”, see Gombrich 1960, 94-5.
586 See Wood 2013, 117.
schemata, it could in its own style conceptually and internally not be integrated into the concept of Roman style. Of course, one could create styles outside their conceptual schemata; Egyptian style could be copied, applied to walls and furniture and adapted in order to fit a certain purpose (otherwise it would be impossible to recognise it within material culture). However, there is a difference between making things a certain way and seeing or recognising them. Although objects can be created in a different style, they cannot be perceived as inherent. The issue Gombrich forwards is thus of interest as it takes the discussion on style and archaeology to a level beyond style as a cultural expression to arrive at the level of perception.

Assuming that style is a cultural expression made according to internal frames, it suggests that Egyptian-styled paintings and objects of Pompeii should have been manufactured by an Egyptian. Such thoughts on style and ethnicity, however, cannot hold as there are innumerable examples of Romans creating things in foreign styles. Another question should subsequently be asked: was the ‘foreignness’ that Egyptian style embodied concerning Roman schemata used because it did not belong in the reference frame and because it was not perceived as something realistic? Was it intentionally applied to be perceived as strange? Although the rendering of Pharaonic-Egyptian style in a Roman context is not the outcome of a cultural expression, the style does express the culture of Egypt. If done deliberately, what did one wish to express with Egypt as style? Taking this perspective adds a degree of intentionality the approach which was also discussed in chapter 3. Both conscious and non-conscious processes are agents of intersubjectivity and should be taken into account. This means that the concept of schemata can indeed be quite helpful when regarding style and objects in the case they are applied at a social level. Relevant questions now become how the choice for something Egyptian might be expressed. As Gell notes: “Artworks are like social agents, in that they are the outcomes of social initiatives which reflect a specific socially inculcated sensibility.”587 Not only are they results, they also act in social and material networks. According to Gombrich and Gell alike, styles are symptomatic of something else. The context is important in order to become aware of the more delicate and nuanced ideas surrounding styles, as stated by Gombrich:

“An act of choice is only of symptomatic significance, is expressive of something only if we can reconstruct the choice situation.”588 Analysing the

587 See Gell 1998, 220.
588 See Gombrich 1960, 16.
choice-situation of Egyptian-styled objects might be able to reveal the intentions behind the use of Pharaonic-Egyptian style. The notion of symptomatic significance furthermore connects to the theory of art-nexus by Alfred Gell, which supposes that objects produced within a recognisable set of forms and styles influence the way in which people make or use them.\textsuperscript{589}\textsuperscript{589} Egypt as a style might have had a specific function in Roman contexts, but because of the way it looked it also did something in and to that environment. This means for the coming parts it is relevant to look at the context in which Egypt was chosen and subsequently study the way in which it acted in that situation.

Now that it is clear why style is useful as a heuristic device in order to study perception, the following sections will carefully scrutinise the objects of a Pharaonic-Egyptian style, contextually looking for its associations and meanings, its implementation within a Roman-Pompeian frame, and at its agency in the contexts in which they were attested. If style perception on this level existed, the question arises: how strong was Egypt as a style? What did it do? As to the conceptual network approach: which mental concepts, and which material and social contexts facilitated the implementation of Egyptian-styled artefacts? These issues will be addressed in two case studies, the first aiming at a specific medium (wall paintings) and the second to a specific theme and its style (the sphinx in Egyptian versus Greek style). Before this is commenced however, objects belonging to the category ‘Egyptian-styled artefacts’ will be discussed first.

\textbf{4.5.2 Imports and locally crafted Aegyptiaca in an Egyptian style}

This section presents a detailed description and comparison of all the Egyptian-styled objects and paintings of Pompeii. In order to compare and analyse the potential relationship between the Isis cult and the Egyptian-styled objects the below table deals with the objects found in the temple dedicated to Isis. Based on these tables and their comparison a few significant observations can be made. Firstly, as with the complete dataset of ‘Aegyptiaca’, the table of Pharaonic-Egyptian style artefacts (table 4.16) yields an eclectic array of objects, material, themes, and subjects. It consists of wall paintings, furniture, and statuettes consisting of various materials: an ivory pyxis, and a greywacke slab displaying hieroglyphs that served as a threshold. However, compared to the entire number of paintings and objects

\textsuperscript{589} See Gell 1998, chapters 8 and 9.
found in Pompeii, artefacts in a Pharaonic-Egyptian style only account for an insignificant number and they do not even present 0,1% of the total finds of Pompeii.\footnote{From this perspective, the Egyptomania discussed in chapter 2 never existed.}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Object & Material & Attributes & house name & House no. & room name & Import/local production \\
\hline
Statuette of a pharaoh & Ceramic & Nemes, shendyt & Casa di Octavius Quartio & II 2, 2 & Garden & Import (probably) \\
Statuette of Horus & Alabaster & Falcon-head, shendyt & Casa degli Amorini Dorati & VI 16, 7,35 & Peristyle & Import (probably)\footnote{The fact it was presumably imported from Egypt has been determined by means of an iconographical and superficial analysis. No chemical analysis was carried out in order to establish its exact provenance. For a more detailed discussion on this statue, see Mol 2013.} \\
Wall painting of pharaohs and pharaonic figures & & Apis bull, pharaohs (nemes), Egyptian offering scenes, ankh & Casa del Frutteto & I 9, 5 & Cubiculum & Local production \\
Wall painting of a pharaoh and an Egyptian sphinx & & Pharaoh, nemes, shendyt, ankh & Casa del Bracciale d'Oro & VI 17, 42 & Triclinium & Local production \\
Pyxis of pharaonic figures & Ivory & Pharaonic figures & Bar & IX 6, b & & Local production \\
Wall painting of pharaonic figures (?) & & Two deities, one kneeling & Casa dei Guerrieri & I 3, 25 & Oecus & Local production \\
Wall painting of pharaonic figures & & Kneeling figures, one baboon? & Casa del Centenario & IX 8, 6 & Cubiculum & Local production \\
Two Egyptian style herms & Red quartzite & Nemes & Unnamed house & I 11, 13 & & Import \\
Egyptian style herm & Limestone /Marble & Nemes & Complesso di riti Magici & II 1, 12 & & Unclear \\
Wall painting of pharaonic figures & & Deities, kneeling figures, theriomorphic figures & Villa dei Misteri & & Tablinum & Local production \\
Slab/threshold & Greywacke & Hieroglyphs & Casa del Doppio Larario & VII 3, 11 & Triclinium & Import \\
Table supported by means of a sphinx & Bronze & Nemes, reclining, male & Casa dell'Ara Massima & VI 16, 15 & Triclinium & Unclear \\
Statuette of a sphinx & Marble & Nemes, reclining, male & Casa di Octavius Quartio & II 2, 2 & Garden & Local production \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Imported and locally crafted objects reflecting a Pharaonic Egyptian style.}
\end{table}

\footnote{According to de Vos 1983, the material of which the herms consist of hail from Gebel es-Silsile located at a distance of 60 km. from Aswan. See de Vos 1983, 60.}

\footnote{As determined after photographic analysis.}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>Import/local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sphinx</td>
<td>Red coloured Pottery</td>
<td>Nemes, reclining male</td>
<td>Sacrarium</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squatting Egyptian male deity</td>
<td>Faience</td>
<td>Sacrarium</td>
<td>Import</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian style herm</td>
<td>Limestone/marble (?)</td>
<td>Temple enclosure</td>
<td>Local (probably)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian funerary statuette</td>
<td>Limestone</td>
<td>Pit in the temple court</td>
<td>Import</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stele with twenty lines of hieroglyphs</td>
<td>Limestone</td>
<td>Hieroglyphs</td>
<td>Import</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17) Objects reflecting a Pharaonic-Egyptian style found in the Iseum.

This is, however, quantitatively speaking. Contextually the argument that Egypt mattered can be wholeheartedly supported, as all the objects were found in the most important and representational spaces of the house. A more specific relationship between rooms and houses and the presence of Pharaonic Egyptian-style objects, however, cannot be deduced: the rooms in which the objects were attested were as varied as the artefacts themselves. Moreover, these houses range from very large and rich estates (e.g., the Villa dei Misteri, the Casa di Octavius Quartio), to large and rich upper-class houses (e.g., the Casa di Centenario, the Casa degli Amorini Dorati, the Casa del Bracciale d’Oro), to relatively modest houses (such as the Casa del Frutteto, or the Casa dell’Ara Massima). Finally, they are also found in bars and very small houses (for example house I 11, 13). The contexts do not indicate a clear connection between the wealth of house owners and the possession of Egyptian-style objects. Striking is that many of the houses which did contain such artefacts often also possessed other objects associated with Egypt in one way or other. In many cases the Pharaonic Egyptian-style objects showed either a direct link to the Isis cult (bearing resemblance to objects also present in the sanctuary) or they were found together with other objects which could have been conceptually linked to Egypt (other than with a non-Egyptian style, but Aegyptiaca occur within the same contexts). For instance, the Casa di Octavius Quartio housed Egyptian-styled statuettes of a Pharaoh and a marble Egyptian sphinx (see table 4.16) as well as several glazed statuettes of Bes and a portrait of an Isis priest. In addition, paintings in the Casa del Frutteto and Villa dei Misteri include figures in an Pharaonic Egyptian style, but along with other Egyptian themes (pharaohs, Egyptian sphinxes and offering scenes, and an
Apis bull). In the Casa del Frutteto a pharaoh statue occurs alongside a pharaonic offering scene and a frame with the Apis bull, whereas the Villa dei Misteri presents us with Nilotic scenes, crocodiles, deities, and fantastic pharaonic figures. This array of deliberate and explicit visual references to Egypt are provided by means of a variety of material and iconographical sources. The case study concerning the Casa di Octavius Quartio in 5.3 will discuss in more detail the way in which these objects were utilised and related to each other. One may conclude that as to these specific contexts a conscious concept of Egypt could have been present and that thus, in certain cases, one was aware of the connection these objects had to Egypt. The other objects with an obvious context illustrate a similar reference to another concept of Egypt. In this case they seem to be connected to the cult of Isis. The alabaster statuette of Horus in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati, for instance, was found in a shrine devoted to Isiac deities. As to other houses, a link between objects displayed and objects derived from the Iseum could be established (see tables 4.16 and 4.17). The possible copy of the painting of Isis welcoming Io in Canopus from the Ekklesiasterion found in Casa del Duca di Aumale (discussed in 4.2.2) could have been an example hereof. However, other houses show similar cases. For instance, the Egyptian styled herm from the Complesso di Riti Magici seems to be an exact copy of the one found in the Sacrarium of the Isis temple. The two small (imported) herms consisting of red quartzite found in house I 11,13 may also have been related. Further, although they are not exact copies, it is remarkable that the Casa del Doppio Larario and the Isis temple house an imported slab displaying hieroglyphs. They are the only objects in Pompeii with hieroglyphs, which renders the chance they had a certain connection quite feasible. Re-use of the slab in the house as a threshold (because of the great sacred value connected to thresholds in Roman Italy in general) might have carried religious importance to the owners. It also constitutes a prominent position being the threshold to a room often occupied by the owner’s clients. It therefore might have displayed not only values of

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594 In contrast to the statement in the section on Isis, statuettes, and blue-glazed objects.  
595 This nevertheless does not inform us on either their ethnicity or their religious preferences.  
596 See 5.2 for a more extensive discussion on this statue and its context.  
597 On the herms see de Vos 1983, 60.  
598 It is stated that: “Its placement at the critical juncture of exterior and interior—a liminal space which, according to Augustine, Romans invoked at least three deities to safeguard—illustrates the power attributed to this object and its sacred script to protect the home and household within.” see, Swetnam-Burland 2007, 131. The threshold will be further discussed in part 5.1.
religious dedication, but also of status. This also counts for the copying behaviour in general, which can be regarded as an expression of devotion and a personal connection to Isis or the cult, but it also could have included social values.\textsuperscript{599}

Exceptions, however, of isolated examples with a Pharaonic-Egyptian style also occur. For example, the bronze sphinx table in the Casa dell’Ara Massima does not seem to refer in any way to the temple of Isis and has no other references to Egypt. The same applies to the ivory pyxis from bar IX 6,b.\textsuperscript{600} A similar illustration of secluded cases of Egyptian-styled objects are the three obsidian Egyptianising cups found in the Villa di San Marco at Castellamare di Stabia (ancient Stabiae).\textsuperscript{601} Whenever any connection of such objects to other concepts of Egypt were absent, it becomes interesting to observe the way in which such artefacts made sense within their contexts. If these Aegyptiaca were the only references to Egypt in the house, was a concept of Egypt actually consciously present in such cases?

Another significant observation to be inferred from the database is that the connection established between the Isis cult and the adoption of Pharaonic-Egyptian style artefacts seems to be limited to objects, not to painting. The Pharaonic-Egyptian style paintings in houses could not be linked in any way (in either style or content) to the Isis cult, as no references are made in houses to Isis via Egyptian styled painting, whereas the Isis temple does not include any Pharaonic-Egyptian style renderings on the walls. This poses an interesting juxtaposition in the conception and application of various media. Not even in the temple dedicated to Isis, of which the largest parts of its wall

\textsuperscript{599} An assumption could be made with regard to copy-behaviour and social status. The objects and the painting were found in rooms inaccessible to the public (the so-called Ekklesiasterion and sacarium) which were only meant for a select gathering. This implies that those familiar with these objects would have been involved with the cult on a higher level. Therefore the objects also represented (to the owners and to a small group of visitors of higher status) an allusion to this position taken up in the cult and to a higher social status, while displaying knowledge of the cult. Especially to other initiates the objects would have indeed made a strong impression.

\textsuperscript{600} The Pyxis is kept at the MNN, its reference number is unknown, see Cantarella and Jacobelli 1999.

\textsuperscript{601} Room 37 of the villa contained two obsidian cups encrusted with semi-precious stones (cornelian, malachite, white, pink coral, lapis lazuli) with Egyptian-style scenes and an obsidian vial with Nilotic scenes. It was concluded that the shape of the cups belongs to the Augustan era, and the petrographic study of the obsidian suggests it originated in the Lipari isles, see Leospo, 1999. Moreover, the house cannot be anything else than the environment of someone close to the Imperial court and the emperor. And, the subject itself leans to the tastes of the 1\textsuperscript{st} century AD with two offering scenes with a pair of animals (bull, ra) on the two larger cups, and an ornamental plant décor in the Hellenic Alexandrine tradition on the third, see Barbet 2004, 55-8.
paintings have been preserved, do the paintings show an Egyptian style as observed in the Villa dei Misteri or the Casa del Frutteto. The Egyptian subjects on the walls of the sanctuary were exclusively rendered in a Roman-Hellenistic style. Although the technique to create an Egyptian-style painting was obviously present in Pompeii, in the case of the Iseum it seems not to have been necessary to associate Isis to Egypt by means of pharaonic styled wall painting. However, objects with Egyptian styled features are found abundantly at the sanctuary precinct, also in the form of imported statuettes of naophori or shabti, slabs with hieroglyphs, and a locally crafted statue of an Egyptian sphinx made of indigenous red clay. Could it be that painting as a medium was not suitable to make the connection between Isis and Egypt? It is argued that the Isis-cult, as a relative newcomer within Roman religion, was more concerned with issues such as validating and legitimising, and signs that they used the past or even their foreignness as a justification for their presence (although the cult was new in Pompeii, referring to a pharaonic past emphasised the idea that it was ‘old’ and therefore important cult) can be found in almost every Iseum. The imports in the Iseum and the Egyptian-styled objects clearly demonstrate this, as does the execution of a statue of Isis in a specific Archaic style. From this point of view, wall paintings might not have added to this concept in the same way sculpture was capable of, because wall painting was always associated with the present due to its perishable and short-lived nature, and because it was painted on a wall, it could never have originated from Egypt or be perceived as ancient. Furthermore, although the objects such as the terracotta sphinx from the Iseum are not authentically Egyptian, its material and style could give rise to the suggestion it was Egyptian, whereas Egyptian themes on wall paintings could never have been experienced as such as they were clearly created within a modern context in Pompeii. This also implies that in the case that wall paintings in an Egyptian style are found in houses, one would not have been particularly concerned with the authenticity of the content. It did not matter they were not originally from Egypt, they were in their own way regarded and appreciated as Egyptianising.

602 It is noted: “...the creation of an Egyptian atmosphere was not solely dependent on the lavish reproduction of “authentic” Egyptian styles.”, see Swetnam-Burland 2007, 118.
603 See Mol and Versluys (forthcoming 2014). Authenticity may have carried more importance in religious contexts.
604 In the sense it was not authentically Egyptian, does not imply they could not have referred to Egypt or does that they were in all cases always appreciated as something Egyptianising. In this case, an analogy with modern application of exotic wall painting styles can be drawn. Home owners decorate their houses with for instance wall paper with
makes clear that various kinds of material culture (object, painting) have
different associations and can therefore not always serve to convey similar
messages or refer to similar concepts and values.
We could deduce from this example that whenever Egyptian-style paintings
are attested, they explicitly do not refer to concepts related to the Isis cult.
The questions posed in the introduction becomes of special interest here,
because if it was not primarily cultic as was always assumed, what did these
paintings express? What could facilitate the choice for Egyptian wall
paintings? Which concepts lie behind its application and integration in
Pompeii?

4.5.3 Egyptian styled wall paintings
Pharaonic scenes in Pompeii
The following section will touch upon the lengthy, on-going debate on the so-
called Pompeian Styles and domestic contexts in which Egyptian-style wall
paintings play a relatively substantial role. Firstly, compared to other motifs,
Egyptian-style figures only form a minor part of the available paintings.
However, being easily recognisable to scholars, they feature regularly in
discussions on wall paintings and therefore provide a good case study in
order to scrutinise the discussions and interpretations surrounding Aegyptiaca. Several wall paintings described as displaying ‘Egyptianising’
motifs are included in table 4.16. They deal with images that include
Egyptian iconography such as pharaohs, sphinxes, or deities in the
characteristic two-dimensional style of portrayal. In the Villa dei Misteri a
room is decorated with fantastic pharaonic images. The Casa del Bracciale
d’Oro houses a garden scene with Egyptian sphinxes and pharaohs as
garden statues. The Casa del Frutteto combines the two in showing a garden
scene on the lower walls and pharaonic offering scenes on the upper panels.
The Casa del Frutteto is a well preserved example that combines various
ways of applying Egyptian style in Roman wall paintings. Moreover, it is
always referred to as the prime example of ‘the Egyptianising style’ in
Pompeian wall painting. It thus stands to reason that it will serve as the key
example in order to analyse paintings.
The Casa del Frutteto (I 9,5) concerns a rather modest house in Pompeii.
Although its construction date is not completely clear, the attested paintings

Japanese motifs are aware of the fact it is not really from Japan, but that it represents
Japanese style. It is aesthetically appreciated.

605 For an ample application of Egypt in argumentations, see Leach 2004, 140; Ling 1991
(preserved in the cubicula nos. 5 and 8, and from a triclinium, Room nr. 10) date from the Claudian period (40-50 AD) and were rendered in a Late Third Pompeian-style. The two cubicula include Egyptianising motifs, whereas the triclinium displays mythological scenes on large panels against a black background. The painting in the first cubiculum depicts a garden scene with plants, birds, Egyptian statues of pharaohs, architectural features with Egyptian offering scenes and an Apis bull (fig. 4.21). The second cubiculum includes an orchard with fruit trees and the rendition of an Isis jug. Former interpretations of these Egyptianising paintings within the discussion on Roman wall painting range from interpretations of expressions of devotion to the Isis cult to exoticism and Egyptomania within the Augustan revolution in art. The interpretations give rise to questions regarding the general discussion on Egyptian material culture (see chapter 2) and to wall paintings in particular.

Fig. 4.21) Paintings from Cubiculum (5) in the Casa del Frutteto (I 9,5). To the left: the north wall with two standing marble pharaoh statues behind a garden fence. A scene of Dionysus is included on a panel in the centre. On top of the railing: a panel portraying the bull Apis. To the right: the east wall with a similar decoration of pharaohs and Dionysus. However, the two upper scenes depict Pharaonic offering scenes. Photograph by R. Kalkers.

607 For a general discussion, see 2.4.2.
As argued above, Egyptomania only accounts for an increase in the number of Aegyptiaca and does not provide an explanation for its integration. Jashemski’s monograph on Roman gardens refers to the Egyptian-styled paintings in the cubiculum of the Casa del Frutteto as a desire for the exotic (as does Ling 1991, who describes it as a similar desire prompting a fashion for chinoiserie in the decorative arts of Europe during the 17th and the 18th century). As to the wall paintings of Pompeii, the number of five in a Pharaonic-Egyptian style, render it difficult to speak of a true Egyptomania. Furthermore, when Augustus is used as explanation for an increased popularity, Rome should also be taken up in the analysis, as the presence of paintings in Pompeii would then be a case of social emulation trickled down from processes starting in Rome. Besides chinoiserie it is also suggested that “the unknown owner was a worshipper of Isis and Dionysos”. Can both be true? Exoticism and religion as explanation for the presence of Egyptian wall paintings seem to be two rather self-contradictory interpretations. If the appearance of the paintings would be derived from a desire for the exotic, would that not precisely imply that the owner in fact did not worship Isis? As a devotee, such images would evidently not be exotic to him but a part of his way of veneration and therefore belonging to his frame of knowledge on the cult of Isis. However, whether this was indeed a way of demonstrating devotion to Isis may be questioned. Could the owners’ religious preference be deduced solely by means of the presence of this painting? From what the first paragraphs of this chapter made clear about the worship of Isis and accompanying religious-artistic expressions of participants of the cult these paintings strike as odd. They are not comparable to anything linked to Isis or the Isis cult with the exception perhaps of Apis and the possible depiction of a jar related to Isis. Such paintings, however, were never found amongst those houses in the worship of Isis that could be materially attested. Nor does anything in the Iseum

608 For a survey of the discussion on Egyptomania, see 2.4.2.
609 See Jashemski 1979, note 56.
610 Although Rome counts a number of paintings that can be added in order to complement the argument, it should not be forgotten that Pompeii had its own sphere of influence and social cohesion. Even when regarding the influence of Rome, the material culture of Pompeii should be reviewed on its terms.
611 For the first interpretation, see Ling 1991; the house is also mentioned in Jashemski 1979, 346, note 105. As to the second interpretation, see Le Corsu 1967; Jashemski 1979, note 56. This painting is considered a confrontation of Hellenic and Egyptian elements. The interpretation it makes a reference to the cults of Dionysus and Osiris (considered gods long assimilated within the culture of Hellenic religious syncretism) is adhered to, while maintaining a broadly Graeco-Roman visual style, see Elsner 2006, 280-3.
carries a link to these paintings.\textsuperscript{612} In this particular case, both interpretative frameworks seem unsatisfactory in order to explain their meaning. The previous interpretations of the house and its paintings share, however, the fact that they link and interpret the appearance of Egypt in wall painting in accordance to an external source to wit either historical development, religion, or a taste for the exotic, without looking at the internal development or the horizontal range of decoration in Pompeii. Although larger historical developments must not be ignored, they should never form the starting point of interpretation. Instead, the objects ought to be considered within the variety of horizontal and local possibilities in which the phenomenon occurs, and within the internal network of integration and conceptual connections in Pompeii. These associations can be found in the category of the paintings themselves, by means of the way in which they are conveyed, their date, location, and function. However, the associations are established in relation to other material and conceptual references which enable the painting to become applied and the idea to be conceived in the first place. Once this has been carefully analysed, it is possible to look again at the reason why in certain cases one chooses to portray Egyptian style and which larger developments this brought about.

Subject, style, and iconography
Looking more closely at the painting and its contents results in a better image of how Egyptian figures were portrayed and the properties of the mental image of Egyptian style. Regarding style, a trait is the explicit two-dimensional style of depicting the Egyptian figures. This means that the heads and legs are portrayed more or less \textit{en profil}, while the shoulders are \textit{en face}. This can be observed on both panels with offering scenes (see fig. 4.22, upper pair), and also with the pharaoh statues (now faded, but identified as such by their posture and nemes: see fig. 4.22, middle row) and the Apis bull (lower row).

\textsuperscript{612} Situla are not unambiguously connected to Isis, but have a multitude of functions in Roman art and culture. See for an overview hereof Moormann 1988, 42-3. Here a religious interpretation is opted against, but also pointed out (as there is no example from Egyptian sculpture known) that the owners intended to create an Egyptian atmosphere rather than copy a realistic Egyptian scene.
Fig. 4.22) Details from the cubiculum of the Casa del Frutteto. The upper paintings depict Egyptian offering scenes, the middle two: a seated and a standing marble statue of a Pharaoh and the lower pair portray Apis (left) and Dionysus and a Maenad. (photographs by R. Kalkers)

Only the Egyptian subjects in the painting are conveyed in this style (Dionysus does not share this phenomenon, nor do the plants and birds), meaning it seems to have been carried out deliberately in order to convey not only an Egyptian subject, but also an Egyptian style.613 It can be assumed, therefore, that the specific style contains a distinguishing feature not only to us, but also to Roman viewers. This distinct feature seems to be deliberately applied in order to add an Egyptian atmosphere to the images. The Egyptian style was consciously applied as a style, which prevailed its iconographical meaning. This becomes even more apparent if the portrait of the pharaoh is placed back within the category of marble garden sculpture painting (fig. 4.23). Indeed the pharaoh is conveyed in a two-dimensional style, while the

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613 Would this also have been related to the way in which they were cognitively experienced as a subject? Dionysus occurs in a myth and can be experienced as a living figure with associated traits, deeds, and a life history, whereas the Egyptian scenes are all either statues (note that the Apis bull is also standing on a pedestal) or flat iconographic scenes (see the discussion in 4.2). Egyptian deities were no part of a myth or a narrative. Thus there was nothing to refer to than Egypt. Could it ever be regarded a 'living' part of the wall painting?
Apollo statue stands in a contra-post position. The shadow of his legs and armour cast create three-dimensionality and depth. As with the Apollo statue from the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia (see fig. 4.23) and numerous other paintings, in which three-dimensionality and depth is brought about by working with shades and depth, the skill to create a three-dimensional picture was present in Pompeii.\textsuperscript{614} It also seems to have been of relevance, considering the number and precision with which such paintings were accomplished, to render the statues realistic and the painting as engaging as possible for the viewer. The more interesting it becomes when we observe that those crafts were deliberately ignored in order to create an Egyptian style.

This also counts for the Apis bull, which is placed on a pedestal as to represent a statue and is standing in the same pose as we see statues Apis appear in Rome and Egypt.\textsuperscript{615} When compared to other representations of

\textsuperscript{614} The panels in the cubiculum also include differences whereas the Dionisiac scenes have depth and include shadow effect, the pharaonic scenes and the Apis bull are depicted in a flat manner. The birds sitting on the frames which display the Egyptian scenes (to emphasise the difference between ‘living creatures’ and architecture) are again painted in a three-dimensional way.

\textsuperscript{615} As for instance the granodiorite Apis bull in Palazzo Altemps (inv. no. 182.594) found on the Esquiline hill in Rome, but also similar to many small bronze statuettes such as the one from 6\textsuperscript{th} century BC Lower Egypt now in the BM (inv. no. AE 37448), or on paintings and stelae such as depicted on the Serapeum stele from Saqqara now displayed in the Louvre (inv. no. DAE-11282806). Although a similar way of depiction assumes knowledge of the
bulls in Pompeian wall paintings, the Frutett-Apis clearly deviates, whereas all other bulls were depicted in dynamic positions, moving, and lifting or turning their heads (a.k.a. representing living bulls).616

If this painting is compared with the Egyptian paintings in cubiculum of the Casa di Centenario and the exedra of the Villa dei Misteri (fig. 4.24), they seem different to those from the Casa del Bracciale d'Oro and the Casa del Frutteto. However, the fact that the Frutteto combines the paintings of the garden statue pharaohs with painted frames of Egyptian figures show that these can both belong to the same category of Pharaonic figures. In addition it shows that there is no differentiation in referring to something ‘Egyptian’ and style. Placing the pharaoh in a garden setting required him to be painted in accordance to the context, so he was painted as a marble statue. The painter could play with the subject and mixed both styles so that it became clear it was Egyptian by means of its aspective style, the subject and perhaps also the use of the colour gold. Nevertheless, he did so in accordance with the rules for garden painting. This implies that the artist could create Egypt in a certain style in accordance with the artistic context. The way in which he knew of Egyptian art (by means of ethnicity, travel, or artistic interest) can in this case be subjugated by the fact that the Roman viewer could apparently recognise this as Egyptian, or at least as deviating in style from that which was normal, by means of the way it was made.

616 The bull features regularly in Pompeian wall painting, within the myth of Europe and the bull. Within this guise the bull is always depicted moving, though not always in the same way. In the house of the Gladiators (V 5,3), the bull is turning towards the viewer with the front part of his body, in the Casa dei Postumii (VIII 4,4) and Casa delle Pescatrice (VII 9,63), the bull is galloping with his head turned to the viewer, whereas in house I 8,9 the bull is lifting his head and seems to be slowly moving forward. Two other scenes show the bull outside a mythological context, one in a hunt (in house VI 16,28) where he is galloping with elevated front legs and another in which the bull is running carrying a leopard which has attacked him (in Casa dei Epigrammi, V 1,18).

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*style* of Egyptian painting, it does not seem to denote a cultic use, as the context of the painting in a cubiculum testifies against this, as well as that Apis is never found in any cultic context (not in statuette nor in painting) except for the sacrarium of the Isis temple. The bull depicted there is in a completely different rendering than both the bull from Casa del Frutteto as well as all other bull depictions in Pompeii. This bull however, is depicted moving and is depicted as a living bull.
The paintings of the so-called ‘Black Room’ of the Villa of Agrippa Postumus (fig. 4.24b) and currently exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) are comparable to the paintings in the Casa di Frutteto.\(^{618}\) They show Egyptianising scenes in similar panels; both depict offering scenes. The villa was located in Boscotrecase and originally belonged to Agrippa.\(^{619}\) The room in which the Egyptianising paintings were displayed was a cubiculum with a view on the bay of Naples; the paintings of Boscotrecase were created during the last decade of the 1st century BC. According to scholars the decoration provides visual references to the reign of Augustus by means of the representations of swans (the bird of Apollo) and the Egyptianising motifs, which served as a reminder to the recent annexation of Egypt.\(^{620}\) Interesting regarding this case is a study that suggests that the Black Room and the rooms of the Casa del Frutteto were probably created by the same artist. This presumption is, primarily based on similarities between the Black Room scenes as well as the vignettes and mythological landscapes found in the triclinium (Room 10), not on the ‘Egyptian’ room.\(^{621}\) Although it is interesting to see that both rooms are cubicula, the similarities witnessed between the

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\(^{617}\) *Pompeii in Piture e Mosaici* refers to the encyclopaedia of paintings and mosaics found in Pompeii in nine volumes, edited by G. Pugliere Carratelli between 1993-2003. Henceforth abbreviated as PPM.

\(^{618}\) See Pappalardo 2009, 152-5.


\(^{620}\) Bragantini and de Vos 1982, 30 and Clarke 1991, 125.

\(^{621}\) In both paintings the landscapes include long-shanked figures. One has applied extensive underpainting of yellow on a blue ground, and a characteristic manner of representing architecture with a low gable and trees with dappled foliage. It is also noted that the pictures from the Casa del Frutteto are much paler in palette and freer in brushwork than the Boscotrecase paintings and presumably later in date. The other rooms are not mentioned, nor is the similarity between the paintings of Bracciale d’Oro and Frutteto. However, as the latter date from the Claudian period (implying a span of 50 years between the paintings of Boscotrecase and the Casa del Frutteto) it is unlikely that it was the exact same painter, see Richardson 2000, 39.
paintings are more likely to be due to the painter than the suggestion that the owners of the very modest house of the Frutteto tried to deliberately copy the paintings from the Villa of Agrippa Postumus. Also, if the political link to August was intentionally made in the Black Room, it was absent in the case of the Casa del Frutteto, as these were made between 40 and 50 AD. The owners of the house could however, have seen the paintings in the Casa del Bracciale d’Oro (which are dated earlier than the paintings in the Frutteto). The walls in the triclinium (no 31) of the Casa del Bracciale d’Oro show a clear parallel in design and iconography. The painting shows a comparable a garden setting with a similar panel displaying an Apis bull (although the bull is not identical to the one in the Casa del Frutteto) and pharaohs positioned in a similar way between the leaves of the garden and in a similar posture (Pharaonic-Egyptian style, white with details in yellow). However, this time also sphinxes are depicted, executed in an Egyptian style: lying down and wearing (at least the sphinx on the right, the left sphinx is too damaged) a typically Pharaonic headgear (nemes).

**Nilotic scenes and Pharaonic scenes**

As mentioned above, Nilotic scenes and Pharaonic-Egyptian styled material culture in some way allude to Egypt. Seemingly, however, more differences can be noted than there are similarities. With exception of the difference in style between the two types of scenes, one can discern more differences whenever Nilotic scenes are compared with pharaonic scenes. The first hereof concern the location and distribution of the wall paintings. The majority of the Nilotic scenes could be attested in outdoor spaces (e.g., peristylia, viridaria, gardens) whereas paintings with pharaonic scenes are almost all to be found indoors. In fact, the three instances in which Egyptian wall paintings are found within a peristyle setting (they are never attested in a garden setting) include domestic shrine paintings of Egyptian deities. Would this imply there was no association between Nilotic scenes and Egyptian-style paintings as a reference to Egypt? Not in location, not in application, and not iconographically, too, does there seem to be any correlations present. Egyptian-style scenes count pharaohs, sphinxes, but no hippopotami, ducks, pygmies or lotus plants. On the other hand, Nilotic

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622 The paintings in the Casa del Frutteto are dated slightly later, from the Claudian period between 41-54 AD (PPM II, 2), the dating from the paintings of the Casa dell’Bracciale d’Oro lie between 35 and 40 AD (PPM VI, 44).

623 There are the wall paintings in the Preadia di Giulia Felice (II, 2, 2), Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI 16, 7.38), and the Casa delle Amazzoni (VI 2, 4) (see 4.3).
scenes never contain anything in an Egyptian style. There seems to be no intermingling between the two concepts. However, the two themes are not unrelated, as the tablinum painting in the Villa dei Misteri includes Egyptian-style figures in the upper frame (see fig. 4.24d) and Nilotic images in a lower frame around the walls consisting of lilies and ducks. In addition, the merging of these two forms of Aegyptiaca is present in objects. The three obsidian cups from the Villa di San Marco count two with an Egyptian scene, but also a vial depicting Nilotic scenes. The iconographical connection in this case can be no other than the concept of Egypt. Nilotic scenes and Egyptian-Pharaonic style could thus in certain instances be related by means of this concept. Significant next steps would be to meticulously analyse in which instances this was indeed the case, and to investigate whether these adoptions of Nilotic imagery differed from those unconnected to other Egypt references. This will be carried out in 4.6.

*Egyptian style in wall painting: use and perception*

As mentioned above, the reason for the presence of Egyptian images such as in the Casa del Frutteto are agreed upon by scholars as: “reflecting a fashion which became especially popular in the decorative arts after the annexation of Egypt in 31-30 BC”. Did the appearance of Egyptian style have anything to do with any political-historical developments? With regard to the paintings of Rome and Pompeii we see a distinct number of residences housing Egyptianising wall paintings applied in various ways. In fact, many examples hereof can indeed be related to the Augustan period, several perhaps even to Augustus himself and his inner circle. The Aula Isiaca, for instance, located on the Palatine and decorated between c.30 and 25 BC, counts elongated and vegetalised columns, Nilotic scenes, stylised lotus flowers and volutes, a frieze with uraei, Egyptian crowns, beaked water jugs, and an item said to be the feather crown belonging to Isis. The Villa della Farnesina (the alleged house of Agrippa and his wife, the daughter of Augustus) which was decorated in c.20 BC shares certain features with the Aula Isiaca. However,

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624 The only exception would be a painting of two statues of a sphinx found in the frigidarium of Terme Suburbane which was placed on a podium in order to flank the entrance to a temple, see Versluys 2002, no. 66, 153-4. Whether the temple depicted here does indeed house a picture of a sphinx is very difficult to discern. If correct, however, the sphinx is seated in upright position and not reclining as an Egyptian-style sphinx would.
625 This will be examined in more detail in 4.6. At present, one can state, however, that the correlation between these two styles of art, in spite of their apparent mutual connection to Egypt, seems to be largely absent.
it also includes a representation of an Isis figure emerging from a vegetal candelabrum.628 Interestingly, the reference to Egypt in these two examples is not carried out in a Pharaonic-Egyptian style. They also contain notably different scenes than found in the paintings of the Casa del Frutteto and the villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase.629 In the latter, as mentioned (see fig. 4.24), an aspetic Egyptian style was created, showing pharaonic figures and offering scenes carries no reference to Isis, whereas the other two houses are decorated by means of paintings in Hellenistic style with floral motifs, stylised candelabra, statues of Isis and Isiac symbols.

It can be observed that Egypt is present in the Second as well as in the Third Pompeian Style. The former is represented by means of the Villa of Livia as well as the Aula Isiaca and the latter style by means of the Villa of Agrippa Postumus and Villa della Farnesina (early Third Style). The imagery inside all these residences contained artistic references related to Egypt, and all not only closely connected to Augustus, but also date from approximately the same period.630 The paintings, nonetheless, reflect a different style and iconography concerning the subject ‘Egypt’. The Aula Isiaca contained Isiac motifs, lotus flowers, and Egyptian columns as decorative features in a Roman style, whereas Agrippa Postumus’s villa had painted panels depicting Pharaonic offering scenes in an Egyptian style. Was this difference related to a change in the way in which Egypt came to be perceived? After looking into the data it is argued that this difference has not so much to do with the perception of Egypt but more with the way in which individual Pompeian styles developed and wall painting in general was perceived.

It is argued, by Zanker and Wallace-Hadrill amongst others, that in general, the purpose of Roman wall painting was the creation of an allusion to a larger life.631 Romans placed themselves within a space of leisure, luxury,

628 See Mols and Moormann 2008, fig. 66.

629 For a similar style with the vegetal columns at the villa at Portici (MNN Inv. no 8593) which was decorated between c.20 and 10 BC, see Ling 1991, 40 no 39.

630 But not the way they are implemented. So the fact that Egypt finds its way into the walls might have to do with this, but the Egyptian style has to do with a development in wall painting.

631 See Zanker 2008, 23-33; Petersen 2006, 138. The illusions on Campanian walls were able to allude to luxurious villas or grand gardens, implying they carried the charge of social meanings and could be read as evidence for social construction within antiquity, see Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 17-28. In this respect it adds to the social emulation model. However, the paintings are more than just a way of 'social construction'. Not only did the vistas create an illusion to a larger [wealthier] life, they also opened a vista to fantasy worlds, to magical places and creatures that did not exist in real life. There is an important psychological component in the renderings of these wall paintings, in which human beings explore the
and *otium* by means of opening up the space to exotic worlds. And although it was an allusion, one did seem to search for a certain sense of realism in style to be precisely able to experience the painting as exotic, larger than life, and otherworldly; its possibility of being real was exactly what could make it appear this way.632 This is what Gombrich meant with the perception of internal schemata: a sense of conceptual reality in painting which could only be experienced by means of their own internal style. In relation to the development of Egyptian-style paintings, this becomes well reflected in the change from the Second to the Third Pompeian Style. Because what the development within the Third Style could do in addition to the Second style, was to use isolated panels with abstract forms as architectural features. In such panels one could easily apply more divergent styles and subjects, as it was no longer part of the ‘real’ scene and did not represent something ‘living’ but something abstract in the form of an architectural feature. These frames thus allowed painters much more freedom as to that which they depicted. In this form, Egypt as a style could find its way into wall paintings, whereas it previously needed to be translated into the locally applied style, implying it needed to blend in as a Roman (normal) feature in order to be regarded realistic. On the basis of this analysis, an important deduction can be made with regard to Egypt as the alleged ‘Other’. Egypt was not seen as the embodiment of the ‘Other’ *per se* and for that reason adopted in wall paintings, but was instead deliberately alienated as a result of a Roman development in wall painting. This example is reflected in the frames of the villa of Agrippa Postumus in Boscotrecase as well as the Casa del Frutteto in Pompeii. However, it is important to note that the application of Egyptian style was not unique as the paintings in the Villa della Farnesina illustrate. While Isis was rendered in a Roman style as she was part of the ‘real’ scene, the paintings depict similar frames in a distinct Greek-archaising style identical to the way the Egyptian-style scene was rendered in Boscotrecase. The wall painting in the Villa della Farnesina reflects archaising images

limits of their imagination in order to stimulate positive emotions by means of an imagined world consisting of myth and fantasy.

632 *The geographical lore created in Italy during the empire invited immersion into an illusory world, an experience not unlike that of theoria in pilgrimage. Though the recognition of signs, the memory led to ‘time travel’ within a landscape and a suspension of present time. The imaginary transportation to another place, most often into legendary Greece, was incited by visual stimuli that, like the guide’s vivid anecdote, led the traveller from a landmark to the events that happened around it.* See Bergmann 2001, 166. As to the holistic effect supposedly reached with painting: “their [wall painting] effects as stimulating a phenomenological, bodily experience, more like that stimulated by architecture than by two-dimensional media.”, see Bergmann 2002, 17-8.
within a golden frame supported by means of winged female figures standing on pedestals. Not only the style was conveyed in a distinct Archaising style, the painting technique (pale colours on a white background) also remind of Archaic *leythoi*. The style is deliberately applied in order to establish a stylistic contrast to the commonly (Roman) styled background. Due to its deviant style it could not be included in the main frames of the scene, in the ‘reality’. Indeed, by means of the possibility of playing with styles and images the panels added something important to the allusion of the exotic and otherworldyness desired in Roman wall painting of this period, as the Black Room in Boscotrecase illustrates so well. Therefore, it offered an excellent way of causing the effect people wished to achieve by means of wall paintings: to allude to a higher dimension. However, even when it is regarded a less conscious and less political development than previously thought, with these new developments in wall paintings Egyptian painting started to express something different, which had consequences for how it became perceived. The main point of this observation is that these examples seem to communicate something more significant about the Roman way of painting, and the development of Roman styles, rather than they represent an argument concerning the way in which Egypt was perceived or concerning the Augustan influence on art and culture. The effect however, of the use of style in this way, was that Egypt became isolated and externalised and through this, it became foreign and strange again within Roman perception. This means that the style itself had the agency to change the concept of Egypt into something deviant, and not the other way around.

4.5.4 The riddle of the sphinx

The problems and questions posed in the beginning of this section on style and its influence on material culture are well demonstrated by means of applying the theme of the Egyptian sphinx (see table 4.18 for the attestations of the Egyptian sphinx in Pompeii). The sphinx, a mythical monstrous creature belonging to the group of ‘*Mischwesen*’, has the body of a lion and the head of a human being, and was a widespread phenomenon throughout the antique world. See Zanker 2008, fig. 6, 12-3. Zanker 2008. The history of the motif learns that the sphinx was known in Eastern art during the 3rd millennium in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Especially in Egypt it is always a male figure closely connected to the Pharaoh. By the end of the Middle Kingdom, Syrian art takes up this motif, providing it with various traits e.g., female, reclining, new features with regard to wings, headdress and tail. The Mittanians add more active poses to the sphinx’s repertoire while
**REPRESENTATIONS OF THE EGYPTIAN SPHINX IN POMPEII**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Attribute</th>
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<th>House no.</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>Cat. no</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Table support</td>
<td>Sphinx</td>
<td>Casa dell’Ara Massima</td>
<td>VI 16, 15</td>
<td>Triclinium</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Sphinx</td>
<td>Casa del Bracciale d’Oro</td>
<td>VI 17, 42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Sphinx</td>
<td>Casa del Bracciale d’Oro</td>
<td>VI 17, 42</td>
<td>Triclinium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statuette</td>
<td>Sphinx</td>
<td>Casa di D. Octavius Quartio</td>
<td>II 2, 2</td>
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Table 4.18 The representations of the Egyptian sphinx in Pompeii

In the Graeco-Roman world the sphinx generally appeared in two types: the Egyptian sphinx, that is lying down, male, wearing a *nemes*, and the Greek sphinx, based on the story of Oedipus, with a female head, breasts, often seated or standing instead of lying down, and winged. As to the Pharaonic-Egyptian style, when Egyptian-style sphinxes appear in Pompeian houses, the Egyptian sphinx can only be found in the form of statues, in paintings (but as statues), and only once in the form of a table foot. It is never materialised in jewellery, pottery, reliefs, or mosaics. Why is this the case? Does it say anything about the way in which Egypt was utilised as a concept? Another issue concerning the representation of sphinxes is whether a link exists between style and content. Was the Egyptian sphinx used to express concepts and values different from the Greek sphinx? Was the Egyptian sphinx consciously applied in order to evoke the atmosphere of Egypt? The line between two stylistic types cannot always be drawn this rigidly. Both historically and stylistically, the difference between Egyptian and Greek style within decoration and material culture now and again became obscured, as can be observed as early as in the Ptolemaic period. In Alexandria, for instance, representations of sphinxes appear which are clearly a mix between Greek and Egyptian forms and appropriately stylistically called a composite-sphinx, which was venerated as a deity in Egypt.\(^{636}\) This so-called Tutu-sphinx, or Tithoes-sphinx, is an example of this category and is mostly depicted standing up. Its tail takes the shape of a [the Hittites also apply this motif. Cypriot material culture includes sphinxes that combine eastern and Aegean iconographical details. We see the sphinx in Minoan art. Now a row of curls is added to the breast and along the wing bone as are wing feathers, and a plumed hat, see Crowley 1989, 43-44.\(^{636}\) "Die Kompositsphinx in einem ägyptisch-griechischen Mischstil ist weder ein anonymes Fabelwesen noch eine ‘gnostisch-mythische Mischgestalt’", see Demisch 1977, 34-5.

\(^{636}\)
snake.\textsuperscript{637} Thus hybrid forms of sphinxes did exist, as can also be witnessed on the walls of Pompeii; for example one of the hybrid forms can be seen Room 7 of house I 10, 11. On the south wall of the cubiculum two sphinxes facing each other were painted, lying in an Egyptian pose, but without a \textit{nemes}. They appear to be wearing a lotus, a flower not connected to an Egyptian style, but to the Isis cult. Via the Isis cult the representation of lotus flowers could have formed an association with Egypt. This final example is particularly interesting as it illustrates the associations in the network with regard to the application of certain concepts. They teach us to be careful when differentiating between ‘pure’ styles and ‘hybrid’ styles, because the latter could in certain instances well be considered pure by the makers/viewers. The hybrid forms also inform us of the diversity of the associations and concepts of Egypt and of those painters could have differently interpreted and conveyed during the same period in the same town. They indicate that not all people would have been familiar with an Egyptian-styled sphinx. In the case of the example above adding a lotus flower could have made the difference between a Greek and an Egyptian sphinx; only because Isis was sometimes associated with Egypt. The representation of a sphinx therefore did not necessarily have to express religious behaviour, but could also be just a way of interpreting an Egyptian sphinx by means of that which one knew about the concept. However, this still does not explain why, in which way and when recognisable Egyptian-styled sphinxes appear. It also does not imply that all representations become hybrid; the hybrid forms should be considered an addition rather than a development, since they are used next to that which would be regarded as the more ‘culturally pure’ styles. The classical pharaonic king-sphinx is still just as much en vogue, skillfully following the strict rules of the Egyptian sphinx with the \textit{nemes}, tal, and rib proportions as was done 3000 years ago, as is the case with portraits of the classical Greek Oedipus sphinx. In fact, when regarding wall paintings in Pompeii all types are reflected. The temple dedicated to Isis, for example, houses hybrid sphinxes in the wall paintings and a terracotta statue of a sphinx in pharaonic style. The Casa di Octavius Quartio possessed a marble statue of an Egyptian sphinx, while the wall paintings of the Casa Del Bracciale d’Oro include both Egyptian and characteristic Greek sphinxes.

\textsuperscript{637} Kaper 2003.
In order to explore this, two examples will be applied either with an explicit cultic content or derived from a cultic context (fig. 4.25). Figures a and b concern one of the renowned frescos found in Herculaneum (currently at the MNN-Inv. no. 8924) depicting a temple dedicated to Isis and its rituals, whereas (c) portrays a sphinx in the temple of Isis in Pompeii. In the Herculaneum painting, a priest performs a ritual. Here the temple itself is significant; two Sphinxes in Egyptian style are located at the entrance. This implies that in Campania one was not only familiar with the way in which Egyptian Sphinxes were conveyed, but with their role within an Egyptian context when they are paired up as temple guardians. In this case a connection between the application of style and the function as something Egyptian is clear.

Fig. 4.25a-b-c) a: A wall painting in an Isis temple from Herculaneum (MNN Inv. no. 8924), b: detail of the sphinxes guarding the temple. c: Sphinxes on the wall paintings of the Isis temple in Pompeii showing cobra-tails (MNN Inv. no. 8563).

However, as to the wall paintings in the temple of Isis in Pompeii (fig. 4.25c) Sphinxes are depicted in a completely different style. Constituting a hybrid of features from the Oedipus Sphinx (standing, winged) and the Egyptian (nemes, male and cobra-tails) they therefore stylistically mainly correlate with the composite Sphinx. Was it not necessary to paint pharaonic Sphinxes? Was it not appropriate? Or was the difference between the Greek and the Egyptian Sphinx on stylistic grounds not that commonly applied and was its role as temple guardian more important? The answer lies, similarly to the above section, in the way in which wall-painting as a medium functioned
and perceived in comparison to objects. The painting of the sanctuary from Herculaneum illustrates that the Egyptian sphinx, unlike the Theban Oidipous sphinx, was not a living creature and could only be conceptualised as a statue. The Pharaonic-Egyptian sphinx was never perceived as a living or ‘real’ sphinx that could feature in stories, just like the features of the offering scenes in the Casa del Frutteto (and in a way, also like the portrayal of Isis and Isis-Fortuna discussed in part 4.2). In the painting of Isis and Io from the Ekklesiasterion of the Isis sanctuary, too, the sphinx that was depicted in an Egyptian style concerned a statue, not an animal. An important observation this analyses generated, is that whenever a lifelike sphinx had to be depicted, it was always conveyed in a non-Egyptian style. What is furthermore notable in the case of the Isis-Io painting (in addition to the fact it displayed a statue of an Egyptian sphinx, not a real sphinx), is the choice of material. The statue was painted in order to resemble red granite. This was comparable to the locally crafted statue of an Egyptian-styled sphinx consisting of red clay which deliberately imitated red granite. A final but nonetheless important assumption could be in that the Egyptian sphinx was not only iconographically different, and never presented as a living animal, but also had to be made out of a specific material.638

The sphinx in gardens
As to the sanctuary and the hybrid forms attested in Pompeii it seems there was little knowledge or concern about the disparity between Greek and Egyptian sphinxes. However, any evidence of a stylistic separation is certainly present. The fact that the Greek myth and the way in which the sphinx appears in Oedipus is known to Pompeians can be observed for example by means of a relief depicting Oedipus and the sphinx found in C. Calvertius Quetus’s tomb. The stucco relief was inserted into one of the small pilasters belonging to the tomb. The sphinx is portrayed exactly

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638 The use of material and the experience however, might have depended on the physical context. Whereas in religious contexts (e.g., the Iseum Campense, the Iseum in Pompeii) the statues of sphinxes consisted of granite, granite imitation or coloured stones (at least not a white colour), domestic contexts display white coloured Egyptian sphinxes. This can be seen in statuary, but also in wall painting, such as the painting from Herculaneum showing Egyptian sphinx-statues (fig. 25a). The painting belongs to a set of two, the other showing a procession scene. Although the painting concerns a cultic scene, it was probably derived from domestic context. However as portraying a cultic scene in a particular Egyptianised setting (palm trees are drawn, ibises are depicted), it does form the only exception in which white coloured sphinx statues are used instead of coloured ones. They might refer in this particular instance not to marble sphinxes therefore, but to limestone sphinx statues. These are not found in Italy, but are used in Egypt.
conform the description in the myth i.e., seated, female, winged, and with breasts.\textsuperscript{639}

One seemed to have been aware of the way in which the sphinx appeared in a Greek myth and that this involved a certain manner of representation. Therefore, and because the Egyptian sphinx was regarded a statue and not a living creature, it seems unlikely that the style could be altered to Egyptian in order to refer to the myth of Oedipus. More evidence concerning the existence of a conceptual differentiation between a Greek and an Egyptian sphinx, and an example of their incorporation in wall paintings, can be witnessed in one of the houses in Pompeii. In the summer triclinium of the Casa del Bracciale d’Oro (VI 17,42 in the Insula Occidentalis) a triclinium was adepdy merged with a nymphaeum, displaying elaborate water features in the centre of the room. While two sphinxes in a Theban style, reclining, female and winged, flank the nymphaeum on the east wall. Two Egyptian sphinxes are portrayed on the north and south walls of the room (fig. 4.26).\textsuperscript{640}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{sphinxes.png}
\caption{Fig. 4.26) A Greek and an Egyptian sphinx, both from summer triclinium (31) the Casa del Bracciale d’Oro (VI 17, 42). From PPM vol. VII.}
\end{figure}

Two distinct styles of sphinxes serve here as a decoration in the same room. It is also the only house to include sphinxes in an Egyptian fashion on wall paintings furthermore, by the clear opposition of styles on the different walls of the rooms it seems that they explicitly played with a similar theme (the sphinx) and two different styles of depiction.\textsuperscript{641} Both sphinxes are not

\textsuperscript{639} The drawing of a stucco relief from Overbeck and Mau 1884, 417, fig. 217.
\textsuperscript{640} See Jaschemski 1979, Appendices, 357, T 422.
\textsuperscript{641} Of interest, too, is a small mosaic found in the nymphaeum in the same triclinium depicting a duck and a lotus flower, see Versluys 2002, no. 48, 123-4.
portrayed as living creatures, but as marble statues, as is often seen in the case of Pompeian garden paintings. Moreover, the walls featuring the Egyptian sphinxes further include pharaoh statues as could be witnessed in the Casa del Frutteto. This confirms yet again that the painters and owners of the room in the Bracciale d'Oro were well aware of the difference between the Greek and Egyptian style. The relevant question following this deduction is twofold: firstly, in which way could it (conceptually) be possible to include such a sphinx (meaning: how could it appear on the wall, and where did the idea come from?) and, secondly, why did they choose to portray an Egyptian-style sphinx?

![Fig. 4.27 a-b) Two marble statuettes of pharaonic-styled sphinxes. From the MNN.](image)

The answers again can be found when assessing the wider assemblage of objects and wall paintings in Pompeii. First of all, a significant clue concerning the presence of Egyptian sphinx statues is their relationship with a popular fashion in Pompeian garden paintings: the portrayal of sphinxes as marble statues and fountains. They appear frequently and although a certain variation can be observed in the way in which the sphinxes are depicted, they all represent a version of a seated, marble, winged, female sphinx, forming the support of a basin with water and presented as a single sculpture. Even more strikingly, these paintings are without any exception attested in gardens, always part of a garden scene, and often close to a

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642 As found in (a) the Casa della Fontana d'Amore (IX 2,7) on the south side of the pool area in the garden, (b) the Casa dell'Orso Ferito (VII 2,45) on the north wall in the garden next to the nymphaeum, (c) the Casa di C. Julius Polybius (IX 13, 1-3), (d) the Casa dei Ceii (I 6,15) in the garden, (e) the Casa del Centenario (IX 8,3) on the east and west walls in the nymphaeum, (f) the Casa del Peristilio (VII 6, 28) in a garden painting on the north wall of the peristyle garden (completely destroyed after the 1943 bombing, see Jashemski 1979, 56 fig. 92) and (g) the Casa degli Archi (I 17,4) in a garden painting at the west end of the north wall of the peristyle garden: two sphinxes and one centaur supporting a fountain.
genuine water source. In the majority of cases, the sphinx is positioned close to a nymphaeum. In other cases (e.g., the Bracciale d'Oro and Julius Polybius) two sphinxes are facing a water source, in the case of the Bracciale d'Oro as real nymphaeum, as to Casa di Julius Polybius in the shape of a painted basin holding water. The Bracciale d'Oro house presents an Egyptian variation on this popular theme, also in a context of a nymphaeum. They can therefore be regarded to belong to the same tradition, albeit now with a change of style. This particular example furthermore connects to another object similar to the Bracciale d'Oro sphinxes: the statuette of a marble sphinx found at the Casa di Octavius Quartio (II 2, 2, fig. 4.27). It was found alongside a water feature (to be discussed more elaborately in 5.3 in which this house features as a case study) together with other marble sculptures, none of which include themes, styles, or material which could somehow be connected to Egypt. The sole discovery of the sphinx, however, led the excavators to believe the water represented the Nile. With respect to the previous observation of the two marble statues it seems more likely that the sphinx alluded to the relation between marble sphinx-statues and water feature than that signified a conscious reference to the Nile. The way the statue is crafted, in marble, and the way it is positioned seems to be referring to the same concept as the painted sphinx sculptures, however, this time it was executed in real sculpture instead of a painting. The examples of depictions of marble sphinx statues are numerous, and as it was found next to a water basin, it seems a powerful link to this tradition. The statuette in the house was not associated with the Nile conceptually, as argued above, but rather represented a three-dimensional rendering of the garden painting theme similar to that in the Bracciale d'Oro house. It was placed here as a result of the association with marble sphinx statue-paintings and water basins, not because of the associations with the Nile.643

This example illustrates that the conceptual association with marble and sphinxes was strong. One could vary stylistically, but not in material, as

643 Whether the tradition of marble sphinx basins started as sculpture to then also be conveyed to painting or the other way around is a difficult issue. It is always argued that garden paintings depicted plants, animals and art as found in the real gardens of Pompeii. However, countless examples indicate that Roman painting was not aimed at portraying realistic pictures, but rather liked to refer to mythical creatures and themes. Although wall painting preserves a larger number than sculpture, no real marble sphinx-basin was ever detected in Pompeii.
marble belonged to the concept sphinx whether it was Egyptian or Greek.\textsuperscript{644} This last notion leads to a different perspective with regard to Egypt-perception, material and contexts. Whereas the sphinx statues within the Iseum had to appear as if they consisted of red granite, the sphinxes in these examples were deliberately made from marble (or were painted to resemble marble). It points at the presence of various perceptions of the concepts and of the material. Whereas both groups could not convey the sphinxes as real animals, there was a different perception as to how they should appear in material.

\textit{The sphinx as furniture: a tale of two tables}

Within the case study on sphinxes another object from the database is particularly interesting to discuss, namely a bronze monopod table foot in the form of an Egyptian sphinx (fig. 4.28b).\textsuperscript{645} It was found in one of the more modest houses in Pompeii, the Casa dell’Ara Massima (VI 16,15).\textsuperscript{646} In addition to the question concerning the way in which the owners of such a small house could acquire such a luxurious piece of furniture, the table itself is quite a unique object without any known parallels in the Roman world.\textsuperscript{647}

First, when reviewing previous interpretations of this table the main explanation again revolves around the cult of Isis. It is for example Kaufmann-Heinimann states: “Narcissus and the couples of Bacchus and Ariadne, Luna and Endymion, Mars and Venus represented in the wall paintings of the dwelling rooms, the Lares and the Genius painted on the lararium wall, Eros depicted on the handles of two bronze vessels, a sphinx used as a table foot.”\textsuperscript{648}

\textsuperscript{644} One may assume that, for this period, marble could more easily to something Egyptian because the association with Egyptian style and dark coloured stones (e.g., diorite, granite, basalt) is developed after 80 AD when Domitian adorned the Iseum Campense with imported dark coloured Egyptian animal statues. We do not see this on the Italian peninsula prior to 80 AD. The granite of course, was already attested in the terracotta example from the Isis sanctuary in Pompeii.

\textsuperscript{645} According to the de Vos the carving of the metal is typical for Alexandria. She never concludes however, whether the table -or the sphinx- was an actual import, but describes it as: ‘una sfinge che reggeva un vaso tra le braccia, acconciata e accovacciata secondo lo schema faraonico.’ de Vos 1980, 93

\textsuperscript{646} The house measured 200 m\textsuperscript{2} and did not include a garden.

\textsuperscript{647} We read: “Sostegno di tavolo molto originale, con una sfinge accovacciata. Un elemento a ferro di cavallo, impreziosito da un finissimo motivo vegetale in Atena elmata, rappresenta l’unico sostegno del piano, ora mancante.”See Stefanelli 1990, 159.

\textsuperscript{648} See Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 188.
Kaufmann-Heinimann mentions nine deities and table of a sphinx in order to describe religious aspects of domestic religion. Would the same conclusion have been reached when the table displayed a Greek-styled sphinx? In which way was a sphinx connected to religion? Why is the sphinx mentioned and not the head of Athena displayed above the foot? The table, albeit perhaps rendered in a style outside Pompeian schemata, should not be interpreted in accordance with external and top-down models of Roman religious culture in which everything Egyptian is equalled with the Isis-cult. Instead, these objects should be analysed bottom-up, not only in conjunction with ‘Aegyptiaca’ but also within the context of other household furniture and tables found in domestic contexts of Pompeii. Examining the tables from Pompeii within a wider framework of Roman furniture places the Egyptian sphinx-table in a more comprehensible context. The Romans developed a certain way of decorating tables as can be very clearly observed in Pompeii thanks to the available number and state of preservation of furniture. Numerous types of tables occur, but the most commonly found which are decorated consist of a marble table with a
rectangular top and a solid slab at each of the shorter ends.\textsuperscript{649} These slabs were often lavishly embellished, terminating at each side with winged monstrous creatures among which all kinds of ornamental motifs were applied to the relief. These animals were mainly lions, griffins, sphinxes, or hybrid forms. Such \textit{Mischwesen} were originally a 4\textsuperscript{th}-century BC invention and signified an embodiment of an Archaic Eastern tradition of ornamenting furniture with lions, other Oriental motifs, and with mythical creatures. The same taste of (Greek) orientalising iconography can still be seen reflected within Roman marble furniture, which is for example testified by the popularity of displaying griffins on tables.\textsuperscript{650} However, it must be noted that here not only the iconography is Oriental, the marble slabs also follow an Orientalising style. As to the sphinxes as decoration, they also appear to be a popular topic for table designs. In addition to tables with two supports portraying sphinxes, a total of twelve marble monopod tables with supports consisting of a sphinx have been recorded.\textsuperscript{651} One such sphinx is found in the second peristyle in the Casa del Fauno (VI 12, 2) (fig. 4.28a). It presents a specific type dated to the Augustan period of which parallels and copies have disseminated throughout the Roman world.\textsuperscript{652} The most remarkable aspect of this particular sphinx representation is again its style, which is not Oriental but distinctly classicising in this case. The face, detailed feathered wings, and wavy hair of the Casa del Fauno sphinx: “as a whole successfulty captures some of the hallmarks of Classical style”.\textsuperscript{653} This sphinx has therefore been regarded by Zanker as the outcome of Augustus’ cultural revolution. Moreover, the table from the Casa del Fauno serves as an example of the way in which people made choices that (intentionally or not) might have alluded to Augustus’ innovative pictorial vocabulary.\textsuperscript{654} As was shown in painting, in furniture sphinxes could also be displayed in a Greek and in an Egyptian style. However, not only the subject of monsters explains

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{649} See Richter 1926, Moss 1988; 141; Mols 1999, De Carolis 2007, 110. Wooden tables, are not taken into account (for this see Mols 1999).
\item \textsuperscript{650} It is possible that the eastern essence of the griffin became diluted during the Hellenistic period through reception and popularity of it in art, see Moss 1988, 367. However, there is evidence that in Roman eyes it was always redolent of the exotic East, see Simon 1962.
\item \textsuperscript{651} Among them the sphinx from the Casa del Fauno, see fig. 4.28a. Moss 1988, (A72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78, 85-90) these are all seated. A72, is from Formia, antiquarium Nazionale, Pentek marble. 73, is from Grosseto, Museo Archeologico (Inv. 22966), white marble, probably Greek. Seated sphinx with eyes closed and elaborately feathered wings. In the seated monopods other tables include panthers, lynxes, griffins, lionesses, and lions.
\item \textsuperscript{652} Moss attested twelve similar seated sphinx tables.
\item \textsuperscript{653} See Moss 1988, 22.
\item \textsuperscript{654} See Zanker 1988, 269, fig. 211 a,b. It is stated that the table was ‘undoubtedly manufactured in one of the leading sculptural workshops in Rome’.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the appearance of the Egyptian sphinx, as it could also be observed from the above analysis that style plays a significant role. The marble tables were mainly created made in an Oriental style, implying it was not uncommon to decorate tables in forms other than local. An Egyptian sphinx could have been regarded the same way: as an otherworldly creature decorated in a particular style. The Casa del Fauno sphinx, too, was executed in different style (Classical). Moreover, a bronze round table with sphinxes assumed to be found near the Iseum (according to Mau however, the table is not even derived from Pompeii but comes from Herculaneum) was again rendered in a different style: this time in a hellenistic fashion. Reviewing the bronze table in this context, when regarded in relation to other tables and not compared with other Aegyptiaca, it is not as unique as once thought. Like Greek sphinx (or a lion or a griffin), the Egyptian sphinx and a was a mythical monster suitable to decorate a table support.

It seems that, when representing sphinxes, one was first of all quite aware of any differentiation in styles and secondly, style mattered. Furthermore, the way in which sphinxes were materialised was of concern to the way an audience experienced them. Adopting a sphinx in whatever style for a table support had notably different associations when compared with wall painting, or when applying it within a religious setting. The reason why one chose to portray Egyptian-style sphinxes therefore knows no unequivocal answer. Now and again, it was merely one of the available styles that could serve in order to set apart something stylistically (tables), or otherwise in order to create a distinctly Egyptian setting (e.g., the Herculaneum paintings in fig. 4.25). In certain cases it was seemingly used almost mindlessly, just to play with a popular theme (e.g., the fountain-sphinxes from the Casa del Bracciale d'Oro). However, by means of an analysis of sphinx representations inside houses, one significant difference between the Greek and the Egyptian sphinx could be observed which may explain their presence or absence within certain contexts. The sphinx was an important feature as a statue in Roman garden (paintings). However, whereas the Greek sphinx could appear both as a statue and as a ‘living’ creature, the Egyptian-styled sphinx could only be conceived as a statue (e.g., in the painting in Herculaneum where he guarded the temple, in the garden painting of the Casa del Bracciale d'Oro, and with the statues in houses and the Iseum). The Egyptian sphinx was not a ‘real’ sphinx, but could only be conveyed as a statue of sphinx. Whereas

655 Mau 1902, 369, fig. 191.
the Greek sphinx played a role in a story (about Oedipus) he was a living creature that could appear together with any other animal such (e.g., swans, peacocks) and with other Nilotic animals (Iseum). The Egyptian sphinx conversely knew no myth in Pompeii, he was not a living creature but a stone piece of furniture or an architectural feature.

4.5.5 Conclusion
The decision to analyse Egypt as a style has gained further insights into the manner in which Egypt could be applied in Pompeian houses and which properties and complexities are involved within its integration. In addition it was also informative with respect to the way in which one conceptually differentiated between various media of portrayal. First of all it could be witnessed that the inhabitants of Pompeii were not only able to recognise Egyptian-styled objects and paintings, but also that they could apply and adapt them in order to express specific themes while alluding to several social values. However, within this process a conceptual distinction existed between the different ways in which Egypt was materialised, for instance when something was conveyed in an Egyptian style by means of wall painting or by means of objects. Wall painting could depict Egyptian figures of which it did not matter whether they were genuinely Egyptian. However, whenever it was relevant to convey the message of authenticity (as the Isis sanctuary demonstrated), objects, and not wall paintings were used. Moreover, because of its style, Egyptian-style scenes could not be merged with other Egypt-references such as Nilotic scenes. This means that even though they are sometimes cognitively related through the concept of Egypt, they could not very well be merged. This, of course, ultimately effected not only the way in which one regarded these scenes but also their reaction towards Egypt. The Nilotic scenes were stylistically internalised and therefore could develop into other concepts (to be analysed in 4.6). Egyptian as a style remained an externalising concept and was therefore mainly helpful in Roman art when a deviant style was required.

The sphinx could ultimately be integrated in a particular way because of the tradition already present in Pompeian garden paintings i.e., to depict Greek sphinxes in the form of garden statues and fountains. That is the reason why this kind of representations is seen only in garden paintings. It is arguable that the marble statuette of a sphinx found for instance in the Casa di Octavius Quartio is a three dimensional materialisation of this custom,
especially because it was not usual to depict Egyptian sphinxes in marble within this context and period. The marble statue paintings created a strong link between the concept sphinx and marble, and therefore generated the idea that this was the usual way to portray Egyptian sphinxes as well, whereas they actually reflected a distinct Roman way of painting style. It is thus not so much the connection the Egypt, but the connection to Roman wall painting which enforced this connection. In this respect, the bronze table support of a sphinx from the Casa dell’Ara Massima originates from a similar local association based on different uses of the sphinx, stemming from the tradition of applying Mischwesen in an Orientalising style as table supports. In this respect it is interesting to note that whereas scholars mark the Orientalising table supports found in Pompeii to be typically Roman, whenever a sphinx table was made in an Egyptian style it immediately fell into the category ‘exotic’, whereas both styles were deviant from what might be called a ‘Roman style’. It seems that our modern visual perception of Egypt is strong to the extent that scholars will be much quicker to designate the style and its objects as exotic and strange. However, both examples illustrate that quite different links between the table as well as the statuettes and paintings could be drawn when compared with the concept of Egypt or the religion of Isis. The analysis indicated that the interpretation and implementation of Egyptian artefacts was based on cognitive associations derived from a local context, which limited the application of certain themes to specific contexts and also explains the complete absence of others. Sphinxes could serve as table supports because they belonged to the category of Mischwesen. However, lions and griffins never served to portray fountains and garden statues in painting, and therefore this must have belonged to the concept of the sphinx alone.

This section also adds to a larger conception of Egypt as subject (or rather as non-subject), witnessed by means of the way in which it was applied in object, painting, theme, and context. Whereas the Greek sphinx referred to Oedipus, to themes such as the flawed nature of humanity, destiny, riddles, and heroism, the Egyptian sphinx referred to Egypt. Egypt as a style did not seem to be able to integrate that deeply, not because of the subject it represented which was experienced as a difference, but only because of the style. This is interesting, because not every Egyptian artefact was statically perceived and considered exotic. However, as a style, Egypt seems to have been considered too distant from Pompeian internal schemata. The Romans
would therefore use it in order to create something external to their reference schemata: when a visual disbalance was required, when something had to be marked as strange or foreign, or when something other than associated with the ordinary atmosphere was desired. It might have helped legitimating the Isis-cult by means of reinforcing its authenticity and ancient nature by referring to Pharaonic Egypt. That it is not only Egyptian style which is not fitting in the Roman schemata and therefore predestined to function as isolated reference to the strange, was however proven by the archaising panels from the Villa della Farnesina, which served the same function as the Egyptianising paintings. In both cases, the perception of style is stronger than its content and semiotics. This is not only important to the understanding of these paintings, but also for the choice of such scenes. In addition to this is the view that the isolation of Egypt as a style was invented by the Romans themselves when individual frames became possible with the change to the Third Pompeian Style. Deviating styles could be used because they became architectural features, of which the effect was that Egypt became foreign and strange. This makes the concepts such as the ‘Other’ no longer a non-intentional Roman phenomenon, but something that was fostered and induced by material culture and the changing possibilities of Roman art; in effect it had very little to do with what people actually thought of Egypt.

4.6 Disentangling Nilotic scenes
4.6.1 Introduction
The final part of the Aegyptiaca survey will deal with the most lavishly present category of Aegyptiaca in Pompeii: the so-called Nilotica, which in its broadest sense can be defined as images concerning the flooded river Nile and the life surrounding it. The images therefore predominantly concern waterscapes with plants such as lotus flowers and exotic animals such as crocodiles, hippopotami, or cobras. They also often feature Egyptians in the form of either human beings or pygmies and occur in Pompeii, as mosaics or on wall paintings, from the beginning of the 1st century BC on and are continuously attested until the end of the town’s existence. Table 4.19 below presents the various materialisations and contexts in which the scenes appear. As a larger group, the imagery can be found on pottery, reliefs, lamps, and jewellery too, however, these are not found at the site of Pompeii.

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Within the wider category of Pompeian Aegyptiaca, Nilotic scenes sometimes seem to represent somewhat of an outsider of the dataset, as their style and materialisation are markedly different to all other objects. Whether this is justified conceptually can and should be questioned of course. However, it is a fact that, as a category of Aegyptiaca, Nilotic scenes historiographically are often dealt with separately. They were for instance not taken up in the selection of Tran tam Tinh or De Vos, who both did not consider them to be directly related to the cult of Isis or to the concept of Egyptomania. For some scholars, a relationship between the two is present, Malaise for instance states that Nilotica and Isiaca are not the same, he states they are related although the nature of this relation remains undefined. To other scholars, a connection between Isis and Nilotic scenes is denied, such as is put forward by Versluys 2002. It becomes apparent however, that in none of the cases sketched above, the nature of the relationship between Nilotic images, Egypt, and Isis, is analysed in detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nilotic Scenes from Pompeii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>House name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caupona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Criptoportico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa dei Ceii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Paquius Proculus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praedia di Giulia Felice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

657 It has, however, been admitted that the two developments i.e., Pharaonic and Nilotic themes, are often combined in artistic endeavours, even in ancient Alexandria, see de Vos 1980, 81.
658 See Malaise 2003, 313.
659 The majority of the paintings and mosaics were dated in accordance with their stylistic appearance.
660 The frame of the mosaic can be dated later, of the Third Style, as the remaining decoration of the house, see Versluys 2002, 99.
661 As painted on a stibadium functioning as a summer triclinium in a garden.
662 As belonging to a redecoration phase of the house in 50 AD and of the Early Fourth Style.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Scene Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Gemmarius</td>
<td>I I</td>
<td>Summer triclinium 663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Larario Fiorito</td>
<td>I I</td>
<td>Summer triclinium 664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Nozze d’Argento</td>
<td>V 2,1</td>
<td>Cubiculum (q)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Nozze d’Argento</td>
<td>V 2,1</td>
<td>Peristyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Sallustio</td>
<td>VI 2,4</td>
<td>Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Apollo</td>
<td>VI 7,23</td>
<td>Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa dei Dioscuri</td>
<td>VI 9,6/7</td>
<td>Tablinum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Fauno</td>
<td>VI 12,2</td>
<td>Summer triclinium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Bracciale d’Oro</td>
<td>VI 17,42</td>
<td>Triclinium nymphae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Quadrighe</td>
<td>VII 2,25</td>
<td>Peristyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Quadrighe</td>
<td>VII 2,25</td>
<td>Viridarium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa della Caccia Antica</td>
<td>VII 4,48</td>
<td>Tablinum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa della Caccia Antica</td>
<td>VII 4,48</td>
<td>Viridarium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Granduca</td>
<td>VII 4,56</td>
<td>Viridarium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Ma. Castricus</td>
<td>VII 16,17</td>
<td>Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa con ninfeo</td>
<td>VIII 2,28</td>
<td>Nymphae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Colombe a Mosaico</td>
<td>VIII 2,34-35</td>
<td>Terrace, fountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Cinghiale I</td>
<td>VIII 3,8/9</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Medico</td>
<td>VIII 5,24</td>
<td>Peristyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa dei Pigmei</td>
<td>IX 5,9</td>
<td>Cubiculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

663 As painted on a stibadion in the summer triclinium in a garden.
664 As painted on a stibadion in a garden on the front and inner sides as with II 9.
665 Confusion exists concerning the dating. Versluys 2002 argues the mosaic dates from 30 BC. However, the mosaic floors in the house date to the 1st half of the 1st century AD. Versluys further argues the mosaic is older based on the stylistic similarities with the Casa del Fauno mosaic which is dated c.90-80 BC. Verlsuys 2002.
This part will draw its remaining questions and data-analysis for a large part from the work of Miguel John Versluys’ *Aegyptiaca Romana, Nilotic scenes and the Roman views of Egypt* (2002). This study comprises a comprehensive treatment of material culture displaying Nilotic imagery and their interpretation in a Roman context, not only in Pompeii, but throughout the Roman Empire from the 2nd century BC to the 6th century AD. Despite the research’ vast extensiveness, not all questions surrounding Nilotic scenes were answered, and therefore it was decided for this study to re-examine *Nilotica* from the framework of bottom up horizontal analysis as put forward in this thesis. New questions can still be addressed to this category, especially those concerning context and use and the relationship of Nilotic images and other Aegyptiaca in Pompeii. Studying the relation therefore between concepts like Isis and Egypt and a contextual analysis of these scenes is one of the primary scopes of this paragraph.

Before discussing the specific issues concerning this section a brief description will be presented of the existing scenes within the domestic contexts of Pompeii (see table 4.19) and of the previous research conducted on the subject. Although this table comprises Nilotic scenes found in houses, it must be noted that they were also present within other contexts (e.g., in the Isis sanctuary, the temple of Apollo, the Stabian, Suburban and Sarno baths). In addition to the variety in contexts, the specific rooms in which they can be attested are also diverse, as the above table indicates. They are often derived from peristyle contexts and gardens, but they may also be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Floor</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Material Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Lupanare piccolo</td>
<td>IX 5, 14-16</td>
<td>Atrium Painting</td>
<td>Dwarf, crocodile, hippopotamus, symplegma, boat, water birds</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Centenario</td>
<td>IX 8, 6</td>
<td>Frigidarium/piscina Painting</td>
<td>Pygmy, ibis, snake hippopotamus, crocodile, duck</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Centenario</td>
<td>IX 8, 6</td>
<td>Nymphaeum Painting</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa dei Misteri</td>
<td>IX 8, 6</td>
<td>Atrium Painting</td>
<td>Velum, palm tree, altar, offering scene, boat</td>
<td>80-70 BC666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa dei Misteri</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tablinum Painting</td>
<td>Duck, ibis, water plants, lotus</td>
<td>30 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa di Diomede</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tablinum Painting</td>
<td>Duck, ibis, water plants, lotus</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.19) Nilotic scenes from Pompeii and their find spots.

666 This presumes a redecoration in c.60 BC. The remaining part of the atrium paintings are dated 70-60 BC, see Meyboom 1995, V, 10. This implies that the paintings were not removed or repainted but incorporated, see Versluys 2002, 157.
found in triclinium, cubiculum, or tablinum spaces. Contextually, therefore, it is difficult to discover any line in their application. Chronologically and visually the category is interesting because Nilotic scenes provide us with one of the very first visual references for Pompeians to the country of Egypt. The Nile Mosaic of Palestrina is the earliest attested image of the Nile and dates back to the beginning of the 1st century BC. Shortly hereafter (c.90-80 BC) the first Nilotic mosaic appears in Pompeii in the Casa del Fauno. They continue to be seen until 79 AD, implying that as a category they cover a relative large time span during which they were used and appropriated. In addition to the abundant and continuous presence of Nilotica in various contexts in Pompeii, the variety observed within the imagery is another remarkable aspect of this category. Only one clear copy is attested (in casu a mosaic emblema found in the Casa del Menandro and in the Casa di Paquius Proculus). Of the remaining scenes not one is identical to the other. The motifs related to Nilotic scenes appeared in various combinations, either only flora and fauna or architecture and human figures. The way in which they are conveyed, the contexts within houses in which they appear, and their motifs are notably varied. As to this abundance and variation in context, form, and style, it may be a valid question whether all Nilotic scenes should be considered to fall within one and the same conceptual framework. Considering the variety and lengthy life span of the scenes in relation to other objects dealt with in the present chapter, the conceptual network of Nilotic scenes might have been more complex and further developed. Nilotic scenes could therefore even further enmesh, obscuring the link with Egypt by means of all the incoming cognitive associations outside Egypt. On the other hand, the concept still seems to have been used (or re-used) in the rebuilding of the Iseum after the AD 62 earthquake, which means that the link with the Nile, Egypt, and Isis continued to be a present cognitive link. The presence of Nilotic scenes in the temple dedicated to Isis indicates a connection between Isis and Nilotica. However, they appear in similar guises in the temple of Apollo and in at least three bath complexes as well. Therefore, tracing the scenes’ appearances would render an interesting example to analyse with regard to the general scope of this dissertation. In which way do they disentangle and spread out? How do scenes found in the Casa di Centenario relate to the Nilotic scenes in the Casa della Caccia Antica and to the Isis temple and what is the conceptual difference between

667 A date shortly before Sulla's reign, c.100 BC, has been suggested, see Meyboom 1995, 83.
these representations? In which cases can we see a direct correlation between the Isis cult and Nilotic scenes?

4.6.2 Previous research on Nilotic scenes in Pompeii

A vast amount of work has been carried out concerning this subject. Therefore, because of a relative historiographical separation of discussions on the Isis cult, or Egypt, previous interpretations on the presence of Nilotic imagery will be briefly introduced first. As mentioned above, although interpretations of the scenes within the context of the Isis cults were present, Nilotic scenes have formed a category that differs from other Egypt-related artefacts in that their relation to Isis has always has been seen somewhat minor. The scenes were not regarded to be of any significance to Tran tam Tinh’s 1964 study of objects belonging to the Isis cult. They were also not considered to be a genuine part of Egyptomania and excluded from the catalogue compiled by de Vos and merely but mentioned in the concluding appendix. In this appendix the scenes are interpreted as an example of an ongoing Alexandrian tradition adopted by the Romans in order to create allusions to the exotic as well as a form of escapism. Whitehouse moreover argues, that in spite of choosing such scenes in order to furbish the temple of Isis, their occurrence within domestic settings was presumably more determined by a homage to fashion rather than to Egyptian religion. It was furthermore argued that the location of some of these panels in the temple of Apollo for example must surely warn against attempts, such as that of Schefold, to suggest that these paintings indicated a specific allusion to the cult of Isis. Meyboom, who published a monograph on the Nilotic mosaic of Palestrina, explains the scenes as illustrations of the flood of the Nile with its connected rituals, festivities, and attendees. Therefore the scenes and iconography should be seen as imagery pointing to fertility, prosperity and

668 For a discussion on the connection between Nilotic scenes and Egyptian religion, see Schefold 1962; Roullet 1972, 46; Leclant 1984, 440-4.
669 See de Vos, 1980, 75-8; It is stated that the lack of identical scenes and the interchanging of elements within Nilotic scenes supports the argument forwarded by de Vos, see Allison 1997, 19-24. The disconnection of the concepts Isis and Nilotica (according to de Vos) may have to do with the fact that the scenes reveal a distinctly Graeco-Roman style of painting.
670 See de Vos 1980, 77-8.
671 See Whitehouse 1977, 64-5.
672 Schefold 1952. The temple of Apollo housed a frieze with pygmy scenes, located in the upper zone of the porticus surrounding the peristyle. They have the same date as the decoration of the Isis sanctuary: post 62 AD (probably c.70 AD). They depict a landscape with a kiosk-like structure, four dwarfs fishing, a palm tree, a crocodile amongst water plants, a dwarf being eaten by a crocodile, three dwarfs performing a sacrifice, and one dwarf rescuing another from the water by means of a club, see Versluys 2002, no. 51.
abundance of nature. As with Dionysian scenes they represented *truphè* motifs, symbols of prosperity.\textsuperscript{673} Meyboom argues in favour of a religious interpretation of the Nile Mosaic in Palestrina (as the first Italic synergy between Isis and Fortuna), but discards a religious reading of the images within domestic contexts on account of the locations in houses. Nilotic scenes in Pompeii appear in rooms with a ‘festive’ character i.e., dining rooms, nymphaeum, gardens, and baths thereby excluding any religious perception.

Versluys follows Meyboom in the sense that he also rejects a principally cultic use of the scenes; however, through his analysis he arrives at a more complex interpretation of Nilotica. Versluys defines the implementation and perception of Nilotic scenes on the following levels: (a) a practical level whereby the scenes are added to nymphaeum because the water-connected scenes of the Nilotic landscapes fit within the space, (b) a personal level in which Nilotic scenes occur because the owner maintained a personal relationship with Egypt or its cults, (c) a social level, where it is argued that Nilotic scenes were considered appropriate to utilize on a certain specified area and (d) on a syntagmatic level related to the larger historical context, in which Nilotic scenes expressed Roman feelings towards Egypt and the exotic Other.\textsuperscript{674} As to the hermeneutic level (d), it has been illustrated that the scenes can allude to the ‘Other’ as the opposite of the ideal Roman self-image in order to establish the power of the Romans over Egyptian territory through art. Furthermore, concerning the historical interpretations, it has been opined one needs to make a difference between the ancient and highly admired Egypt and its contemporary inhabitants, which were now subjected to Roman rule. This can primarily be witnessed by means of observing the vertical development of the scenes which are presumed to have evolved from a more ethnographical character during the Republican period to a rather ‘burlesque’ character during the early Imperial period when the Egyptians became to be portrayed as dwarfs and pygmies.\textsuperscript{675} This implies that the development indicates that Romans knew that the inhabitants of Egypt were no pygmies, but that they had purposely created a mythical and fantastic rendition of the Nilotic image in order to perhaps ridicule, set apart, and distance themselves from the Egyptians. According to Versluys this

\textsuperscript{673} Meyboom 1995.

\textsuperscript{674} Versluys 2002.

\textsuperscript{675} See Versluys 2002; Meyboom and Versluys 2007, 172, 207. Here although Versluys and Meyboom emphasise that this occurred especially during the 1\textsuperscript{st} century AD.
development in the Roman views of Egypt was influenced by the Roman annexation of Egypt as province in 30 BC. In the same respect Clarke also acknowledges the multi-interpretability of the Nilotica, while arguing that the scenes were appropriated as an amusing part of a decorative wall painting scheme or flooring, but could also represent the colonial Other, or serve to avert demons as apotropaic pictures.\footnote{676 See Clarke 2007, 155.}

The distance Allison, Clarke, Versluys, and Meyboom have taken from a religious interpretation of the Nilotic scenes has, however, recently been contested by Barret, who predominantly interprets the scenes as expressions of religious knowledge and behaviour.\footnote{677 See Barret 2012, 1-21. A religious interpretation of symplegma scenes in Nilotic imagery, linked to Osiris, and emphasizing their fertility character has also been opted for, see Meyboom and Versluys 2007, 197.} According to the latter, Nilotic scenes represent the inundation of the Nile. Accompanying festivals include pygmy dancers and dwarves celebrating the return of the solar eye goddess.\footnote{678 Although Bes never appears recognisable on a Nilotic painting or mosaic, he was also connected to these dances by means of his relationship with Hathor, see Barret 2012.} Barret furthermore has made the connection between the dwarf figures and Nilotic scenes by means of their shared connection to the Isis cult. The way in which the scenes are composed and all they portray and in which way (especially pointing to sexual and festive subjects) attests according to Barret of a profound knowledge of Egyptian theology. Barret admits that not every viewer would have recognised the religious significance of the scenes. However, those familiar with, in her words ‘Egyptian theology’, would have found much to recognise. A majority of iconography and acts in fact alluded to Egyptian religious themes, as Barret demonstrated. Whenever an observer without any knowledge of Egyptian culture saw something merely amusing or decorative, more informed viewers may have perceived a complex iconographic program depicting celebrations performed for the flooding Nile.\footnote{679 See Barret 2012, 16.}

These diverse and sometimes seemingly conflicting interpretations of the meaning of Nilotic scenes strongly argue for a complex understanding of these scenes. It is interesting to observe that here, in contrast to many of the other Aegyptiaca dealt with above, not one scholar disputes the possibility of a multitude of meanings concerning these paintings and mosaics. This being
said, it is not entirely clear whether this is an interpretation that applies to every scene in general, or for specific scenes, contexts or audiences. The question that remains is what makes Nilotic scenes to be appropriated in different ways? Does the content or the context allow for this? Therefore it can be regarded useful to compare these two and more variables to gain more insight in their use and appropriation.

Two angles of approach might complement the existing studies to these scenes. A first strategy is to compare Nilotic scenes in the afore-mentioned ‘horizontal’ perspective. This means they are compared with other types of wall painting scenes in Pompeii and therefore not analysed as a bounded category only viewed in the context of their Egyptian meaning. A second strategy would be to establish the way in which concepts such as Nilotica and Aegyptiaca relate to each other by means of a relational and contextual approach. As noted above, Clarke, as well as Barret and Versluys do not fully explore a contextual approach in order to support their interpretations, as none of them consider Nilotic scenes within the full scope of material culture present in domestic contexts of Pompeii.

The relation between Egypt and Nilotica

Should Nilotic scenes be regarded as a disparate category to other Egyptian related artefacts? Were they no longer connected to Egypt but had they merged into the decorative landscape of Pompeii? Although certain instances might argue for this (e.g., the development of individual motifs) we also come across contexts in which Nilotic scenes seem to be connected to other ‘Aegyptiaca.’ As can be seen in the table below (table 4.20), there are quite some instances where this occurs. Although for some of these the connection is flawed, as they represent cases that cannot be directly related because they are widely spread within large houses and different rooms, contain only small parts of an enormous amount of objects, or enclosing long time spans, such as is the case with for instance the Casa del Centenario. Here the number of finds related to Egypt is relatively large, but too widely distributed throughout the huge house to be of any significance. The same holds for the finds in the Casa del Menandro. Here a Second Style Nilotic mosaic was found on the floor of a small triclinium (Room 11), and a painting in the Fourth Style adorned the atrium. The room with the mosaic was found was no longer utilised for dinners or gatherings of any kind at the time of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, but served as a storage room, rendering an intentional connection between the decorations in rooms
unlikely. The Praedia di Giulia Felice, is even larger, and combined large Nilotic scenes in the triclinium with a domestic shrine devoted to Isis in the peristyle. Although the choice of the decoration of the triclinium may have been influenced by the religious preferences of the inhabitants, it is difficult to attribute a connection between the two concepts when they are not used within the same context. As triclinia are amongst the most popular rooms to be adorned with Nilotic scenes, it could well be a coincidence. Stronger, therefore, are the cases that include Nilotica and Aegyptiaca in the same wall painting. It now seems that certain examples reveal the connection between Nilotic imagery and other Egyptian subjects. The obsidian bowls of the Villa San Marco, of which two include Pharaonic-Egyptian images and one shows Nilotic scenes, have already been mentioned in part 4.5.

| HOUSES WITH NILOTIC SCENES AND OTHER EGYPT-RELATED ARTEFACTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| house name | house no. | Nilotic scene | No. | Room | Other artefacts | No. | Room |
| Casa dell’Efebo | I 7,11 | Garden | 2 | Bronze statuette Isis/ marble statue Isis | 3 | ?/garden |
| Casa del Menandro | I 4,10 | Mosaic, landscape painting | 2 | Oecus/atrium | Jupiter-Ammon medallions/Harpocrates statuette | 3 | Atrium/triclinium/cubiculum |
| Praedia di Giulia Felice | II 4,2 | Summer triclinium | 3 | Amulet of Harpocrates/ shrine with Egyptian deities | 2 | Summer triclinium/atrium |
| Casa delle Nozze d’Argento | V 2, i | Cubiculum, peristyle | 2 | Statue green glaze frog, two crocodiles | 3 | Garden |
| Casa dei Dioscuri | VI 9, 6/7 | Tablinum | 1 | Isis head marble | 1 | Unknown |
| Casa degli Amorini Dorati | VI | Duck, lotus flower | 1 | Domestic shrine dedicated to Isis | 5 | Peristylium |
| Casa di Bracciale d’Oro | VI 16,42 | Mosaic | 1 | Summer triclinium | Painting of pharaoh/Apis bull/ Jupiter-Ammon | 3 | Summer triclinium/summer triclinium/triclinium |
| Casa del Centenario | IX 8,6 | Triclinium | 1 | Sistrum, pharaonic paintings, Isis | 4 | ?/cubiculum/triclinium |

680 “The presence of a box of storage vessels comparable to the furnishings of the west ambulatory of garden c suggests that this room was used for storage prior to the eruption.”, see Allison 2004. As to the Casa dell’Efebo, in a similar situation, a bronze Isis-Fortuna statuette was found in an undisclosed space, which can hardly be linked to the Nilotic scenes in the stibadion. Malaise 2005 erroneously states that a painting of Isis-Fortuna was discovered in the house.

681 See 4.5.2.
The Villa dei Misteri is a further illustration of a connection between pharaonic style and Nilotic scenes, because it portrays Pharaonic-style figures (as discussed in 4.5) and a frieze with Nilotic figures on the same painting in the tablinum of the house, which was redecorated in the early Augustan period. The Casa del Bracciale d’Oro presents us with an example in which paintings of pharaohs, sphinxes, and an Apis bull are found within the same room (the summer triclinium) as a Nilotic mosaic depicting ducks with lotus flowers. The latter mosaic was found as a decorative part of the nymphaeum at the rear end of the room. With only a duck and a lotus flower, it represents a motif with only little explicit reference to Egypt. However, because of the specific context, it is significant to find such scenes together in one space. The Casa degli Amorini Dorati houses a similar painting depicting ducks with lotuses. Although ducks and lotuses cannot not be directly linked to the Nile or Egypt, this specific scene embellished a shrine devoted to Isis, with paintings of the Egyptian gods, cult paraphernalia (e.g., a cista mystica, sistra) and an Isiac procession. Finally, the sanctuary of Isis itself also reveals a connection between Nilotic scenes and Egypt-related artefacts by means of presenting distinctively Nilotic imagery on the walls of the portico of the sanctuary. It is argued that their presence should rather be explained by means of association and the popularity of the genre, not by any religious significance.682 This follows the remark that: “the two dwarf landscapes which decorated the porticus of the temple of Isis in Pompeii are however so general and inconspicuous that they were probably not meant to represent ‘the sacred country of Egypt’.”683 Furthermore, the Nilotic paintings of the Isis temple can be compared to those of the sanctuary of Apollo (whose images are only preserved by means of a drawing), which is contemporaneous and houses similar sacred landscape scenes to the Isis temple either with or without pygmies, and

displayed in a context unconnected to Egypt. It therefore does not seem necessary to look for a religious association in order to explain the scenes in the Isis temple. They were simply examples of fashion, applied because they were stock figures in the painter’s repertoire. The popularity of Egyptianising dwarf scenes in Pompeii after AD 62 would certainly have played a role in the placing of Nilotic scenes in the temple of Apollo and Isis. However, this does not cause a cognitive association with Egypt, the Nile, and Isis to be absent. Of course the period during which the temple was refurbished often saw Nilotic scenes as a decoration. Nonetheless, the Isis temple counts a high number of such scenes with explicit Nilotic animals. The fact they also recur on the upper friezes renders it difficult to do away with them as a mere coincidence related to fashion. On the same portico paintings moreover, the upper frieze clearly portrays many Nilotic animals that could specifically be associated with Egypt. This painting for instance, includes a typical Egyptian representation of an Egyptian ichneumon fighting a cobra. Although several generic animals are depicted, the paintings below testify of knowledge beyond that of decorative purposes on the side of the commissioner. This latter notion furthermore leads to an interesting observation concerning this section especially, because if the decoration in the sanctuary of Isis was executed with the concept of Egypt in mind, the relation between Egypt, Isis, and Nilotica would have continued until the final years of Pompeii. Moreover, the Augustan scenes in the tablinum of Villa dei Misteri mentioned above testify that the connection between Nilotic scenes and Egypt were also present during an earlier stage. Does this imply that these connections had always been present, or did certain events and intentions re-establish the association? Taking a diachronic contextual approach to analyse the scenes might be fruitful for their understanding. These cases show that the connection between Isis and Egypt and Nilotic scenes and Egypt seemed to have been present. However, it also shows that it only occurs in a small number and that true blending and mixing of images, does not occur. Therefore although Nilotica and Egypt could be conceptually related, they were evidently not considered to belong to the same concept.

In order to acquire further clarity on the relationship between Isis and Nilotica, and Egypt and Nilotica, a remaining question which should be answered is what the available cognitive and material prerequisites entailed

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684 This drawing is sourced from Reinach 1922, 377, figs. 5 and 6.
in which the scenes could integrate in Pompeii, and whether this experience knows a development of any kind. And, what was conceptually related to these scenes? In the following sections, the iconography and the development of motifs will be discussed, whereas its style and contextual presence will be more carefully scrutinised. Not only must the houses or the rooms be analysed, the location on the walls should also be given more attention in order to obtain a clearer image of the way in which these images developed, and within which frameworks they were conceived.

4.6.3 Iconography

Tybout, in his review of the publication of Versluys 2002, considered it a serious omission that the diachronic distribution of individual motifs was not chartered in a tabular manner, as their relative frequency would be highly relevant. The various motifs present were therefore analysed. Their relative presence can be seen in fig. 4.29. What does it imply when certain motifs are lost? Can it inform us about Roman cognition? The below pie chart illustrates the relative presence of individual motifs in Nilotic scenes.

![Pie chart showing relative presence of different Nilotic motifs](image)

Fig. 4.29) The relative presence of different Nilotic motifs in Pompeian imagery.

The general overview furthermore shows they depict mainly animals, or objects connected to water, which seems logical with regard to the overall theme of the scenes. However, the combination, form, date, and contexts in which these motifs appear differ significantly. Not only the chronological

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686 See Tybout 2003, 505.
development of certain motifs are of importance to consider, likewise the
wider visual networks of wall painting in Pompeii should be meticulously
scrutinised in order to establish which place such motifs occupied among
the remainder of the available visual repertoire. The motifs selected to
ascertain any changes with regard to their application and appropriation are
pygmies, ducks, lotuses, and exotic Nilotic animals. These will be treated as
a case study in the following part.

*Development and distribution of individual motifs: pygmy*

Pygmies (for their presence in imagery, see table 4.21) are a thought-
provoking motif to trace by means of the material network of visual culture
of Pompeii as they tie in directly with the discussion on Egypt as the
proclaimed ‘Other’. It is stated that the change (or rather the appearance) in
a representation resembling dwarves and pygmies from the portrayal of
realistic human figures into Nilotic scenes can be witnessed from the 3rd
quarter of the 1st century BC onwards.\(^\text{687}\) It is also argued that pygmies
start to appear in the course of the 1st century BC with the intention to
enhance the exotic character in Nilotic scenes.\(^\text{688}\) The origin of this
phenomenon was based on the knowledge of the existence of pygmy races in
Aethiopia, where the Nile had its source.

As mentioned above, Versluys interprets the portrayal of dwarfs and pygmies
in Roman wall painting, along with their apotropaic and symbolic fertility
and *tryphe* function, as an allusion to the Egyptian Other, the stereotype to
which a Roman could make a distinction between himself as a Roman, and
the ‘Other’, the ultimate foreigner and his uncivilised behaviour, as non-
Roman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENRE</th>
<th>HOUSE NAME</th>
<th>HOUSE NO.</th>
<th>ROOM</th>
<th>SPECIFIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo/di P. Cornelius Tages</td>
<td>I, 7, 11</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>West wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Casa di Paquius Proculus</td>
<td>I, 7, 1</td>
<td>Triclinium</td>
<td>Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Casa dell’Efebo/di P. Cornelius Tages</td>
<td>I, 7, 11</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Around the walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>I, 10, 4</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td>North wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>I, 10, 4</td>
<td>Oecus</td>
<td>Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td>Praedia di Iulia Felice</td>
<td>II, 4, 2</td>
<td>Summer triclinium</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td></td>
<td>II, 9, 2</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Stibadion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall painting</td>
<td></td>
<td>II, 9, 4</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Stibadion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^\text{687}\) See Versluys 2002, 274-7; for the difference between pygmies and dwarfs in Nilotic
scenes, see Meyboom and Versluys 2007.

\(^\text{688}\) See Meyboom 1995, 150.
This change in representing (or viewing) the Egyptian lies, in Versluys’ view, in accordance with the events occurring after the Battle of Actium in 31 BC, resulting in the incorporation of Egypt in the Roman Empire. At what time do the pygmies appear on wall painting and mosaic? Is this really related to political developments in the Roman Empire? The change from ethnographic depiction of Egypt to stereotypes could on a meta-level be influenced by means of historical events. However, the development within the medium representing these scenes (such as wall painting) should be scrutinised before this can be established. Do other paintings also change in this period? What happens with the tradition of depicting human or human-like figures on wall paintings? It has been argued by Versluys and Meyboom that: “In 110 of the 130 Nilotic scenes which have been preserved Egyptians are depicted. It is striking that in only ca. 35 of these scenes the people depicted are common people and in ca. 75 cases the people are depicted as dwarfs or pygmies.”

The dates Versluys gives to the paintings in which pygmies appear in Pompeii almost all fall between 50-75 AD, which seems to exclude a direct influence of Augustus’ actions in Egypt, unless they are the remnants of an older development. An argument in favour of the latter statement can be made on the basis of the mosaics. The two afore-mentioned identical mosaic emblemata from Casa del Menandro and Casa di Paquius Proculus, for instance, can be dated to somewhere during the Augustan period (the mosaics were dated between 50 and 25 BC) and they portrayed pygmies. As wall paintings had a considerably shorter lifespan they could have been replaced. However, it remains remarkable that not a single Nilotic pygmy is to be found among the Second Style wall paintings. Furthermore,

\[689\] See Meyboom and Versluys 2007, 171.
viewing the range between 50 and 25 BC during which the two-pygmy mosaics fall, means that they could well have been created before the Battle of Actium and are thus not an exclusive proof of a shift in perception. Moreover, there remain no attestations of pygmies and dwarfs on the walls of Pompeii prior to the 1st century AD, only on floors. Hence, even if the development starts in accordance with the changing views of Egypt after the annexation, the predominant increase during the 2nd half of the 1st century AD does not speak in favour of this thought. Nilotic scenes within the Third Style (which ran more or less parallel with the heyday of the Augustan Empire) are completely absent whereas, if the scenes would reflect the Roman views of Egypt, they should be thriving. We read that this: ‘does not seem to correspond with the situation in the Roman Empire in general’.

According to Versluys, this is due to the character of the Third Style, which does not allow any further space for larger landscape scenes and the exotic character of the Nilotic. On the negative stereotyping which Versluys observes witnesses after the annexation of Egypt by Rome an argument can furthermore be made, for Tybout contests this statement and instead witnesses a positive appropriation of Egypt throughout the development of the scenes, which he states as follows: “Before 50 AD besides the few scenes including dwarfs, we find 1: Nilotic pictures depicting flora and fauna only, 2: Nilotic pictures depicting normally-proportioned inhabitants 3: Egyptian and Egyptianising ornamentation (uraei, cult vessels, Egyptian deities) abundantly present in wall painting, especially in the Third style, apparently not eschewing the exotic. All three testify to a positive appropriation of the newly conquered land and its cults.”

However, ducks and lotuses can appear unconnected to any concept of Egypt, while the Egyptian deities and the Nilotic scenes are in only a few instances related as a concept. Only the Isis temple and maybe the duck and lotus scenes on the domestic shrine of the Casa degli Amorini Dorati attest of this connection and these are both considered to be exceptional cases. Speaking about Nilotic scenes in terms of positive or negative does not really seem to play a significant role within the appreciation of these scenes.

Let us look at the comparison between the representations of normal human beings versus the pygmies in more detail. Do they appear contemporaneously or is there a progressive line to be found when

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690 See Ling 2005, 53.
692 See Tybout 2003, 511. A firm opposition between the material culture (positive, and the literature (negative) has been noted, see Malaise 2003, 322.
developing from human to pygmy? In Versluys’ 2002 catalogue, normal humans still appear after 30 BC, implying that Egyptians did not entirely changed into pygmies, but that pygmies appear alongside the portrayal of normal human beings. It is indeed striking that pygmies are depicted, however, it remains a valid question whether the Romans really thought they inhabited the land of the Nile. What caused this development? Were pygmies depicted because of the Roman views of Egypt and conception of Egyptians? Did Nilotic scenes serve as a background because of the way they depicted pygmies? A striking observation in this respect is that although normal humans and pygmies appear contemporaneously in Nilotic scenes, nowhere do we see humans and pygmies in the same scenes. This means that a choice was made within Nilotic scenery between dwarfs and humans. The choices that lie at the basis of such a decision are important to consider. Concerning the pygmies, it was assumed above that representing the ‘Other’ might not have been the most significant instigator of their presence in such themes in Roman art. Why then would people choose for pygmies? The latter view is relevant, and argues instead for a contextual view in which Nilotic scenes should be scrutinised against the background of Roman wall painting in Pompeii in favour of historical developments in the Roman Empire. As with the development of Egyptian style discussed in 4.5 the choice for a certain motif may have had something to do with the development of Roman wall painting decoration in general. The previous section taught us that within the broader context of wall painting it was not customary to depict lifelike scenes, or human beings, but to create an allusion to a larger than life and imaginary atmosphere. In general, as also discussed above, depicting lifeless human figures (statues), deities, or other creatures was much more common than representing real humans. In this context it thus makes sense that pygmies are portrayed instead of normal human beings and that this has only little to do with the Roman views of Egypt. When Roman art moves from realistic three-dimensional architecture in the Second Style to less realistic scenes in general this may also have affected the Nilotic scenes and their figures. How were other non-human representations effected within this development? A related feature in Roman wall painting comparable to pygmies in Roman art is worth considering in this case: cupids in Roman wall painting.

693 See 4.5 and the discussion in Zanker 2008.
Fig. 4.30) Scenes portraying Cupids. Above: Cupids at play, found in Herculaneum (from Roberts 2013). Below: Two 20th-century postcards made by G. Sommer depicting Cupid scenes located in the triclinium of the Casa dei Vettii. On the left we see cupids involved in picking and pressing grapes, and on the right cupids holding a target practice and selling wine.

The cupids are depicted as winged babies (see fig. 4.30) and as with the pygmies, they can also be found in humorous scenes in which they participate in situations of everyday life in Pompeii, quite comparable to the way they do along the Nile. An example is the painting from the triclinium

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694 The cupid in Roman art counted very varied applications, both in sculpture and painting. However, he is normally depicted as a chubby young boy with wings. Cupid (the Greek Eros) was the god of desire, erotic love, attraction and affection. In Latin he was also known as
of the Casa dei Vetti (VI 15, 1) in which cupids are involved in selling wine, celebrating festivals, gathering and pressing grapes, picking and selling flowers, producing perfumed oil, chariot racing, and washing clothes (see fig. 4.30). As with the pygmy scenes, they appear as small underdeveloped creatures, frequenting the margins of scenes as humorous decorative elements. Are pygmies in this respect similar to cupids, replacing real humans in order to render the scenes less realistic? It could be that depicting undersized creatures fitted the atmosphere of caricatural, humorous, and lighter scenes, better than using real human beings. Even more significantly, however, when looking closer at the iconography of the cupid versus the pygmy scenes, they also seem to have exactly similar background settings (e.g., in banqueting and hunting scenes) from which the idea rises that they could be utilised interchangeably. Compare the following scenes in fig. 4.31, where the scenes above depict pygmies hunting a crocodile, whereas in the adjoining scene we see cupids hunting a deer. The lower figures portray a banqueting scene with pygmies as well as cupids. In addition, more paintings appear in Pompeii during this period featuring pygmies, who do not allude to the Nile specifically, but are likewise engaged in everyday life or as caricatures. Pygmies are therefore not only related to Egypt, but could also be used more generally as a mockery-like creature applicable in diverse contexts. There seems to be no strict boundary between the concept of cupid and pygmy in these contexts and the line between the two should be regarded in a more fluid way (and without any cultural connotations). It can be concluded moreover, that the category of pygmies as such can be considered to allude to a much broader framework than Nilotic scenes. It also means that the statements forwarded by Barret (and partly by Meyboom and Versluys) that pygmies engaged in playing music, fighting river animals, drinking, fishing and sexual activities are explicit allusions to Egyptian religion (specifically the return of Isis, or Hathor, to Egypt) should be nuanced. It actually denoted a quite common Roman way to represent undersized mythical creatures in such scenes, and it does not point to Egypt specifically, but rather informs us of Roman wall painting styles and the preference (especially during the Fourth Style) to refrain from portraying real

Amor and sometimes portrayed as the son of Venus. Although a deity, he never received any official worship in temples but mainly served as a decoration or, in the case of a cultic contexts, as the companion of Venus. Clarke 2003, 89; LIMC 3.1, Eros/Amor Cupid, (archaic and Hellenistic) 933-42; Roman Cupid (objects) 952-1042; (discussion) 1042-49.
human beings by means of caricatural imagery but to adopt small mythological creatures instead.\textsuperscript{695}

Regarding the contexts in which the cupid and pygmy scenes appear, it seems they were mainly appropriate at dinner rooms or cubicula, in spaces where humorous scenes could add to the occasion. A difference between the cupids and the pygmies, however, can be observed too. First of all, within the scenes we see at every occasion that within the pygmy-paintings, the setting and background plays a much more pronounced role than the cupid scenes.

![Fig. 4.31](image) A comparison between representations of cupids and pygmies. On the left: above a scene with pygmies hunting a hippopotamus (house VIII.5.24 peristyle). Below: cupids hunting a faun and a hare (VII.6.28 Pompeii cubiculum 8). In the right: a banqueting scene, above shows one with cupids (from IX.3.5 triclinium 14), below one with pygmies (house VIII.5.24 peristyle).

It was important in many occasions, to show that the scene took place in distant country, by depicting aquatic scenes, foreign animals, and palm trees. The cupids scenes often figure on a plain coloured background, the actions of the figures are sufficient to display, while the pygmies are in need

\textsuperscript{695} Furthermore, the Isis temple contests the argument that an explicit religious scene is portrayed by means of feasting and sexual behaviour should be of extra significance to those familiar with Egyptian religion. The reason for this is that it does not house such scenes, only very generic scenes depicting a pygmy holding a fishing rod, crocodiles, ibises and ducks, see Versluys 2002, no. 59.
of a setting. A larger difference, however, which could have had something to do with the fact that the setting was an important feature of pygmy scenes, is that pygmies can now and again be seen involved in certain sexual activities (*symplegma* scenes), which are never observed within cupid-related imagery. According to Meyboom and Versluys they represent the union of Isis and Osiris, of Egypt and the Nile, but what if they are compared not with Egyptian iconography, but placed within the context of Pompeian wall painting? The absence of images with sexual overtones within cupid scenes would point to a different perception and function of pygmies within Roman wall painting, because they display behaviour belonging the uncivilised Other, whereas cupids only enact in the more decent scenes taken from daily life. Did people really think that pygmies displayed this behaviour when they depicted them in Nilotic settings or was the Nilotic atmosphere added in order to explain the reason why the pygmy behaved in such a way? Because of the broad manner in which pygmies are used in general, and the fact they only act in this way when the scenes are explicitly Nilotic, the latter idea seems the most plausible. The argument is sustained, moreover, by considering the wider category of non-Nilotic pygmy paintings which do not include any deviant behaviour and are also not always rendered with a Nilotic background. It is known that *symplegmatas* were not considered to express proper Roman behaviour, therefore it would have been quite convenient to place the scene in an exotic setting. Arguing along these lines, it is notable to observe that all representations of *symplegma* scenes including pygmies were placed against a distinctly Nilotic background, there are no scenes containing merely erotic act. We always see hippopotami, crocodiles, ibises and other distinctly exotic animals, as to emphasise it really is a non-Roman context.

The contexts and dates of the scenes concerning pygmies in erotic positions support this hypothesis. All are late developments, which weakens the link

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696 This is not always the case, as now and again pygmies without backgrounds occur. However, this is a difficult discussion because, whenever it is the case, they are no longer always classified as a ‘Nilotic scene’. That also points to the difficulty of the category in general.


698 For example, the painting in de Casa dello Scultore (VIII 5,24). In it pygmies act out the judgement of Salomon. The *atriolum* in the private baths of the Casa del Menandro a caricatural friezes portrays Olympic gods and Greek heroes (a so-called Cretan circle) as pygmies, see Ling 2005, 64. Room 57 of the Casa del Centenario houses a painting of pygmies gathering grapes.

699 This is also known from the context of the theatre, where Romans often would shift to foreign settings whenever unacceptable scenes were performed, see Hall 1989.
of the Nilotic scenes of constituting a direct relationship with to the annexation of the country Egypt. They are also not reserved to any specific erotic or private context, but appear in (semi-)public spaces of the house such as the atrium or peristyle. Moreover, it is noteworthy that two of the erotically themed pygmy scenes are found on a stibadion, meaning in a context specifically designed for dining and feasting, and that another was encountered in a bath complex, where erotic scenes are more often presented in a humorous manner. As with much other erotic imagery in the Fourth Style, these were meant to be entertaining. Perhaps such scenes were considered most appropriate for these contexts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>House name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Room name</th>
<th>Cat. No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Other motifs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symplegma</td>
<td>Casa dell'Efebo</td>
<td>I 7, 11</td>
<td>Garden on a stibadion</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Hippopotamus, ibis, temple, pygmy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic scene</td>
<td>I 9, 2</td>
<td>Garden on a stibadion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Crocodile, ibis, pygmies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic scene</td>
<td>Casa di Sallusto</td>
<td>VI 2, 4</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Boat, ibis, pygmy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic scene</td>
<td>VI 5</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Fragmented, similar to I 7, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic scene</td>
<td>Terme Stabiane</td>
<td>VII 1, 8</td>
<td>Room G</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Crocodile, double oboe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symplegma</td>
<td>Casa delle Quadrighe</td>
<td>VII 2, 25</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Crocodile, boat, hippopotamus, lotus flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symplegma</td>
<td>Casa delle Quadrighe</td>
<td>VII 2, 25</td>
<td>Peristylium</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Crocodile, boat, hippopotamus, lotus flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic scene</td>
<td>Casa con ninfeo</td>
<td>VIII 2, 28</td>
<td>Room x</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Ureus, dwarf, duck</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Casa del Medico</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td></td>
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<td>IX 5, 14</td>
<td>Atrium</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50 - 75</td>
<td>Hippopotamus, boat, crocodile, dwarf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.22) Erotic scenes found in Pompeii.

**Development and distribution of individual motifs: ducks and lotuses**

The following scenes represent a swimming or standing duck beside a lotus, or holding it in his beak. Ducks and lotuses can be considered a further significant motif to analyse, because they concern scenes that are related to Nilotic scenes – as they first appear on such scenes but might have become

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700 For example the erotic scenes above the apodyterium in the Suburban baths (VII.16.a) or the mosaic of an ithyphallic negroid figure on the threshold of the caudarium of the Casa del Menandro (I 10, 4). On the taboo concerning sexual images as humorous art, see Clarke 2003, 120-7. On the suburban baths see Jacobelli 1995, who interpretes the scenes as a humorous form of remembering the number of the lockers in the apodyterium.
separately appreciated as an independent theme in wall painting. This implies that while the ducks and lotus theme originated from Nilotic scenery, one may question whether such scenes were still perceived and appropriated as Egyptian. The earliest Nilotic scenes included ducks holding lotus flowers in their beaks, implying that these specific scenes occur since the first Nilotic imagery. Twenty-two Nilotic scenes featuring ducks are included in the catalogue of Versluys, only four of which depict ducks and lotus flowers. Several other houses contain this specific scene (e.g., the Casa degli Amorini Dorati, the Villa dei Misteri) which Versluys does not mention. A duck is recognised as Nilotic because it is depicted in either an aquatic scene, surrounded by water plants, or with a closed lotus flower in its beak as can be encountered in the Casa del Fauno mosaic (fig. 4.32 and table 4.23). The scenes from the Casa del Fauno are significant in this respect, because while the ducks and lotuses in fig. 4.32.a are unmistakably part of a Nilotic scene, fig. 4.32.b from the same house depicts a similar duck without any reference to Egypt or the Nile. This points to the presumption that the specific figure of the duck holding a lotus flower could be used - and therefore conceived - from a very early period on as being conceptually separate from Nilotic imagery or Egypt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House name</th>
<th>House no.</th>
<th>room</th>
<th>form</th>
<th>depiction</th>
<th>date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casa delle Nozze d’</td>
<td>V 2,1</td>
<td>Peristyle</td>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>62-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argento</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa di Sallustio</td>
<td>VI 2,4</td>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
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<td>Casa del Bracciale</td>
<td>VI 17, 42</td>
<td>Triclinium/</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>35-45 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d’Oro</td>
<td></td>
<td>nymphaeum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Cinghiale I</td>
<td>VIII 3, 8/9</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Mosaic</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>30 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Centenario</td>
<td>IX 8, 6</td>
<td>Nymphaeum</td>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Duck, lotus flower</td>
<td>70 AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>I 4, 10</td>
<td>Caldarium (alcove)</td>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Ducks, lotus flower</td>
<td>30 BC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.23) Ducks and lotus motifs found in Pompeii.

701 There is some confusion concerning the dating. Versluys 2002 mentions 30 BC. However, the mosaic floors in the house date to the 1st half of the 1st century AD. It is further argued that the mosaic is earlier based on the stylistic similarities with the Casa del Fauno mosaic which is dated c.90-80 BC, see Versluys 2002, 138.
A third mosaic (fig. 4.32c) from the Casa di Cinghiale I dates to the early Augustan era and can therefore indeed be regarded as separated from Nilotic scenes.\(^{702}\) However, it must be stipulated that, although these scenes appear detached from their Nilotic contexts, it does not imply that the connection between this specific theme and other concepts of Egypt was completely absent. As noted above, the paintings in the tablinum of the Villa dei Misteri tablinum demonstrate that Egyptian figures and ducks and lotuses in Nilotic settings could sometimes be found together. Similar motifs were encountered in combination with other Egypt-related artefacts in examples from the Casa del Bracciale d'Oro and the Isis shrine in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati. In which way could the link between Egypt and this theme be established in these particular cases? A better conceptual knowledge of Egyptian visual culture could have been apparent. In the case of the Casa degli Amorini Dorati religious preferences may have played a role. Another but related question is in which way the motif in itself could still be linked to Egypt, albeit devoid of any explicit Egyptian traits? This may be because Nilotic scenes, although changing in form and context, persisted to be a popular motif in wall and floor decoration. A reference to the entire picture including ducks and lotus flowers together with hippopotami, crocodiles, and pygmies could still be made. The connection was thereby not lost completely, but was combined in specific ways and capable of disappearing in numerous other instances. A relevant question in this respect is why the duck and the lotus

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\(^{702}\) The Second Style dates to between c.50 and 25 BC; Versluys 2002, no. 58, 138.
motif did start to ‘wander off’? Why could it become detached from Nilotic scenes, while others remained intimately connected? The reason for this might be that ducks were common, indigenous, and therefore recognisable and locally appreciated, and were also no exotic species in Pompeii. If one did not wish for something exotic as a wall decoration, but still desired a waterscape, this was generally appropriate. This presumption can be confirmed when considering the remaining paintings of birds and lotuses housed at the Casa delle Nozze d’Argento, the Casa del Centenario, and the Casa del Sallustio. All include ducks with lotus flowers, presented in similar ways and contexts (i.e., peristyle or garden, specifically the inner walls of the peristyle gardens, and not only as ducks without lotus flowers but also as other species of birds. This suggests they were conveyed in a similar conceptual framework which had nothing specifically to do with the Nile or Egypt.703

Development and distribution of individual motifs: other Nilotic animals

The motifs found on Nilotic scenes were subjected to a varied appropriation and utilisation within the domestic contexts of Pompeii. Pygmies appear to gain popularity in Nilotic scenes at a later stage than the first emergence of Nilotic scenes, whereas ducks and lotuses became an entirely separated topic from a rather early period on. This makes it interesting to study whether more motifs appeared or disappeared during the life history of Nilotic scenes as a genre and what caused this process. A final comparison of Nilotic motifs will therefore look into specific animals and their application in Pompeian wall painting. A comparison will now be made between the earliest Nilotic scenes preserved from Pompeii and later examples. The earliest such scene is represented by means of the mosaic from the Casa del Fauno (VI 12, 2). It is the largest house in Pompeii and known from the famous Hellenistic Alexander mosaic, but is also one of the most elusive when it comes to the study of Roman domestic contexts, as does not represent an average house.704 The Casa del Fauno as can be seen today was

703 As, for instance, the Casa degli Amanti (I 10,11) and the Casa del Menandro testify (I 10,4).

704 The house was excavated between 1830 and 1832 by the German Archeological institute (founded in 1829) with R.Schöfer. Unfortunately, a general overview on the finds and archaeology have been lacking until 2009, when A. Hoffmann and A. Faber attempted to reconstruct and amalgamate the information gathered from previous excavations dating from (a) the 1st quarter of the 20th century (R. von Schöfer), (b) 1939 (A. Tschira), and (c) 1961-1963 (T. and F. Rakob). The chronology of the house was refined by means of a detailed ceramic analysis carried out by Faber, See Hoffman and Faber 2009. A large number of publications deals with the mosaic pavements and architectural remains of this
built during the early 2nd century BC (c.180-170 BC) on top of an earlier 3rd-century BC structure and was occupied until 79 AD. The house uniquely combines rich mosaic emblemata with the naturalness of First Pompeian Style wall painting.\textsuperscript{705} Important to note is that both the First Style paintings of the house of the Faun and its elaborate mosaic pavements seem to be fashioned after patterns utilised in the palatial structures of Hellenistic Macedonia and other Hellenistic kingdoms.\textsuperscript{706} It was a Hellenistic house not only in its ground plan, but also in its decoration and interior. Remarkably, the inhabitants went to great length in order to keep their house in the style of its first construction phase, as the remains of the First Style wall decoration, the flooring, and the many restoration marks found throughout the house testify.\textsuperscript{707} The Nilotic mosaic from the Casa del Fauno (dating from between 90 and 80 BC) was placed just below the Alexander mosaic and cut into three parts in order to fit between the columns of the summer triclinium, presenting it with the function of a threshold.\textsuperscript{708} The mosaic was situated here until the final days of Pompeii, meaning it was a continuous visual reference, or at least establishing frequent visual confrontations with its inhabitants and visitors to the house for almost 2 centuries. Which species of animals and plants can be seen in the Nilotic mosaic in the Casa del Fauno mosaic? In addition to the Nile itself, it depicts ducks, water birds, ibises, a hippopotamus, a crocodile, a frog, a cobra, an ichneumon/mongoose, and lotus flowers in several stages of their existence.\textsuperscript{709} Which images continue to be seen in Nilotic or other scenes and which have disappeared? Ducks and lotuses have been discussed above.
Frogs, crocodiles, and hippopotami continued to be seen on Nilotic scenery (and beyond) until AD 79. However, certain creatures encountered on the Casa del Fauno mosaic supposedly only appear here. The Egyptian ichneumon for instance, attacks and eats venomous snakes. It is also called a Pharaoh’s rat and was considered a sacred animal in ancient Egypt where it was portrayed on temple walls. This is the only Nilotic scene it occurs on. The fact it is known to include snakes in its diet and is depicted in the mosaic fighting a cobra probably points to the maker’s knowledge of Egypt, either because it was made in Egypt, or closely copied from the Nile mosaic from Palestrina or some other representation of an ichneumon. However, this knowledge was probably lost over time; the ichneumon does no longer seem to be associated with Nilotic imagery, until it reoccurs in the Fourth Style upper frame in the portico of the temple of Isis. It is however interesting to note that in the case of the Iseum picture, the ichneumon is again incorporated within the same motif of fighting a cobra, just as was encountered in the Casa del Fauno mosaic. While snakes and ducks were familiar species to Pompeii, the ichneumon might have been too alien to be copied or recognised. Thus and therefore did not spread iconographically, except by those people with a thorough knowledge of Egypt, as the Isis temple decoration testifies.

The ibis, hippopotamus, and crocodile were seen more frequently in depictions of exotic animal iconography. The latter two were wild monstrous creatures which often accompanied pygmy scenes. They were also closely connected to the water and therefore maintained a stronger link with the Nile, which may have made them more suitable as a Nilotic animal than the ichneumon. There are twenty examples of crocodiles, and eighteen of hippopotami. In ten cases the representations overlap, including hippopotami and crocodiles. Furthermore, with the exception of the mosaics of the Casa del Fauno and the house of Paquius Proculus (although a copy of

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710 Two other paintings depict an ichneumon, to wit the Palestrina mosaic and the frieze painting in the Iseum in Pompeii, see Meyboom 1995.
711 In this specific scene an ichneumon (or mongoose) fight a cobra, as in the Nile mosaic of Palestrina. Although it is stated to be a popular topic within Nilotic scenery, it is not found in any domestic setting besides the Casa del Fauno, see Meyboom 1995, 27, 243 note 74; de Vos 1980, 61; De Caro 1992, 56 no. 1.65.
712 Although the frog, which can also be proclaimed to be an indigenous species, does in a Nilotic context only occur in the Casa del Fauno mosaic, it is present in many gardens in the form of green-glazed statuettes (see 4.4). It is argued that the frog was also an important symbol of fertility connected to the Nile within Egyptian iconography, see Meyboom 1995, III, note 124. A frog was also depicted on the eastern wall of Cubiculum g in the Casa di Lucretius Fronto (V 4, 11) together with birds and plants (albeit not with a recognisably Nilotic theme). See de Vos 1980, 81-2, fig. 38 a-c.
the latter from the mosaic of the Casa del Menandro does not contain a crocodile), they all date from the most recent phases of wall and floor decoration in Pompeii. As to the ibises (fifteen in total), all are attested in the form of wall paintings (dated around c.70 AD), from the final phase of Pompeii (except for one painting which was found as a lower dado in the tablinum of house I 2, 24). This is also the only example to depict an ibis alone amongst water plants. The remaining paintings only depict this bird within a larger Nilotic landscape accompanied by dwarfs, pygmies, temples, and various other animals. This also counts for the crocodile and the hippopotamus. The crocodile (twenty appearances) and the hippopotamus (eighteen appearances) never appear alone. All are, with the exception of the mosaics, dated to c.70 AD i.e., within the Fourth Style. This implies that, albeit applicable as a genre, they could not appear alone which is presumably also caused by similar reasons of recognisability, as with the ichneumon.

To conclude the section on an iconographical motif analysis of Nilotic scenes, it has proved fruitful here to study the iconography of the paintings in more detail, as they provided significant insights into the perception of these images in relation to wall painting and pavement decoration. By means of studying the development and reception of motifs on Nilotic scenes, the category Nilotica can be considered to be much more fragmented and even impossible to frame in a single bounded category. Ducks and lotuses appear in markedly different contexts and their perception has little to do with the Nile, the exotic animals however, do seem to refer to the Nile, but not merely as a specific geographical reference but often just to point out that the setting was not Roman. Nilotic images displaying pygmies appear in a large range of small mythological creatures, referring to comical behaviour, but by adding a Nilotic landscape the options of behaviour could be enlarged to more inappropriate acts.

4.6.4 Style
In addition to iconography, style is also important to consider concerning the relationship with Egypt, as section 4.5 also indicated. It concerns the way in which Nilotic scenes were captured within the Pompeian wall painting styles as well as the way in which they were by and large conveyed. A difference is to be observed between the pharaonic styled images of the previous section and these scenes. Although they refer to Egypt by content, Nilotic scenes are
not rendered in a Pharaonic-Egyptian way (as discussed in part 4.5), but in a characteristically Roman way. A style therefore does not stand out when compared with other wall painting scenes (e.g., the afore-mentioned cupid scenes, mythological scenes, and all other renderings fashioned in a Graeco-Roman style.

Looking at the diachronic development within the three Pompeian wall painting styles in which Nilotic scenes are conveyed, the question is raised: does this change significantly through time? As seen above, only a few motifs (i.e., frog, ichneumon) are lost with connection to Nilotic scenes since the first Nilotic image in Pompeii. Pygmies were a later addition and only attested in mosaics dating from the period of the Second Style on. It seems not only that the majority of scenes can be dated to the Fourth Style in general, but also that pygmies, crocodiles and hippopotami are the most significant occurring motifs. Is this to due mainly to the changing relation with Egypt, or with the change in wall painting in general? The analysis of the previous section has suggested that the latter hypothesis seems more plausible, whereas the later styles provide room for small landscape paintings with mythological creatures (to which the unknown hippopotami and crocodile were probably accounted, as was the pygmy) within the peripheries of the walls in rooms.

It can be argued, however, that the style of these paintings cause them to be widely adopted in wall paintings. Therefore, as already mentioned, they are so comparable with cupid scenes and other non-Nilotic pygmy scenes. When observing the Fourth Style, especially in its most recent phase, we see a huge number of small landscape scenes placed in the margins of the walls. These were sometimes Nilotic, or merely presented a waterscape, both falling under the ambiguous denomination of ‘sacred landscape scenes’. These scenes have been present since the beginning of the Second Style wall painting, and continuously depicted Nilotic and non-Nilotic landscape scenes. The pieces attested in the atrium at the Villa dei Misteri (see fig. 4.33) should be dated to c.70 BC. However, the Casa del Menandro houses an almost identical frieze in the atrium, too, also presenting Nilotic and non-Nilotic scenes which could be firmly dated to a post 62 AD context. Such sacred landscape scenes in general do not consist of realistic or existing structures, but of small frames depicting a mystic, sacred landscape in a non-urban context. Considering the Nilotic scenes in the wider context

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714 See Ling 1997, 51.
of sacred landscape paintings they are hardly separable from the non-Nilotic landscapes. They both picture water, islands, and sanctuaries. It is a justified question in this case, whether the difference between Nilotic and non-Nilotic in these instances should be made at all. Fig. 4.33 shows a picture of such waterscapes in which the first is Nilotic and the second is not. Both through the cupid scenes, and the sacred waterscapes the style of Nilotic scenes which is intrinsic to Roman style, catered for an implementation which made them integrated features of Roman artistic endeavours.

![Fig. 4.33] Sacred landscapes. They depict water, flora, in some cases fauna and architectural features in an attempt to create a mystical, sacred and fantastic atmosphere. To the left: a Nilotic landscape scene from the atrium of the Villa dei Misteri; to the right: second shows a non-Nilotic scene from the peristyle of the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI 16,7-35). Photographs taken by the author.

Furthermore relevant to consider when discussing style, is that Nilotic scenes seem to be a rather bounded entity within the category of Aegyptiaca, with its own array of motifs that are not transposed to other genres, except perhaps by means of the blue/green-glazed statuettes. No pharaohs, hieroglyphs, deities, or sphinxes occur in Nilotic scenery. Even when Isis and Nilotic scenes appear together, such as in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati or when Nilotic themes are combined with Egypt-styled figures, as with the Villa dei Misteri, they are never placed in the same frame but only in carefully separated parts of the wall. Why do such themes not overlap? As was already discussed in paragraph 4.5, this might have to do with style and the ability to portraying situations that are potentially life-like in Roman perception. Egyptian sphinxes and pharaohs in Pompeii could therefore only

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715 Of the landscape scenes in Isis temple, the small panels of which decorate the walls of the porticus, only two of the six scenes are explicitly Nilotic. The remainder consists of generic, sacred landscape paintings as found throughout Pompeii (e.g., in the temple of Apollo), see Versluys 2002, no. 59.

716 It is claimed that the architectural feature in the Casa dei Pignei (IX 5, 9) was an obelisk. This is not very likely considering the other examples of architecture and its shape, see Schefold 1962, fig. 147. It has been described as a high pillar with a statue of Sobek, see Versluys 2002, 147.
cognitively associated with statues, not with living creatures, something which also counted for sphinxes. Therefore in Roman style Egyptian scenery did not have a place (except for the few instances were statues are shown, however, these rather refer to a general ‘sacredness’ by showing temples, herms or statues of deities then referring to explicit Egyptian features). While statues therefore might have featured in these scenes, they could not have done so as living beings. However, then the question remains why there were no statues of pharaohs and sphinxes to add to an Egyptian atmosphere? The same counts for Egyptian deities, which were never set into a Nilotic background (also not in the Casa delle Amazzoni, despite the thoughts of some scholars- this was inferred from a drawing made of a lararium painting and consists of plants and birds and a waterscape, however there is no single direct association with the Nile). Interestingly, it was not necessary to add to an Egyptian atmosphere, the cause for this might have been that the Nile and its life, although associated with Egypt, was seen as something different from Pharaonic Egypt and Isis. Nilotic scenes were the first allusions to Egypt, therefore they were considered an individual genre and adding ‘extra’ iconographic connections to Egypt were thus unnecessary. It argues for the existence of multiple concepts of Egypt, it furthermore argues however, that Egypt in the case of Nilotic scenes was not the primary association. It was not necessary to add more Egyptian features in this case, because Egypt was not the main subject of the painting.

Moving to the cultural style in which Nilotic scenes are conveyed (see for definition the previous paragraph, section 2), this is of critical importance. The previous paragraph argued that style mattered in use and perception, and that Pharaonic style could never integrate in a Pompeian context the way a Roman style could. Nilotic scenes, although depicting an Egyptian subject, are not made in an Egyptian style. Would they therefore should show a different picture than Pharaonically styled wall paintings and objects? And related to integration and style is the question whether in this particular case of Nilotic imagery ‘Egypt’ therefore was able to be incorporated in a so-called ‘narrative way’ (see 4.5), because the Nilotic scenes were painted in a roman style. This appears, looking at the fashion of painting and the position of Nilotic scenes on the walls, not to be the case. Because they mostly appear in the Fourth Style, in the margins of paintings, as a specific type of landscape scene, or as a humorous scenes just like the cupids (who appear on similar locations on walls). These scenes evidently
were not meant to be the central ‘carrying stories’ that appeared on the centres of walls, they merely served as additional background pictures. Cupids and pygmies only showing everyday life scenes could not feature on the centre of walls. This is also probably why they appeared less frequently in the Third style, which relied heavily on mythological genres. This notwithstanding, the Nile and its (mythological) animals and humans, were able to bring the subject of Egypt closer to the viewer through its indigenous style, and as was observed in the part on Bes and Ptah-Pataikos they probably formed a strong cognitive connection and visualisation of what was Egypt. This latter argument is significant, because it shows the particular agency of Nilotic scenes with regard to the perception of things Egyptian. Through style, and again without being consciously aware of this, Egypt could have become more familiar to the Roman beholder.

4.6.5 Contexts and spatial distribution

The spatial distribution of Nilotic scenes according to the size of houses is less varied than the finds of the blue-glazed statuettes, as 60% falls in the category of the large and very large houses. This would render Nilotic scenes an elite phenomenon. However, this specific image has more to do with the presence and preservation of wall painting in general than with the Nilotic scenes in particular. The number and quality of preservation will automatically be higher for the larger houses than the smaller ones. However, by means of this bias, it can be established that Nilotic scenes were not eschewed by the elite, but formed an important part of self-representation. This is confirmed by means of table 4.24 which provides the distribution of scenes according to house size and fig. 4.34b that indicates the room functions where the scenes were attested. Many of the rooms which housed Nilotic scenes, almost all, were situated in spaces that were not public (such as atria) but reception spaces for guests of equal or higher status, and especially in places in which they would gather such as triclinia and stibadia. The pie charts below (fig. 4.34a) concern the distribution of find contexts of Nilotic scenes in Pompeii. First to be noted here is that the largest percentage of the images could be found in a garden context. When choosing garden paintings, Nilotic scenes were probably a natural option. Of these contexts, the peristyle (12%) and the garden (17%) were the most frequently occurring spaces with regard to housing Nilotic imagery. According to Barret, Nilotic scenes were primarily associated with the celebration of water and the returning of the Nile flood, which is the reason
why many scenes found within the house were located near fountains or baths. However a note must be made that although Nilotic scenes are found in three public baths, and were connected to private baths, nymphae, and fountains as well; more scenes were actually attested in triclinia (dining-contexts) not in water contexts (see pie chart 4.34b). Only three of the Nilotic scenes are attested in the contexts of a nymphaeum, while there are about 15 examples of nymphae found in Pompeii. The fact that only three were decorated with a Nilotic scene (also a wall painting) could imply it was not a common part of a nymphaeum per se, but that the motif could be applied within the larger theme of water related subjects. Furthermore, it seems that specific motifs were utilised in specific contexts. First, all the ducks and birds in the case they are separated from Nilotic scenery often appear on the inner walls of peristyles where it was customary to depict birds and plants. Of interest when looking into the ‘indoor spaces’ (i.e., public contexts with a non-dining function such as the tablinum, atrium, or cubiculum) or other rooms with a more intimate character is that paintings were found portraying pygmies, but never in an erotic way. Such a scene was most probably not considered to be appropriate for these kinds of settings. However, one would expect to perhaps come across erotic scenes within a dining context, as they alluded to feasting. However, this does not have a direct connection, except with the two stibadia (in the Casa dell’Efebo and its close copy in house II 7, 1). The erotic scenes are, without exceptions, found in peristyles and in gardens.

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<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>Casa dell’Efebo</td>
<td>I 7, 11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casa del Menandro</td>
<td>I 10, 4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praedia di Giulia Felice</td>
<td>II 4,2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>V 2,i</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casa di Sallustio</td>
<td>VI 2,4</td>
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<td>Casa di Apollo</td>
<td>VI 7,23</td>
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<td>Casa dei Dioscuri</td>
<td>VI 9,6/7</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Casa del Fauno</td>
<td>VI 12,2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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718 This could be related to the apotropaic function Clarke ascribes to these scenes. See Clarke 1998, 119-42.
719 This survey includes only those houses dealt with in Brandt’s table on house sizes. Size is determined according to Brandt 2010. Brandt divided the houses according to size: 1 = Small (51-150m²), 2 = Medium, (151-450 m²), 3 = large (451-850m²), 4 = Very large (850-1800m²), and 5 = Extra large (1801-6000m²), see Brandt 2010, 96.
Although these scenes were in all probability not directly targeted at warding off evil, apotropaica were often found in gardens. Sexual or abnormal behaviour and exoticism also alludes to such concepts. Another explanation could be that the garden as an exotic and outdoor setting was conceived as a liminal space where boundaries could be stretched. Another example where ‘comical’ and objects with sexual overtones occur within a garden setting is: the statue of sleeping hermaphrodite found at the back of the garden at the Casa di Octavius Quartio (II 2, 2). Within triclinia, the scenes not only alluded to comical pygmy scenes, but also to the wealth and abundance generated by the Nile. When looking at the distribution of the wall paintings containing Egyptian themes a difference can be observed between Nilotic scenes and non-Nilotic Egyptian imagery. As discussed above, the largest part of the Nilotic scenes could be attested in outdoor spaces (e.g., peristylia, viridaria, gardens) whereas other Egyptian images are rarely found here.

![Contexts of Nilotic Scenes](image1)

![Rooms in which Nilotic scenes are found](image2)

Fig. 4.34a-b) The context of Nilotic scenes. Their function (left), and distribution of the rooms (right) are indicated.
In fact, there are only three instances in which non-Nilotic Egyptianising wall paintings (which are never attested in a garden setting) are found in a peristyle, all of them appeared to be domestic shrines.\textsuperscript{720} Therefore it seems that Nilotic scenes had a distinctive function within wall painting, which was markedly different from pharaonic imagery but was also varied in itself. This makes the reference to the variability in use and perception of such scenes despite their seemingly similar appearance. Through a contextual perspective it can become clear however, that there are rules to discover within the application of different Nilotic scenes, for different animals, motifs, or scenes were appropriate for different settings.

\textit{4.6.6 Nilotic scenes, a Roman view of Egypt?}

Was a cognitive link to Egypt made during the life-history of Nilotic scenes in Pompeii? Looking closely at the development of the iconography of the Nilotic scenes, it is obvious that an unequivocal and decisive answer for the entire category of representations and their cognitive reference to Egypt cannot be provided for. Nilotic scenes became part of a genre of landscape paintings not necessarily linked to Egypt, but applicable in a variety of contexts and with various cognitive associations. In some cases a link was clearly made, however, in many other examples there seems to have been none.

The 2002 thesis of Versluys therefore mentioned in the beginning of this section, that proclaims the annexation of Egypt by the Roman Empire in 30 BC caused a change in perception of the Roman view of Egypt resulting in a shift from an ethnographic to stereotypical depiction of Egyptians is not entirely valid on these accounts. It ought to be slightly nuanced, both with respect to developments in wall painting itself and within the context of decoration in Pompeian houses. Figures, landscapes, and architecture in wall paintings are presumed to have moved from ethnographic depictions, towards more mythological scenes in general during the Augustan period, again implying that the presence of pygmies and dwarfs in Nilotic scenes was no reflection of a specific change in behaviour towards Egypt. Furthermore, it is difficult to say whether the implementation of Nilotic scenes increased because of the annexation of Egypt or because wall painting during this time allowed much more space for separate frames. The reason for this is that a development in wall paintings made that they no longer existed of

\textsuperscript{720} They are the wall paintings in the Preadia di Giulia Felice (II, 2, 2), the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI 16, 7.38), and the Casa delle Amazzoni (VI 2, 4).
continuous space, but became made out of fragmented scenes instead (in which small frames depicting landscape scenes such as Nilotic imagery could be applied). Moreover, as mentioned above, it seems that although Egypt was made a Roman province in 30 BC, the largest part of the wall paintings could be dated after 40 AD, implying that the increase of Nilotic scenery largely falls after the addition of the country of Egypt as part of the Roman Empire. However, portraying pygmy scenes may have catered for a change in vision towards something stereotypical because of the constant visual confrontation with pygmies, mythical creatures, and Egyptian landscapes. On the other hand comparing these scenes to cupid scenes -the closest related artistic parallel in style, location, and content- showed no use of stereotypes of any kind. They were merely supposed to represent humorous and derisive scenes of everyday life of the Romans. Also in pygmy scenes it may well have been more important to the viewer, therefore, what was happening (e.g., hunting, sexual activities, feasting, etc.) than who was depicted.721

In conclusion, to answer the question whether Nilotic scenes depict a Roman view of Egypt the answer is both yes and no. Nilotic scenes displaying pygmies are not so much a political statement or a stereotypical rendering of Egyptians, it however does show a further integration of a theme once Hellenistic and slowly taken up within Roman wall painting styles. The pygmies very well fit within the Roman taste of wall painting of that time, and their development runs parallel with the application of all sorts of small landscape scenes into divided frames or friezes, or within the depiction of everyday scenes with a humorous undertone; especially in the Fourth Style this becomes apparent. Therefore it is not a coincidence that there is a steep rise to be witnessed in Nilotic scenes during the last phases of the town, this has little to do with Egyptomania.

4.6.7 Conclusion
By means of the contextual analysis of Nilotica insights were added to the use and perception of Nilotic scenes within a Pompeian context. This was mainly achieved by reviewing the development and life history of different motives, which showed a more complex and fragmented picture of the

721 Cupids were never engaged in sexual activities, but pygmies who were apparently better suited to portray such scenes were always specifically set against an Egyptian background with crocodiles and hippopotami.
category of Nilotica, and through a more detailed contextual analysis, which showed that also in the depiction of certain Nilotic scenes there were rules to be observed with regards to use.

Nilotic scenes appear to be one of the deeper integrated group of Egyptian-related objects in Pompeii. They are present in many houses, have a varied application in both motives and contexts and have the longest life span of all Egyptian-related artefacts. This has most probably to do with their style, which fits in precisely within the developments made in Pompeian wall painting. While this development most likely did not directly reflect the Roman views of Egypt or Egyptians, their abundant presence did have consequences of how Egypt was viewed. Of course it cannot be deduced with certainty how the view of Egypt was influenced by these scenes, and whether Pompeians started to see inhabitants and the country of Egypt in the way they were displayed in these scenes. Although it cannot be excluded that there was an influence made through the imagery, they should probably not be regarded as either negative or positive, while this ignores the many complexities of wall painting as a visual medium and of the concepts that existed of Egypt. The scenes were an independent feature within Egyptian-connected wall paintings, next to other imagery which also did not show particularly stereotyped views of Egypt. Nonetheless, it can be observed that the Nilotic scenes had an effect on other Egyptian-related artefacts, probably due to the fact that they probably represented the first visual reference to Egypt in Pompeii. It can be seen for instance, that when green glazed figurines entered Pompeii (although its dating is not firmly established they are most likely a later development than the Nilotic scenes of the first century AD) that the choice and selection was closely related to what is depicted in Nilotic scenes.

The way Nilotica are integrated furthermore argues for the theory that Nilotic scenes were seen as an independent concept mostly unrelated, not artistically at least, to other concepts of Egypt. This did not mean however, that there was no conceptual relation between Nilotic scenes and Egypt, because both early developments in the Villa dei Misteri as well as later implementations within the temple of Isis show that the connection was present from the start and remained to be made in certain occasions. Nonetheless these were only occasional references made in specific contexts, especially for case of the Isis sanctuary. Next to such exceptions however and in a more general way, it could be observed that Nilotic scenes were so fully integrated phenomena in the Fourth Style Pompeian wall painting that
they could function unrelated to the context of Egypt. They blended in with small landscape scenes (sacred landscapes), which show waterscapes with temples as were abundantly present in wall painting and in which the boundary between Nilotic scenes and non-Nilotic scenes often became so blurred that it artificially had to be drawn by scholars. On the other hand the scenes tie in with another specific thematic type of the concept of small mythological creatures such as (non-Egyptian) dwarf, pygmy and cupid scenes which are involved in everyday life activities like hunting, working, and feasting. They all portray exactly similar scenes, in which again a boundary between cupids, dwarfs and pygmies and their actions is difficult to distinguish. The pygmy is no different concept than the cupid within the context of Fourth Style Pompeian wall painting, and allusions to Egyptian theology in this case (the context in which the wall paintings appear, what they depict, and in which rooms they are displayed) seem to be implausible. There is one exception however in which cupids and Egyptian pygmies deviate, which is quite telling with respect to Roman perception. When sexually deviant behaviour is portrayed in such paintings, the setting becomes explicitly Nilotic – endorsed by all exotic animals which were known from this type of imagery such as hippopotami, crocodiles, and ibises. Because they were appreciated as humorous scenes with a sexual undertone, they could not be related to ‘proper Roman’ behaviour or to cupids which was why an exotic (non-Roman) context was necessary. The exotic in this way became a background to stretch the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

All in all, although the multiplicity in regard to Nilotic scenes was already emphasised by many scholars, it could be seen from this analyses that when they are not just viewed in the context of other Aegyptiaca or in the context of Egyptian theology, Nilotica show an even more fluid and fragmented picture than was thought before. Nilotic scenes are extraordinary objects within Pompeii and within the category of Aegyptiaca, especially because they were so mundane. Nilotic scenes could therefore be even further enmeshed, obscuring the link to Egypt even more through all the new cognitive linkages outside the Egyptian, and it was the primarily Roman way in which they were conveyed which made this possible. Nilotic scenes are therefore primary examples to show how a specific theme, how an originally foreign image becomes the Self and becomes the Other at the same time.
4.7 Conclusion to chapter 4: the dynamics of material culture and the concepts of Egypt

4.7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I have tried to disentangle the category of ‘Aegyptiaca’ as it was introduced in chapter one. The first important conclusion which must be drawn in this respect is that conceptually at least, we cannot speak of a category ‘Aegyptiaca’. Objects that were imported from Egypt, objects that were locally made in an Egyptian style and objects which referred to Egypt in a non-Egyptian style had different uses and meanings; and were therefore not unequivocally perceived as ‘things Egyptian’. While one of the basic premises formulated in the beginning of this research was to be cautious concerning the conceptual difference between the Egyptian and Egyptianising objects as defined by modern scholarship and their experience by a Roman audience (see discussion chapter 2), this chapter has demonstrated that the situation is even more complex. Even in challenging the Egyptian-Egyptianising debate the discussion does not do justice to the enormous variability in the perceptions and uses of Egypt in relation to Roman material culture that can be witnessed in the houses of Pompeii. Moreover, it seems that the distinction between Egyptian and Egyptianising in some cases was important and apparent for its users, in other cases however it seemed to be of no concern whether something was genuinely Egyptian or not. Future research therefore, focus should be on the variability in which these objects manifest themselves, and the causes of the variability (that is: the contexts), and not to this distinction.

However, having deconstructed the conceptual existence of Aegyptiaca in Pompeii is, as was already stated in chapter 3, only the first step in solving the issues concerning these objects. The main question that is left after the deconstruction is what is left of the category? Can we still, on the basis of the conclusions of this chapter, examine Egypt in domestic contexts? Is the concept as such something which exists in our minds or in the minds of the Romans? How should we then continue to investigate these objects? This last paragraph will summarise the results of chapter 4, discuss the consequences for the central thesis of the research, and explore the way to continue.

4.7.2 The category ‘Aegyptiaca’

When it is the objective to study the perceptions and uses by the Romans of Egyptian objects it is essential to abandon the category of Aegyptiaca.
Because in the context of all objects, paintings, and architecture found at the site of Pompeii, the artefacts from the database actually appear to belong to very different conceptual categories than Aegyptiaca. This chapter demonstrated that from the perspective of perception, a bronze table with a sphinx foot did not conceptually belong to something Egyptian, but to the category of tables depicting *Mischwesen*. A statuette of Ptah-Pataikos did not belong to ‘Aegyptiaca’ so much as it did to apotropaic dwarf statues. A scene depicting a duck with a lotus flower did not necessarily reflect the Roman view of Egypt, but to garden contexts among other birds and plants, while pygmies could be used to display everyday scenes considered too mundane for humans and deities and in this way were strongly associated with cupid scenes. A marble statue of an Egyptian sphinx was regarded within the category of sphinxes as marble garden ornaments. In the mind of the Romans, in their daily dealings with objects, these artefacts were not conceived as belonging together as Egyptian objects.  

How can we deal with the consequences of this supposition? To solve this it is of significance to first elucidate where the basis of the problem is actually situated. Something that could be witnessed quite clearly after the deconstruction of the category is how modern scholars project concepts upon the material culture of the past, which does not necessarily correspond to a historical situation. An elusive concept such as Bes (4.4) has caused an ‘upheaping’ so to say, of every find connected to the (modern) concept of Bes as if these were all identically experienced by the Romans. While in fact, it appeared from the analysis that a statue of Bes was experienced as something different than a wall painting of Bes in the Isis temple and again different from a depiction of Bes on a Late Republican coin. It can be noticed that in this way a particular idea becomes projected onto different expressions of material culture, as if they all belong to a similar concept, however because of this unequivocal and a priori projections archaeologists will fail to understand the incredible diversity of uses and meanings that material culture brings. In the same respect it is also (erroneously) assumed that an idea is more important than the artefact itself, as if what an objects symbolises prevails over what it actually is and does. First of all, when there is no distinct and monolithic concept present in a society, as is the case with Egypt in Pompeii, objects automatically and instinctively become interpreted

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722 Although we should refrain from utilizing the conceptual category of Aegyptiaca, the alternative scenarios sketched above should not be considered to be fixed conceptual categories either, as 4.7.5 will illustrate.
in different ways. Secondly, a statue is something different than a wall painting; they are used and interpreted differently, convey different messages, and influence the viewer in many different ways. Different objects afford different behaviours and how people categorise things is dependent to a large extent on their specific uses. If material culture is taken seriously as an analytical tool this should be made a point of departure in the methodology.

The projections of modern scholars cause further related complications for this investigation, as was already indicated in the first chapter of this thesis, in the way that the selection of the data and its interpretations were based on modern conceptions of Egypt (as discussed in chapter two). It is of great importance to realise, due to the multiplex relations that Rome had with Egypt, that the Roman concept of Egypt was notably different and in all probability also more complex than in modern western society today, and therefore does not represent anything conceptually analogous which we could employ. The ties to Egypt were different in the Roman era, more direct, much more varied, and also stronger than ours today; they were explicitly present on considerably more levels of Roman society (economic, political, religious, social, and cultural). Egypt was not so much an idea as it was a constant and realistic presence which continually reshaped its own image. Furthermore, Egypt was a physical part of the Roman Empire and therefore much more intertwined with Roman culture compared to modern Western society. The concepts of Egypt that are employed today: mysterious, old, the possessor of secret wisdom, and the associations such as pharaohs and hieroglyphs; they should be considered to be only a portion of what ‘Egypt’ could conceptually entail for a Roman. What are the consequences of this assumption? The inference is that archaeologists not only project their views onto an archaeological dataset, but also that they project a view that does not acknowledge the complexity the concept comprises. This means that the

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723 Not only does the relationship with Egypt play a role, the Roman world itself alters the concept of Egypt different. Reflect upon for instance the relation Romans maintained with the divine (rendering Isis seriously worshipped), whether our subsequent development of monotheism changed the world to such an extent we can no longer consider Egyptian religion as a part of modern religious society, see Assmann 1995. Contemplate the vital chance of perception which Napoleon’s Description de l’Égypte brought and, for instance, the cultural contacts and increased globalisation of the modern world which makes Egypt only one strange culture among many other strange cultures.

724 Leemreize has analysed this process by means of a discourse analyse of Latin literature from the 1st century BC to the 1st century AD in a PhD dissertation (forthcoming 2015). Only by looking at the concepts directly as they are conceived in texts can the complexity of Egypt be made clear. Material culture does not offer this opportunity as there is no clear link to the concepts and objects.
collection of data was already biased from selection onwards, with resulting consequences for the analysis, the interpretation, and the conclusions. The current research therefore deals with a serious ontological and hermeneutical problem. Because if we want to take the study of Egyptian artefacts in the Roman world a step further, and truly see whether it is possible to receive any insights in the perception of these artefacts, it is important to first rule out modern ideas that were projected on them. This was commenced in chapter three in the formulation of a methodology which could give room to perception theory and the levels of experience. An important aim of this chapter specifically was to find a strategy in which it was possible to approach the dataset more empirically than was done in the past.

The hermeneutic issues sketched above asked for a radical rethinking of how objects, ideas, contexts, and material related to each other and to Egypt. This was done according to the adopted post-phenomenological framework, in which it was argued that experience can never occur in a vacuum but is situated knowledge created within and by the environment. 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. It is important to regard objects holistically in all their diversity and in relation to all other objects, ideas, styles, practices, spaces, and materials that can be attested in a setting. As a perspective, it was subsequently decided to use the concept of relationality and material-associative networks through a careful contextual analysis of the objects together with all their conceptual and material relations present in Pompeii. In this way it became possible to remap the relations that objects had with Egypt from the perception of those dealing with them, thereby being able to transcend modern associations and concepts of Egypt.

4.7.3 Associative networks

In the introduction of this chapter introduced the idea of proximal networks (4.1) as a perspective which could allow a more emic way of assessing the artefacts from the database. The key point was that in this way it would become possible to think about the objects and its cognitive connections in a relational instead of a categorical way; which means that the relation to Egypt was investigated instead of examining artefacts as Egyptian. In this way Egypt could become a heuristic tool to analyse the emic dealings with objects and the society in which they were used. Associative (or semantic or
cognitive) networks are thus not so much a theory, but rather a tool for the visualisation and re-mapping of artefacts in order to rethink conceptual associations between people and material culture and the way they constitute and affect each other. This revealed again the complexity of objects; not only are we engaged differently with different objects, objects also interact with each other through different networks, affecting the perception of them and changing the dynamics of experience. The explanation of the networks showed along which lines objects could be integrated in the environment of Pompeii, however, as was stated in the introduction, the network is dynamic and visualises only a snapshot moment within a process of continuous transformation of connections. Lines may disappear and new links are established as the objects are used, produced, and exchanged. Through the dealing with objects new associations arise while other vanishes. In this way Egypt as an association might become obscured within perception. The fluctuations and changes of links are not only influenced by the objects themselves, but also by people dealing with them through a process of social transmission, by children through their parents and through the diverse social strata of Pompeian society. People growing up around objects that their parents call foreign (Egyptian) do not experience its foreignness as profound anymore themselves, and a generation after those people grew up the whole connection to foreignness might be disappeared. Within the dynamics of the inheritance and change of object-significance, horizontal transmission (as was discussed in the introduction of this chapter 4.1) therefore plays a crucial part. That means that not what an object might have signified in Egypt, or the way it travelled from Egypt, but the way objects become integrated into a society through its presence, its use and its associations is what mattered mostly for how objects became perceived and taken up in the networks. Ideas do not cling to an object, the object’s agency acts out in a new environment and is subsequently used and understood the way it fits in within the existing framework. What is important in this process of the dynamics of the associational links (the cognitive integration of an object) is that it *enmeshes* an object within society. Innovation and diffusion of object meaning commences as soon as an artefact comes in contact with a new environment; its interpretations become varied because of the social variation of that society (they cause for different links). However, it seemed that even the very basis for the selection of an object in a new context was influenced by horizontal recognition and understanding. This
last notion brings us to the discussion of our objects in the light of cultural embeddedness.

4.7.4 Cultural embeddedness

Through a network perspective it was possible to overcome some of the interpretative biases with regard to the concept of Egypt and to rework the associations of different types of material culture and concepts with the idea of Egypt. This perspective is considered an important step because it acknowledges and takes seriously the different workings and agencies of material culture, as it takes account of the possible variations and complexities of the Roman ideas of Egypt. This reconfiguration however, is only a first step in the reinterpretation process of Aegyptiaca and also transmits new problems which will be dealt with in the last parts of this section. For example, what lies at the basis of the enmeshment of Egyptian material culture? And how do we explain these processes? Cultural embeddedness refers to the way in which objects, ideas, and practices become dependent on cultural context for their meaning and appropriation. Every ‘foreign’ element newly imported or constructed in the context of Pompeii was understood in a framework already present. This has consequences for how things are integrated, but also for what was selected out of the available repertoire. Of course, the availability of ‘things Egyptian’ (‘Greek’, ‘Dacian’, ‘Gallic’ or ‘Persian’ can be interchangeably used in this context) within the increased connectivity of the Roman Empire was larger than what is eventually observed in local contexts. This means that choices were made (intentional and unintentional), and that a choice for something depended on that local context which is subsequently able to provide information about that local context.\(^{725}\) However, a first remarkable observation that the network analysis made apparent is that almost all of the objects from the database had a logical association with things which were already present in Pompeii. The Bes statuettes were recognised as dwarfs, already used for centuries for their apotropaic qualities and therefore incorporated as such. The mental distinctions between Egyptian sphinxes were not always that large from a Greek sphinx, and both were associated with other (fable) creatures such as griffins, lions, and phoenixes and could likewise be used in the similar contexts, such as in tables, and within the context of painted garden statues. Isis could be associated with a range of other deities and through her association with Fortuna, connections Egypt

\(^{725}\) As is put forward as an important methodological aim of globalisation studies.
could vanish. Pygmies in Nilotic scenes might have sometimes been interpreted as inhabitants of *Aethiopia* (part 4.6.), but within the context of wall painting they also could be recognised as the exotic and worldly equivalent of the cupid, and as a consequence of this we see both figures act in similar settings such as hunts and feasts in wall painting. What can be deduced from this observation is that many things were incorporated not because it was considered foreign but because it was familiar; objects were recognised from a Pompeian framework and therefore it were those objects that became selected. Even the actual imports from Egypt that can be witnessed in houses, such as the basalt slab with hieroglyphs from the Casa del Doppio Larario and the Egyptian styled herm of Jupiter Ammon from the Complesso di riti Magici could be directly connected to finds from the temple of Isis (see 4.5, table 4.16). The only uniquely ‘strange’ object that hitherto has no parallel with any other find, object or painting, is the alabaster Horus statue attested in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati.\(^{726}\)

With respect to these observations, it can also be reasoned that ‘exotic’ as concept to interpret these objects should be employed with the utmost cautiousness. Of course, there are instances when something was selected from the repertoire with the intention to signify something exotic, or something foreign, but the case I want to make here is that these are exceptional cases more than they are the norm and definitely not something which can be assumed a priori.

One last issue should be mentioned concerning cultural embeddedness, and that is about the way things become selected. It seems from this last part, that choice always denotes a conscious and intentional process. Nevertheless, it should be put forward here that this is often not the case because choices are habitually made rather intuitively. In most everyday situations the human brain functions in a responsive way instead of an interpretative, because it is developed to quickly react to the environment instead thinking it through, which is a slow and energy taking process.\(^{727}\)

Intentional behaviour in general is much less common, and perception is based and as a consequence of this it is influenced by much more processes that lie outside the brain. Why is this important? It is because of these intuitive associations that objects are recognised and change within their new environment. Because the choice for the way an object will show up in

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\(^{726}\) This statue will be discussed in detail in 5.2.

\(^{727}\) The slow, deliberate, analytical and consciously effortful mode of reasoning about the world is described in Kahneman 2011. See also 3.2.
an environment (resulting both from selection and production) rather occurs intuitively on the basis of cultural embeddedness and is not very conscious, means that the process is profoundly influenced by unintentional processes and ‘the things themselves’.

This last discussion demonstrates correspondingly how inadequate a concept like ‘Egyptomania’ is as an explanation for the process of why we see so many Egyptian objects in the Roman world. Many objects and paintings would not have been consciously selected as such, or used as such, and their selection was not always intentionally directed to the acquirement of something Egyptian. It also adds an important general argument to the discussion on modern preconceptions and projections in archaeological research from 4.7.2, because as scholars project modern concepts on historical case studies, they also often make the mistake to ascribe intentionality to certain habits and actions of the past much more than was actually the case.

4.7.5 The agency of Egypt?
The discussion on intentionality leads to another important issue this chapter put forward, that of agency. What is even more significant than choice, is that because of human’s intuitive and responsive way of dealing with the everyday world our environment (both spatial contexts and material culture) has much more influence on us than realised. Perception does not take place in the brain, it happens out there. Humans have a distributed cognition which depends on external stimuli and takes place in the world. Cognition is embedded, which means it is relative to ecological, cultural and social fields; the internal representations are selected so as to complement the complex and ecological settings in which people must act. It also means cognition is for a part subjected to the things (objects) which surround people. We do not only interpret objects intentionally, objects influence and shape our behaviour and thoughts unintentionally. Although this thought goes beyond perception of objects, it has large implications for the new line of thinking we set out for this study and it lies at the basis of how objects influence perception and action. This is because perception studies analyses how things are seen on a superficial top tier (but utmost importance therefore) of perception; not what it is in the world, but how people experience them and how things appear to us. However, what is

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728 For an elaborated discussion on this topic from the field of neuro-biology, see Noë 2009.
729 See Clark 1997, 221.
important to realise is that how things appear to us is also influenced by "what things are"; effects present in the object (its material properties for example, its size, colour, weight, polish, etc) that we do not "pick up" consciously when we perceive objects but affects to a significant extent of how people see things and interpret things (as in pre-ontological and ontological understanding). This is what we call the agency of things, the dimensions, affordances, and possibilities of things and physical properties of things. Therefore it is considered to be vital to incorporate this perspective for its acknowledgement of the power that things themselves possess. The question is how does this change the current understandings about Egyptian objects?

Therefore it is significant to return to the conceptual categories once more. In the previous part it was argued that the objects from the database belong to different conceptual groups than 'Aegyptiaca', but instead to apotropaic statuary, garden-ornaments, religious objects, water scenes, and *mischwesen*-tables. However, if the network method is taken seriously, this cannot be considered to be fixed and stable categories either, but merely a way to deconstruct the former classification. Also, this would still denote a reflective coping (or intentional interpretation) of objects, while the table is used unreflectively in the world. It did not first have to be conceptually classified as a table before the owner could put things on it. The network approach shows that there exist multiple options of interpreting similar objects. We have elucidated that those options depend on the present perception framework of Pompeii, social variations, the way objects are recognised, and with what other objects and ideas they are associated. These cognitive options show all the possibilities, it depends on the context and the viewer what perception is dominant. This means that eventual perception is thus something different than the potential meanings or associations of an object. Further, because the objects from the database perceptively do not belong to Aegyptiaca, it does not denote that could not sometimes be perceived and interpreted or used as Egyptian. The network only revealed that an Egyptian perception is not something that automatically occurs. The examples from the chapter not only showed that Egypt consisted of a multitude of concepts, but also that these were often not a conscious part of perception.

However, although, or maybe even because objects often belonged to other perceptive conceptual categories (which the Egyptian connotation obscured in perception), Egypt was able to unintentionally influence the way people
perceive and use objects. As we just argued above, objects that are handled without conscious and interpretative thinking are able to influence our behaviour, and influence how we perceive other things. People recognise things based on what they know, from a large frame of knowledge which is developed through our interaction with objects, visual stimuli, architecture that surrounds them. The Egyptian connotation, subsequently, did not disappear in the table foot although it was not always consciously perceived as something Egyptian. The Egyptian element of the table influenced the perception of its users. Exchange is always mutual: that what we affect also affects us; what we change will also change us.\textsuperscript{730} When for instance a table foot in an Egyptian style becomes enmeshed and a culturally embedded object, and seen as something internal, this means that other similar looking objects will become recognised and categorised on the basis of that table. What it signifies in its new environment or how it becomes used will be based on this; not on the fact that it is Egyptian/foreign/exotic. However, nonetheless, the object is still from Egypt or has Egyptian iconography, and this will become internalised too. As the process of integration and recognition continues many things (once) Egyptian are able to slowly form a cognitive substrate on the bases of which newly arrived things become recognised and integrated. And within the same process of cultural embeddedness that was explained above the enmeshment of an Egyptian artefact will cognitively trigger recognition of other objects. Through this largely unintentional and unconscious process Egypt (as an unintentional hidden reality and as a conscious Roman interpretation) was able to integrate as a cultural part of Roman society.

\textbf{4.7.6 Narrative and style}

Another issue that has emerged during the analysis of chapter 4 (especially from paragraphs 4.2 \textit{representations of deities} and 4.5 \textit{Egypt as style}) is the issue of narrative and style in relation to Egypt. It ties in with the discussion on cultural embeddedness in the sense that recognition and interpretation from an internal framework has implications, and that local recognition leads to different integration patterns within society. It showed another example of the flexibility and variability of the concepts of Egypt in Pompeii. In this case it provided an example of how Egypt can sometimes become the ‘Other’ through the same process of cultural embeddedness. This is

\textsuperscript{730} As Gosden states: “Patterns of exchange and consumption derive partly from the nature of the objects themselves”. See Gosden 2007, 196
something that became clear when we regarded the manifestations of Isis in Pompeian houses (4.2), Egyptian style and mythology (4.5) displayed on wall paintings. From the case study of representations of Isis compared to that of Venus in Pompeii (4.2.3) it could be observed that Venus/Aphrodite was conceived within a narratively structure; meaning she had a background narrative in which her portrayal could be conceived, a history, she was dynamically depicted in various positions as if she was a human being. Moreover, Venus could be used within mythological narratives and on a more meta-level as an allegory. Isis on the other hand always remained an icon in Roman art; in wall painting as well as in statuary she remained a static representation of her cult statue, without ‘being alive’, without changing position or being part of a story. In a historical sense this is not necessary, Isis has a mythology of her own, which was known in the Roman world.\footnote{Plutarch in \textit{De Iside et Osiride} as well as Apuleius’ \textit{Golden Ass} describe detailed accounts of the myths concerning Isis.} Was this information only available for initiates of the cults of Isis and Serapis? Because it is not reflected in the material culture, it can be argued that although knowledge was present (also in Pompeii), it could not become materialised in a narrative way. Even the painting of Isis in her sanctuary had to be conceived within the Greek myth of Io. Could it be that Isis’ myth was unable to become incorporated in the collective memory of Romans? While Venus was culturally embedded in a large corpus of myth, she could be displayed in a much more flexible and vigorous way. Egyptian mythology was not embedded in the collective memory of the Pompeians, at least not to an extent that it could transform itself to wall painting. Greek mythology on the other hand was an all-encompassing and an intrinsic part of Pompeian life.\footnote{The mythology here is referred to as ‘Greek mythology’ because the Romans for a great part took over Greek mythology in their own narratives. This does not imply that those myths were conceived of as culturally Greek, they were an intrinsic part of Roman storytelling and intertwined with their own mythology, and only used to refer to the origin. Strictly speaking, we are dealing with ‘Roman mythology with a Greek origin’ when referring to portraits of Aphrodite and Venus. Roman myths with an Italic origin (e.g., the Sabine Virgins, the story of Romulus and Remus) can also be found, however, to a much smaller extent.} How intrinsically Greek mythology was known in Pompeian society is easily proven by the look of the hundreds of mythological scenes painted on the walls of the Pompeian houses. Not only quantitatively, but even more so qualitatively they show the knowledge of Greek myth; they depict such a large variety of scenes from the lives of heroes and gods of which only a very few consist of direct copies and of which most portray unique images, which means that they were cognitively
quite accessible as a narrative. Some scenes were showing scenes just before or after a climax moment, some scenes only provide a few hints to the story; all this indicates a detailed inherent acquaintance and understanding of mythology. Isis was thus differently perceived in the context of painting and material culture from deities that could be conceived in Greek mythology. Isis was not the ‘Other’ when it came to her worship, Romans had many different cults integrated from abroad which all had their place and function in society, however the way she was perceived as goddess was different from some other deities. Isis was not so much foreign, as she was less intimately known. Of course there are intrinsic values belonging to the two deities (Venus as the goddess of love versus Isis the goddess of birth and family values) which make Venus more likely to be approached in a more unrestricted way than Isis. However, the fact that other deities also show this discrepancy in portrayal (such as Mithras compared to Dionysus or to Hercules) is prove that the difference in conception of these deities goes deeper than their characters. If a narrative is present in the collective memory it appears to have had large implications on how subjects are portrayed in material renderings. However, although it difficult to say with certainty, it could be imagined that this must have had consequences for the way Isis was perceived as a goddess herself, even more so because in the Roman world statues of deities were representations of the gods and could be worshiped as gods.

In a similar way Egypt can be approached as a style (part 4.5), which by the same token showed a good example of how Egypt as a heuristic tool within network analysis was able to uncover some of the mechanisms in Pompeian society through the way material culture was used. Whenever the mythological stories were depicted on the walls of houses, they were conveyed in a Roman style execution. Although this seems evident, Roman wall painters (and house owners) were well aware of different artistic styles. They were also able to convey images in the typical Egyptian aspective

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733 For instance, the painting of Peirithoos greeting the centaurs, arriving for the wedding feast. Or, the painting of Perseus and Andromeda in which Perseus prepares to free Andromeda after negotiating with her father from Boscotrecase, see Woodford 2003, 130-1. An evolution can be witnessed from synoptic images to more condensed image in which the remaining story occurs with less and less images. Only hints to the stories are presented, see Woodford 2003, 45-7. Consider in this respect the scene of Troilos and Polyxena fleeing from Achilles (who is not represented) on an Attic red figure hydria from 480 BC crafted by the Troilois painter (currently on display in the British Museum). Instead of providing an expanded version, the myth only portrays Polexena running and Troilos on a horse. Without any name one knew what had preceded and was to follow.

734 The discussion in 4.2, but especially in 4.5 seems to illustrate the existence of a 'Roman' style opposed to 'Archaic' or 'Egyptian' style.
style, as well as use other styles. However, on every occasion Egypt was shown in style (which only is attested in a very few cases) it was separately framed and isolated from the rest of the wall. It was for instance made into an architectural feature; however, it could not be used to portray something ‘alive’, something that was a part of the story, just as could be observed with the example of Isis. When it comes to style, Egypt can be identified as conveyed and used as the non-Roman ‘Other’. It was definitely experienced as different from Roman style painting and intentionally used to make that opposition. When can something become the ‘Other’? When it is no longer regarded as the self. However, as the Self is what is inherent and an unreflective part of coping with the world, the ‘Other’ takes a degree of consciousness. When things break down, are deformed, or are somehow out of the ordinary in their settings (as is the case with stylistically enframing Egypt) people suddenly regard them more consciously. They are out of the ordinary and thus experienced intentionally and interpretatively. In this way, people could become aware of Egypt, it became present-at-hand as Heidegger would name it. Through making Egypt present-at-hand in wall painting the different concepts of Egypt that existed in the Roman framework and their inter-relations became present and aware.

First of all, this only holds for the use of Egyptian as a style, because when Egypt was portrayed as a subject, for example Isis and Isiac images (in and outside the sanctuary) or Nilotic scenes, these were also conveyed in a Roman style. Secondly, it also seemed, which is quite remarkable, that this was merely a matter of how divergent styles were employed in wall painting and not something uniquely for Egyptian style. An exact similar way of presentation could be witnessed in the application of Archaic Greek style. This means that the network exposed something significant about the way Romans used wall painting and how they perceived style. Although Roman wall painting had to create a fluid environment in which ordinary life expanded to include extraordinary figures that transcending the boundaries of everyday experience, in order to be conceived they should be executed in a Roman style. Even fantasy figures had to be experienced in a way in which they could be recognised from an internal framework; they needed to be internally accessible. Therefore, deviant styles such as Egyptian and Archaic Greek could only be presented in frames as an independent feature, only to signify ‘the strange, the exotic and the ancient’ through style; they were unable to convey a narrative.
4.7.7 Choice

The last part of this concluding paragraph deals with a concept touched upon already, but not yet sufficiently problematised. After the deconstruction of Aegyptiaca, the way they can be perceived and how their agency works, it is now is clearer what is at the basis of the integration of objects and how they received new meanings in accordance with other concepts present in society. However, this does not mean that the analysis has come to an end. Because an important interpretation-level is still missing from the analysis, this is the social variability of interpretation. Choices could be narrowed down to the range of what could be appropriated in a certain local context and why. Within the discussion on networks, enmeshment, materiality, and agency of objects I have elucidated how they could be represented, that is: what was the range of their understanding. In this case it could be witnessed that in every instance similar objects could both be experienced as exotic and as something internal to Pompeian frameworks. No single object is therefore intrinsically exotic. However, this means that the question when an object was perceived or used as exotic is not yet answered. If we want to say anything about whether rules existed in the choice and application of different styles and objects and their social uses (how they were used to express certain values, but also how these objects were able to change the environment of the house), it is important that we direct our gaze to the house as a unit of analysis.

This means that the next step in the analysis should consist of examples of how these objects were used within domestic contexts. Now that it is established that the objects do not belong to the same categories it is necessary to know more about the intentions, values, and choices of people in order to elucidate whether there were any rules in use. What other sculpture was present; in what locations within the house did they become displayed? Do combinations of Aegyptiaca occur and what does this mean? What values were expressed with the different ‘Aegyptiaca’ within a certain context in comparison to other objects? Were they differently used than for example Greek looking objects? To give an example, in the previous chapter we it could be observed that the Casa di Octavius Quarto displayed Bes and Ptah-Pataikos statuettes next to a water feature, which might have represented the Nile, therefore suggesting a three dimensional Nilotic scene. However, did scene take up a significant part of the space of these gardens? What was meant with creating such scenery? How visible was the sculpture within the space of the garden (i.e. was it meant to be seen?), what else was
displayed in the garden? Was it meant to create an ‘exotic atmosphere’? What image did the owner wished to present to the viewer? With these questions directed to case studies of houses it is possible to analyse the choice for particular objects. As this chapter narrowed down the possible generalisations that can be made about the meaning of the objects, the coming analysis will provide an illustration of what an object can do in an environment.