MODESTY AND EXCESS

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF POMPEIAN HOUSES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO ROMANITAS AND LUXURIA

Winnie Joanna Greenwood Ormerod

Masteroppgave i arkeologi
Institutt for arkeologi, konservering og historiske studier
Det humanistiske fakultet

UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

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Preface and acknowledgements

Ever since my first meeting with Pompeii in 2000, while on study tour with University of Birmingham, I have been captivated by the city. I have returned several times, and every time I leave, I find myself longing for the next visit. The ruinous city is intriguing, dead and vibrant at the same time; in a way sad, yet uplifting. It felt only natural that, when I started my Master's degree, Pompeii would be my chosen subject.

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MODESTY AND EXCESS
1. Introduction

It is a paradox that one of the biggest natural disasters in the ancient world is also among the most fortunate things to have happened to archaeology. The burial of the city of Pompeii has provided an excellent opportunity for studying the Roman world. Not only has an entire city been preserved, it was preserved in its glory days as an exoskeleton of a social organism.

The purpose of this study is to connect the architecture and decoration of the private houses of Pompeii with the mentality of their owners. The houses will be examined in context with the modest and patriotic romanitas and the extravagant luxuria, strongly associated with Hellenization. A central question is whether these two contrasting conceptions could be found within the same household. The hypotheses of this study are that the house owner made a conscious choice in designing and decorating his house, that in most cases this choice was guided by one of the two above-mentioned ideologies and that the remains of the house can reveal the owner's ideological inclinations. The focus will be on the parts of the house preserved for the guests and family. The service areas will therefore receive less attention. I have limited my research to a sample of 23 houses (fig. 7), four of which will undergo detailed study.

This chapter will focus on the definitions and background for the problem. The second chapter will introduce the theoretical framework and methods needed for the analysis. In chapter three the criteria for the selection of the houses and the preservation of the material will be discussed, followed by a description of the four main houses. Chapter four will commence with an analysis of the main houses, which are subsequently compared with the remaining houses of the sample. The concluding remarks aim to sum up the finds and set them in the wider context of classical archaeology.

1.1 Historical background

Pompeii is situated in Campania, on a fertile plain close to the sea and the Sarno-river (fig. 8). When the city was buried by Vesuvius' ashes on the 24th and 25th of August in AD 79, it had
already existed for 700 years. It was founded by the Oscans in the seventh century BC, and was controlled by the Samnites from around 400 BC onwards (Ling 2005:16-17). The neighbouring areas had been colonised by the Greeks in the eight century, with Neapolis as a centre for Greek art and culture. This had a strong Hellenizing effect on Pompeii (Cooley 2003:17-18; Hales 2003:97). The Pompeian Forum, rebuilt in the late second century, was "a masterpiece of Hellenistic planning" (Sear 1998:108). In 290 BC, Pompeii was made an ally of Rome, and as a result of the Social War (91-87 BC) the inhabitants were given Roman citizenship. In 80 BC, as part of the Romanization process, a colony of Roman war veterans was established there (Cooley 2003:18-19). While this had a visible effect on the city's public architecture, for instance through the building of the amphitheatre, the attempts to identify the settling of the veterans in the domestic townscape (e.g. Zanker 1998:74) have not been successful (Hales 2003:100). At the time of the eruption, Pompeii was a wealthy city of some 8000 - 10000 inhabitants (Ling 2005:98). The coastal area around Pompeii was a favoured location for the holiday homes of Roman aristocrats (D'Arms 1970:vii). Despite Pompeii's strong affiliations with Rome, it is necessary to bear in mind that the city was not merely a blueprint of the Roman capital; it had its own identity (Dyson 1997:154; Hales 2003:97). Because this identity was much influenced by both Roman and Greek culture, it is an ideal city in which to study romanitas and luxuria, and the interaction between them.

1.2 Romanitas and luxuria

This study will focus on the implementation of romanitas and luxuria within the architecture and decoration of houses. Rather than focusing only on individual signs of romanitas and luxuria, this study aims to consider the ideologies in context and see whether they can be applied to the house as a whole.

Romanitas is an anachronistic term, which first appeared in the second century AD in Tertullian (de Pall. 4. 1. 1), where it was contrasted with Greekness (Dench 2005:31). I will therefore use the term a posteriori in this context. Romanitas is the essence of being Roman, a measure of the moral "Romanness" of the citizens (Edwards 1993:2). Unlike the adjective romanus, which signifies being a good Roman in terms of performing the duties of a citizen, the noun romanitas also had strong attachments to moral connotations. The Roman cardinal virtues, public life and duties to Rome were emphasized. In the second century BC, increas-
ing amounts of Greek objects of art came to Rome in the form of war spoils (Pollitt 1978:158). This lead to an increase in luxury and a distinct private sphere in the house. Cato the Elder and his contemporaries saw this as "a marked beginning of slow decay in the moral standards of Roman society" (Pollitt 1978:158). The views of Cato were supported by, among others, Livy (25, 40.1-3), Plutarch (Marcellus 21.5), Varro (Rust. 1.59.2) and Pliny the Elder (NH 33.150), who deemed expensive embellishments of private houses to be luxuria (Pollitt 1978:158; Wallace-Hadrill 1994:4). The hostility to luxury was a Roman ideal, the Samnites, who occupied Pompeii some time before the Romans, had no such inhibition (Zanker 2001:142). In contrast to the Greek identity romanitas was not based purely on ethnic qualification, but could be achieved by anyone adopting Roman morals and traditions (Hales 2003:12-14).

The Augustan ideology that arose around the emperor Augustus, had a strong emphasis on the four virtues: virtus (valour and glory), clementia (clemency), iustitia (justice), and foremost pietas (piety and altruism) (Galinsky 1998:83-88). Augustus saw inherent political ambitions in the private extravagance and decreed all Greek art to be public property (Pollitt 1978:163-168). Luxury was accepted only in accordance with the station of the house owner. Too much was a "gross, external display of luxury", that "seemed to do harm" (Galinsky 1998:186-187). This combines well with ideals of romanitas to such a degree that one could consider the Augustan ideology to be part of romanitas.

From the first century BC, educated men were expected to have at least some knowledge of Greek art, and art collecting became accepted among the elite (Edwards 1993:22-23; Pollitt 1978:161). Luxury in private homes, unthinkable in classical Greece, increased all over the Hellenistic world, and subsequently the Roman world (Thébert 1993:208-209). Luxuria was the mentality of extravagance for self-aggrandizement. In his private sphere, the homeowner could enjoy his otium, as opposed to the negotium of the public sphere. Here the owner was freed of his civic duties, and could "occupy himself with Greek literature, history and art" (Zanker 1999:42). Luxuria in town houses was greatly inspired by the country villas, where the combination of otium and luxuria first appeared (Zanker 1979:462, 470; Hales 2003:35). This mentality spread downwards among the populace through imitation (Wallace-Hadrill 1990:144-146; Zanker 2001:19-21). Luxuria was a competitive lifestyle, in which the private
took precedence over the public. This mentality made opponents portray luxuria as a vicious circle, where citizens could risk ruin trying to surpass their neighbours (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:146). The luxurious extravaganza itself was criticised as excessive and immoral.

At the same time, it was crucial that the house matched the owner's social standing. It was necessary to balance this requirement with the need for moderation (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:4; Wiseman 1994:98). As Cicero states, the master ought to distinguish the house, and not vice versa (Off. I:139).

1.3 Objectives

While some of the houses in this study have been the object of thorough examination, a holistic evaluation of Pompeian houses with regard to romanitas and luxuria is yet to be done. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1994:3) suggests that the code of design was like a foreign language that must be interpreted. By deciphering the social codes of a house, one might be able to understand the owner, both as he was and how he wished to be perceived by the outside world. To establish if romanitas and luxuria were part of these social codes, I will consider four key factors:

The first factor is whether it is possible to trace the house owner's ideological stance distinctly through motifs in decoration. The motifs may have suggested a deeper symbolic meaning, both individually and, as Bettina Bergmann (1994:225) states, in concert.

The second factor concerns whether both ideologies could be manifested within a domus. This being so, the discourse between the two ideologies will be analyzed. Given their polarised relationship, it is unlikely that they appeared equally balanced within the same household. Therefore it will be relevant to study the dominance of one ideology over the other.

The third aspect considers the dichotomy between the two ideologies, in cases where both appear within the same household. The central question is whether they follow a significant pattern. If they do, it could be connected with the visitors. The house owner received both humble and honoured guests and they were entertained in different spheres (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:38).
The final factor concerns the role of fashion. Was the decoration consciously chosen by the owner, or was it largely inspired by the decoration in other houses? Both ideologies were connected with fashion the last years before the eruption, and one must not mistake lethargy for strategy. Therefore the quantity of and correlation between the evidence will be important.

1.4 Written sources

The employment of historical sources is crucial for this study because they provide contemporary views on architecture and decoration of private houses. Vitruvius' treatise on architecture (*De Arch.*) is a useful source to the houses themselves. Vitruvius was conservative (Leach 1993:137) and strongly inspired by Augustan ideology, and his views should be understood with this in mind. The writings of Cato the Elder, Cicero and Pliny the Elder are important in order to gain a better understanding of the Roman mindset, particularly with regard to *romanitas* and *luxuria*. Written sources must, however, be used with caution. Some of them pre-date the area of study, but may yield important information nevertheless. The texts are concerned mainly with Rome and do not always correspond with the Campanian material remains. Another important point is that the classical authors were mainly concerned with describing the ideal, rather than the real (Hales 2003:20, 99).

1.5 Historiography

Since the rediscovery of Pompeii in the 1740's the research has been an ongoing process, disinterring new material and revealing different aspects. In the beginning, the main preoccupation was with the aesthetics of objects of art. A more thorough investigation began at the end of the 19th century when the German scholar August Mau classified the Campanian wall paintings into four chronological styles on the basis of typology, and provided the rooms of the Pompeian house with Vitruvian nomenclature (Mau 1908:39-40, 42, 250-289).

From the 1980s onwards, the research on Pompeii became increasingly analytical and focussed on social aspects. The individual character of the domus was considered, and it was established that the houses were not merely copies of a Vitruvian ideal house. In his two books, (1987, translated 1988) and (1995, translated 1998), the German archaeologist Paul Zanker argues this, and focuses on two modes of decoration, that of luxurious villa imitation
and of Augustan inspiration. This new paradigm within classical archaeology also includes the British historian Andrew Wallace-Hadrill. He follows Zanker's approach and expands it in a series of articles (1988, transcribed 1994) on the social functions of the Roman house, and how it could reveal the social background of the owner. The contextual study of individual houses became more apparent in the late 1990's, as expertly demonstrated by Fausto Zevi (1998) in a holistic study of the decoration of the Casa del Fauno. The communication between house and viewer in establishing social standing and political power was elaborated by Eleanor Winsor Leach, with particular emphasis on wall painting (2004). A further formalization of this communication was done by Shelley Hales, who defined the Roman identity as romanitas and emphasized the connection between romanitas and decoration. While Hales does use Campanian houses in her study, she looks at them briefly, and only as part of an argument. A holistic study of the Campanian houses and their relationship to luxurious extravaganza or modest elegance, and the information this could reveal about the owner, is yet to be done. Another important aspect in the study of Pompeii that had long been neglected was artefacts. In her work, Pompeian Households - An Analysis of the Material Culture (2004) Penelope M. Allison demonstrates the important role of artefacts in the interpretation of Pompeian houses.

The ten-volume reference work Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici (PPM) (1990-2003) thoroughly describes each excavated house in Pompeii with photographs and ground plans. Häuser in Pompeji (1989-) is a compilation of monographs, each on an individual house, published by the Deutches Archäologisches Institut. Each book has a standardized setup, including a meticulous description and photographic record.
2. Theory and practice in the Roman house

How to interpret a domus to understand the owner

The Roman house played a vital role in the mentality of Roman citizens. It can be seen as an expression of the owner's social identity, and as such it was instrumental both in shaping and maintaining it. Bettina Bergman (1994:225) sees the domus as "an extension of the self", and considers it "tinged with the past". The Roman house was partly public, and the owner would have been assessed on the basis of it. A central question is how much personal involvement the homeowner had in the choice of decoration, and whether design and subject matter were chosen randomly, in accordance with taste and fashion, or on the basis of conscious ideological perceptions. All the houses in this study have been examined in situ, and will be studied using the comparative method.

2.1 Theory

This study is based on the assumption that the Romans took an active role in designing their houses (Leach 2004:19). The basis for this is Anthony Giddens' statements that "[h]uman actors are not only able to monitor their activities and those of others in the regularity of day-to-day conduct; they are also able to 'monitor the monitoring'" (1984:29), and that they "understand what they do while they do it" (Giddens 1984:xxii). It is logical to assume that this also applied to the Roman mentality. This signifies that a house owner was able to observe his own and others' reactions to the architectural and decorative layout of a domus, and that he was able to put this observation into practice. The house owner, in understanding the process of redecoration, was able to take an active part. Zanker (2003:266-269) illustrates this by pointing out that when a Roman chose an artefact which differed from another only by decoration, this choice was deliberate, particularly with regard to expensive goods.

Louise Revell (1999:52) also applies Giddens' theories to Roman society and she argues that Roman public buildings played a vital part in expressing and maintaining Roman identity. While Revell looks at public architecture, the same argument can be used for private buildings
(Grahame 2000:19). The Roman identity was for a long time associated with public life. Public elements could be found in several houses, suggesting that the house had a cultural function, that of maintaining the Roman identity by the use of uniting elements. This fits well with Geertz’ primordialism. Clifford Geertz (1963:11-114) argues that large social groups have a strong bond that unites them as a cultural unit. These bonds, or 'givens' include a common language, territory, religion and history. According to Harold Isaacs (1975:30-33), a person is born with this identity and passes these 'givens' on to the next generation to preserve the cultural entity and to satisfy a universal need to belong (Siapkas 2003:41-42). Bergmann (1994:226) states that the domus was vital, both physically and as a metaphor, in this process. The choice of decoration and the ideology it represented was an important factor in the upbringing of children and a reminder to the guest. Although the house was designed to impress the visitors, it was the inhabitants who were the main recipients of the decoration (Zanker 1998:14).

Mark Grahame (1998:160-62) combines the style, that is "the way of doing" with Pompeii by dividing style according to the discourse of James Sackett, Polly Wiessner and William Macdonald. In this division, style is either ‘passive’ (Sackett 1990:33-35), which means that it does not have a deliberate message, or ‘active’ (Wiessner 1990:107), which has such a message. The ‘active style’ can be divided into two subgroups, the ‘assertive’ and the ‘emblemic’ (Macdonald 1990:53; Wiessner 1990:107-108). The 'assertive style' only has meaning when seen as a statement within a cultural context, to distinguish the owner. The ‘emblemic style’ has a distinct connotation. It has two subcategories: 'status', signifying social identification, and 'etiquette', signifying ethnic identification (Macdonald 1990:53-54). In this study, ‘etiquette’ is strongly associated with romanitas and ‘status’ with luxuria.

![Figure 1: The division of style into categories](#)
Grahame (1998:162) further points out that a "common way of building and decorating houses will consequently be indicative of a shared set of values, which, in turn, will indicate a cultural identity". If *romanitas* and *luxuria* played a vital part in the building and decorating of the domus, it was part of the cultural identity of the Roman citizen.

2.1.1. The division of a house into spheres

In contrast to the more secluded dwellings of contemporary western society the Roman house also played a significant public role (Hales 2003:1-2; Zanker 2001:10). Wallace-Hadrill's theory concerning the division of the domus into different spheres is a prerequisite for understanding the significance of certain motifs in certain rooms.

![Figure 2: The division of the house into spheres](image)

Wallace-Hadrill's figure illustrates the division of the house into two main spheres in accordance with grandeur and accessibility (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:38). The outsiders, or formal visitors, were designated to the public sphere. The *familia*, which translates into "household", were found in the private sphere. Those close to the family fit into both spheres. The formal visitors ranked from close friends, or *amici*, to clients, and the familia from *paterfamilias* to slaves. The figure helps explain who was expected in which room and thereby for whom the decoration of the room was meant. This can be almost as revealing as the decoration itself. A house owner could present himself as austere and modest to his public visitors and extravagant to his friends.
This division is not perfect; the paterfamilias was certainly in the private chambers, but his office, the *tablinum*, was in the public sphere. The amici were outsiders, but they were regularly entertained in private rooms such as the *triclinium* and the peristyle. The clients were certainly humble, but they visited the paterfamilias in the grand and public rooms, the atrium and the tablinum. I have chosen to solve the problem by adding a third sphere to the house, that of formal and informal (figure 3). The formal rooms, most of which were public, were allocated to rituals, such as the *salutatio*. These rooms were important in the socio-political aspect, the religious daily life and the Roman identity of the participants of the rituals (Hales 2004: 18-19) The public and formal rooms were also the most visited in the house. In accordance with propriety, the unwritten rules of decoration were stricter in these rooms than in any other part of the house. The intimate *cubicula* are at the other end of the scale. The main purpose of these rooms was informal activities, such as sleeping or recreation, and thus the rules of decoration were probably much less strict.

![Diagram of Intimate, Informal, and Formal Spheres](image)

*Figure 3: This figure illustrates the division of rooms (From the strictly formal, e.g. the atrium, to the intimately informal, e.g. the cubiculum, where the grey area illustrates the reception rooms meant for guests, e.g. the triclinium).*

The division into formal and informal is not absolute. In many cases household artefacts were found in the atrium suggesting that members of the family used it when it was not hosting a formal gathering (Allison 2004a:165). The cubicula were on occasion also used for social gatherings. The reason for this division is to illustrate that rooms with formal functions also had stricter rules with regard to propriety than informal and private rooms.

Simon P. Ellis (1992:123) places the Pompeian houses between the earlier Roman houses and the strictly closed houses of the Late Empire, where guests of the lower ranks were guided far
away from the private spheres. Rasmus Brandt (2004:17) suggests that the exterior and interior design in a domus channelled the movements of the visitor. The visitor was guided by the layout and decoration of the house into following the 'shortest route' to his destination, be it formal or informal. The part of the house in which little or no movement from visitors took place was the 'dead sphere'. How the decoration of a house differs between the shortest route and the dead sphere can reveal a number of interesting factors about the owner.

2.2 Guidelines for interpretation

Each of the four main houses in this study will be examined in detail with emphasis on layout and spheres, artefacts and interior decoration. Before analyzing the individual houses, it is important to set some general guidelines regarding the interpretation of the houses. Firstly, the domus must be considered as a whole. This holistic approach implies that although each room must be treated separately, the interpretation of the domus lies in the sum of the factors. Secondly, each house must be looked at in relation to the remaining houses of the study and, where necessary, also be compared with other Pompeian houses. Thirdly it is important to demonstrate how *romanitas* and *luxuria* are expressed, through decoration, layout and spheres.

2.2.1. Layout and spheres

The front door of the Roman house was usually left open during the day and the house was an object of public scrutiny. Therefore the lines of sight were crucial in forming a good first impression on the visitor (Zanker 2001:10-11). The layout of a house can reveal a number of important data relevant to understanding the house owner. One of the most important aspects is the line of sight, which can be categorized as emblemic. The very open and traditional *fauces-atrium-tablinum-axis* is etiquette emblemic, connecting to the public duties of all Romans, and thereby to *romanitas*. The secluded and private layout is status emblemic, which is linked to lavishness, leisure, private life and to *luxuria*. Another vital aspect is the size of the rooms, both individually and in ratio with others. The ratio between the public and the private sphere can reveal the owner's preference. The layout of the house was more permanent than the decoration, and changes to the layout were often minor. Wallace-Hadrill (1997:222) has calculated that the mean size of the houses in his two samples was 279 m² and thus houses
surpassing this size should be considered large. In addition to layout and spheres, views must be taken into account. As Hales (2003:113) points out, the insider, or the visitor, had another experience of the house than a passer-by, and an invited guest in the peristyle saw more than a client awaiting the arrival of his patron in the atrium. Therefore there are three important lines of sight; from the outside, from the public sphere and from the private sphere.

2.2.2. Interior decoration

The examination of interior decoration will focus on floors, ceilings and wall painting. Each aspect must be observed both individually and in the broader context of the room in which it is situated. Pictures must be understood both in an iconographical and an iconological sense. As fashion changed over time, luxuria changed with it. Indirectly, so did romanitas, slowly accepting what others took for granted. The implementations of the two ideologies were dynamic. For instance, Cato the Elder boasted that he had no stuccowork at all in his house (Plutarch: Cato 4; Wallace-Hadrill 1994:4). Vitruvius (De arch. 7.5.3-4) argued against unrealistic depictions and expensive colours 150 years later, and in the Neronian period Petronius (Sat.) satirized personal aggrandizement and vulgar display in decoration.

Several concerns arise when interpreting motifs in wall paintings and mosaics. The greatest risk is that of over-interpretation or applying modern iconographical interpretations to the ancient motifs (Allison 2004:12). It is difficult to determine how much emphasis should be placed on a particular motif and what connotations it may have had to the commissioner and the other people who saw it. Price may also have been a determining factor in the choice of decoration.

2.2.3. Wall painting

The most ubiquitous form of interior decoration is wall painting, which was fashionable throughout the period in question. Wall painting was a relatively permanent fixture and it is therefore logical that the motifs and colours would have been chosen with care. As the house was an indicator of the owner's identity it is conceivable that he must have taken an active part in manipulating the decoration to reflect him (Zanker 1999:40). This correlates with Giddens' statement of human behaviour and active participation. The connection between wall painting and the two ideologies is partly a matter of cost and partly a matter of iconology.
Wall painting was used to differentiate the grand areas frequented by the family and guests from the humble service areas (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:39). Wallace-Hadrill suggests (1994:31) that there are three different hierarchies in painted decoration: that of wall painting types, division elements and colours, and that these might overlap and even contradict each other. To this list should be added quality of painting and originality of the motif.

The hierarchy of wall painting types is closely connected with the effort it took to paint them. Therefore a colourful panel painting would rank above a simple vignette and a large wall painting was more impressive than a small one. Regardless of quality the relative number of panel paintings in a house can help further an understanding of the owner's decorative taste. Some of the houses will therefore be examined focussing on the number of panel paintings per representative room. A representative room is a room that meets two criteria: that it is grand, and therefore is likely to have had panel paintings; and that the walls are so intact that the decoration is intelligible. Wallace-Hadrill (1994:167) divides wall painting types into this hierarchy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Little vignettes</td>
<td>Swans, putti, tragic masks, griffins, sacred objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Roundels</td>
<td>Medallions and small panel paintings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Panels</td>
<td>Still lifes, villa scenes, (sacred) landscapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Elaborate panel paintings</td>
<td>Mythological panels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4: The hierarchy of wall painting types from the lowest rank (1) to the highest (4).*

Wallace-Hadrill's second hierarchy is that of dividing elements, the ornamental divisions separating the wall painting panels. The internal ranking correlates with the complexity and quality of the dividing elements. The more elaborate the dividing elements, the more exclusive they were:
While there may have been symbolic attachment to certain colours, the most important measure, at least in this context, is that of price. A house painted in expensive colours showed signs of great expenditure and luxury, while a house decorated in more austere colours showed signs of modesty, by belief or necessity. Figure 6 combines Wallace-Hadrill's study (1994:167) of the most frequent colours with Pliny's division of colours from natural to artificial (NH 35:30-38; Ling 1995:209). Pliny's natural colours and Wallace-Hadrill's common colours rank lowest and the artificial and uncommon colours are highest in rank:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Simple lines</td>
<td>Monochrome lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Border pattern</td>
<td>Embroidery borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Embellishments</td>
<td>Candelabra, columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Architectural vistas</td>
<td>Perspectives, &quot;windows&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5: The hierarchy of dividing elements from the lowest rank (1) to the highest (4).**

**Colour**

1. Simple white (chalk, marl and Melian)
2. Red and yellow ochre (1,5 to 8 sesterces)
3. Black
4. Blue (frit) (32 to 44 sesterces)
5. Paraetonium white (33 sesterces)
6. Indigo (80 sesterces)
7. Armenian blue (first 300, then 24 sesterces)
8. Cinnabar (maximum 280 sesterces by law)

**Figure 6: The hierarchy of colours from the lowest rank (1) to the highest (8).**
Wallace-Hadrill (1994:166) divides the colours into three categories, the cheap white, the frequent red and yellow and the rarer blue, green and black. This matches the prices mentioned by Pliny. Black seems to have been among the more common of the artificial colours (Pliny, *NH* 35:30-35), although Vitruvius (*De arch.* 7, 10) describes the production process as a fairly complicated matter. While Ling suggests that Pliny defined the colour as "plain" (Ling 1995:209), Wallace-Hadrill places black among the costlier colours. Since it appears most frequently in the wealthier houses, it most likely belongs in the third category.

2.2.4. Floors and ceilings

Like wall painting, the floors of a Roman domus were used hierarchically, to accentuate the function and the social status of a room (Mau 1908:287-288; Zevi 1998:33-35). One of the most common and least expensive floor types is *cocciopesto* (crushed terracotta), followed by *opus signinum*, which was *cocciopesto* interspersed with terracotta fragments, stone or marble *tesserae*. Mosaic floors were fairly common among the houses of this sample, ranging from black and white mosaics with simple geometric motifs to complex polychrome patterns combined with elaborate decoration. Marble was the most expensive material used. *Opus sectile* pavements were particularly rare (Richardson 1997:374) and costly, and were found only in a few houses in the sample. In the Late Empire *opus sectile* had become much more common, even on walls and ceilings (Ling 1991:187). Only a handful of houses in the sample have preserved ceilings. Most of these were plastered and painted, and a few were elegantly dressed in moulded and multicoloured stucco.

2.2.5. Artefacts and lararia

It is essential to consider the artefacts found within the house because they can reveal various aspects about the inhabitants and their daily lives, as well as the function of the room in which they were found (Allison 2004:11-14). Many high value artefacts, such as statues and silverware, have been discovered in situ, and these can help to reveal the taste and ideological aspirations of the owner.

The house altar, or *lararium* was an integral part of the Roman household. It demonstrated the owner's religious affiliation and duties. The lararia usually took the form of niches in the wall surrounded by painted decor on a white background with snakes and sacrificing *lares*. They
were often located in the private confines of the house, commonly in the service areas (Frölich 1991:28). In some houses, however, they were moved to the public areas and as such formed part of the public display. A number of lararia took the form of elaborate aedicula-shrines. This type of display indicates that the owner wanted to show off his family heritage, and subsequently himself. Such self-aggrandizement could be interpreted as a sign of luxuria. By contrast, if the lararium is found in the traditional, secluded part of the house, it could signify romanitas, given that it were an active choice by the house owner. If the house shows signs that the house owner had the resources to move and upgrade his lararium, then not doing so could prove to have been an active choice, and therefore romanitas.

2.2.6. Implied iconology

The most common motifs in the houses examined are myths, portrait-medallions, still life-panels, vignettes, landscapes, geometric patterns and figural motifs. All of these have inherent symbols that need to be put into proper context. The Augustan ideology generally focussed on "peace, order and stability" (Galinsky 1998:179), which is best expressed in sacred and pastoral landscape paintings (Zanker 2003:285-287). In this study the Augustan ideology will be treated as a continuation of romanitas. Still life panels usually depicting animals, birds and fruit are typical of the rustic ideal of romanitas.

The iconological division of the mythological motifs is based on Paul Zanker's division according to function. The myths functioned as (moral) aides in living or helped transform the domus into an owner's otium (Zanker 1999:40). Most myths end either good or bad for the protagonist, and those with a tragic end are often accompanied by a moral lesson. These are, according to Zanker's definition, connected with romanitas. The former are probably there to entertain, and as such are closely associated with luxuria. An example of this is the depiction of Ariadne on Naxos, who is about to be saved by Bacchus and live by his side for eternity. The fate of Narcissus, starving to death transfixed on his mirror image, is the most depicted myth in Pompeii, with at least 46 versions (Stemmer 1992:51), and it probably served as a harsh lesson in the dangers of hubris and vanity. Mythological pictures which include gods present another difficulty - they could be have been chosen merely to honour the deity, and had no moral connotations. This ambiguity is illustrated by another popular motif, that of Mars and Venus. It need not be associated with the myth in which Venus' husband, Vulcan,
trapped them *in flagrante*. They may have been chosen to symbolize the need for war as a prerequisite to a happy life. This has been suggested by Zanker (2003:275), although he associates the *putti* with Bacchus, and not with Venus, which is more common. Such an interpretation is strongly associated with *romanitas*. Myths associated with the Trojan War were also popular, and they could be attributed to either ideology. However, the connection between Aeneas, who fled from Troy, and the imperial family, was stressed by Caesar and Augustus (Erskine 2001:15). Many of the myths in the war also carried strong moral messages.

Vignettes and other depictions of gods or their attributes also occurred a number of times. The Capitoline Triad of Minerva, Jupiter and Juno, is strongly linked to Rome, as are the three deities individually. Venus was the mother of Aeneas and the patron goddess of Pompeii, but at the same time she was also a symbol of promiscuity and luxury, and as such she could be associated with both ideologies. Apollo was strongly associated with Augustus (Galinsky 1998:102), and thereby with *romanitas*.

### 2.2.7. Gardens, real and illusionary

Gardens were a common feature in Pompeian houses whether in real or painted versions. They dated back to the agricultural days of Rome, when everyone had a vegetable garden (*hortus*). In the second century BC the hortus developed into the enclosed peristyle (Ferrar 1998:12-17). The garden was usually hidden or partially hidden from the public's gaze. It was the owner's realm with statues and fountains, where he could enjoy his otium. The exotic and colourful garden can be seen as a liminal sphere where the boundaries of civilized life could be stretched (Hales 2003:153-155). Motifs associated with the wild, untamed nature were also closely connected with *luxuria*. One example of this is the frequent portrayal of aspects connected with Egypt or Bacchus. In some instances painted representations were used in lieu of a real garden, or more often as an optical expansion of the garden space (Jashemski 1979:55-56; Ling 1991:152). Painted hunting scenes with wild, exotic animals (*paradeisoi*) were another common subject in Pompeian gardens. The motif was probably derived either from the Hellenistic *paradeisoi*, the large private game parks owned by Hellenistic monarchs, or from the fights staged in the Roman amphitheatre (Leach 2004:130). The eastern and exotic connection emphasizes the link with *luxuria*. 
2.2.8. Function and fashion

Not all decoration had an inherent or symbolic meaning; both function and fashion were significant influences. Allison (1992b:248) suggests that there is a contextual relationship between decoration and room function. Decor could have been chosen for habitual or practical reasons, rather than being a demonstration of the commissioner's personal persuasion. For example, the many black triclinia in Pompeii may have had a practical explanation; Vitruvius (de Arch. 7, 4.4) advised that winter triclinia should be painted black because soot from the fire would damage brighter colours. Floors along the shortest route were heavily trafficked, and consequently quickly worn. Therefore cocciopesto, caementicum and other robust floor types were preferable to the more elaborate and frail types.

Another alternative reason for preference of decor is fashion. It is important to be aware of what was fashionable at the time of decoration. This will help decide whether fashion or either of the ideologies was the most likely the reason for choice of decoration. For example, the Fourth Style was in fashion at the time of the eruption, as Sear (1998:117-118) points out, "there are far more Fourth-Style paintings [in Pompeii] than any other style despite the fact that the bulk of them were painted in a space of 17 years". At the time of the eruption, the Fourth Style painting was at the height of fashion, which would link it to luxuria. However, if almost everyone had it, it would probably be considered common, and not luxurious. Likewise the use of Augustan symbols was at the zenith during the Flavian period (Zanker 1990:278), and therefore such symbols alone are not enough to establish a house as influenced by romanitas. This is also true for mythological motifs. Some were so ubiquitous that they were most likely chosen because they were fashionable. Richardson (2000:13) has shown that there were copybooks of motifs in circulation, and that some themes were widely popular at certain times. Leach (1981:307) mentions four examples of widely distributed motifs in Pompeii: Daedalus and Icarus, Perseus and Andromeda, Polyphemus and Galatea and Diana and Acteon. The myth of Diana and Acteon, she suggests, was popular well into the last years of Pompeii.

Quality and type of wall decoration were therefore more important in distinguishing fashion and luxury than style was. Reversely, the less common First and Second Styles would probably have been chosen for redecoration for a specific reason, be it honouring the ancestors,
conservative taste or perhaps both. *Luxuria* was most likely strongly connected with fashion. Augustan symbols and other *romanitas* traits in private art reached their climax at the time of the eruption (Zanker 2003: 278). The Second and especially the First Style were sometimes preserved to show that the owner came from an old and established Roman family. This can be interpreted as *romanitas*, since honouring the old paintings had precedence over decorating the house in the latest fashion.

**2.3 The problems of interpretation**

When examining motifs one should bear in mind the possibility for misinterpretation. Leach (1981:307-327) points out the difficulty of interpreting myths, and uses the Acteon-myth as an example. She suggests that there were at least four versions of how he met his end at the hand of Diana: he saw her bathing and boasted of it; he happened upon her bathing quite innocently; he claimed to be a better hunter and he angered Jupiter by wanting to marry Semele. The difference however, is more iconographical than iconological. In all cases, Acteon has brought on the wrath of a deity, for which he is punished. In other myths variation can be so big as to arrive at different results. An example of this is that in some versions of the Bacchus and Ariadne tale, she dies, either in childbirth or at the hand of Bacchus. As Ariadne appears together with Bacchus in several paintings in Pompeii (such as in the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto), it is most likely that the happiest version was most recognized in Pompeii. In both examples, the context of decoration and ornamentation is important. The painting probably expressed much of the same atmosphere as the surrounding decorations.
3. The houses

This study is based on the examination of 23 Pompeian houses, visited and studied in situ over the course of three trips. The houses are of different ages and vary in size from 140 m² to 1800 m² and belonged to the lower and upper range of the middle class. The common selection criteria are:

1. That the houses are in a relative good state of preservation, signifying that the architectonic layout is complete, that there are works of art in situ and that the decorations are diverse in nature.

2. That the houses are, at least to some degree, documented through excavation reports.

3. That the houses can shed light on the dichotomy between *romanitas* and *luxuria*.

The main focus will be on four selected houses: the Casa dell'Efebo, the Casa dell'Ara massima, the Casa degli Amorini dorati and the Casa delle Nozze d'argento. The remaining houses of the sample will however, be referred to, for comparison and exemplification wherever this is appropriate.

3.1 Discrepancy of the material

The Pompeian houses are not simply a reflection of Pompeian society at the moment when disaster struck in AD 79. They have been shaped by decades of development. Every inhabitant left his mark on the house, governed by personal taste, fashion and the need for maintenance (Hales 2003:99-100; Thébert 1993:208; Wallace-Hadrill 1994:97-9). The earthquake in 62 AD had a damaging effect on the town's buildings, and signs of repair work are common (Dyson 1997:152). There are also indications, such as irregular ground plans, multiple entrances and partitions, that some of the houses are the result of a fusion of several previous ones. Thus every house as it is preserved today should be seen as the result of an ongoing process.
The current state of preservation must also be taken into consideration. Although the selected houses are relatively well preserved, they have all been affected in some way by for instance mass-tourism, looting, vandalism and deterioration caused by post-exavcation neglect (Bon 1997:7-10). One example of this is the lack of upper floors. Although most houses originally had an upper floor, the existence of these is now known mainly through the presence of staircases (Allison 2004:32-33). I have therefore decided to omit the study of upper floors from my sample. As pointed out by Allison (1992a:49-50) the Pompeian material does not conform to the so-called "Pompeii Premise", a notion that the whole site was preserved and left intact, exactly as it was at the eve of the volcanic eruption in 79 AD (Binford 1981:205). Instead the provenance of artworks and artefacts are in many cases unknown because they have been removed from their original context to museums, or due to incomplete or lacking records and inventory lists, particularly in early excavation reports (Allison 1992:50; Bon 1997:9-10). It is therefore highly complicated to obtain an overview of the houses and their environment.

3.2 The Casa delle Nozze d'argento (V 2, i)

The Casa delle Nozze d'argento is one of the largest houses discovered in Pompeii, and at 1600 m², with 34 rooms, it is the second largest in this sample. The house was excavated between 1891 and 1908. The original house was of Samnite origin, and was constructed in the second century BC (McKay 1998:41). At some point the neighbouring house (V 2, h) was attached to it, perhaps functioning as the servants' quarters. While both Allison (2004a:217) and Ehrhardt (2004:176-185) include this part, PPM (III:676) does not. As the passage between the two houses was blocked-up some time before the eruption, the house will be treated in accordance with PPM III. In connection with the founding of the Roman colony the house was probably taken over by a Roman colonist (Richardson 1997:155), and was renovated at least twice, during the middle of the first century BC and in the Neronian period (McKay 1975:41). The renovations entailed the elimination of rooms around the atrium and the addition of a second storey over the atrium. On the basis of graffiti, the last owner of the house has been identified as L. Albicius Celsus, aedil candidate of AD 78 (Castrén 1975:No.19; Della Corte 1954:84; Leach 2004:229; Richardson 1997:155) but he never served as aedil (Mouritsen 1988:109).
3.2.1. Layout and spheres

The Casa delle Nozze d'argento had, in its final state, a typical peristyle-house layout close to the Vitruvian ideal (McKay 1975:40). It consists of two clusters, the public atrium-cluster and the private peristyle-cluster. The line of sight goes through the traditional *fauces-atrium-tablinum-peristyle*-axis, culminating with *exedra y* (plate 1). Atrium *d* is unusually large. At 198.43 m² (Ehrhardt 2004:35), and two stories in height it is the largest atrium discovered in Pompeii even though larger houses have been found (Richardson 1997:155). It is tetrastyle, with four fluted Corinthian columns positioned at each corner of the impluvium. The largest room of the house is peristyle *r*, at 303 m² (Ehrhardt 2004:91), the centre of the private cluster (plate 2). It is Rhodian with a Doric portico, and the five fluted columns along the north wall are taller than the other 14, which are octagonal. The colonnade surrounds a small garden patch. Attached to the peristyle are two triclinia, *m* and *w*, the tetrastyle *oecus 4* (plate 9) and the bath complex connected through *apodyterium v*. On either side of the peristyle there is a garden, the more modest garden *i* was accessible from the service area *s* and the apodyterium, while garden *5* could only be reached via a narrow door in the northeast corner of the peristyle.

Garden 5 was originally colonnaded, but the columns had probably been demolished after the earthquake in AD 62. It had a masonry summer triclinium, similar to that in garden 23 of the Casa dell'Efebo, arranged around a small pool in the centre with a fountain and a round marble table. Nearby, on the wall was the inscription: "How inviting is your house, O Albucius" (Jashemski 1979:91). Garden 5 is the only area adjoining lararium-room *j*. Guidobaldi (2002:253) suggests that garden 5 was at one time connected to the atrium through one or more exedras now closed, which could suggest that the lararium had once been more easily accessible.

3.2.2. Wall painting

The Casa delle Nozze d'argento is painted in the Second and the Fourth Styles, with the exception of room *e* and the south portico of peristyle *r*, which are executed in the Third Style. The Second Style paintings in atrium *d* (plate 7) and *oecus 4* had been deliberately mended and reconstructed in the Neronian, (Fourth Style) period (Leach 2004:229). There are only two mythological panel paintings in the house, both located in *cubiculum q*. The first
depicts Hercules and Priam (plate 5) and the second, which is poorly preserved probably shows Jupiter and an eagle. Both are found in the partly hidden cubiculum $q$. In room $l$ there is a medallion of a Bacchante and either Orpheus or Bacchus, another medallion with two figures, one of whom has a wreath, and traces of a third. An old photograph reveals what seems to have been a panel painting with a nautical motif on the top of the west wall of apodyterium $v$ (Ehrhardt 2004:Figure 607).

There are also examples of simpler decoration. Most dados have plant motifs. There are some multicoloured vignettes, still life-panels (*tepiderarium* $u$) and pastoral landscapes (*atrium* $d$ and in a niche in peristyle $r$). There are also hunting motifs (peristyle $r$), with putti (tablinum $o$) and pygmies (cubiculum $q$, plate 4). Among the monochrome mythological vignettes are Amor and Psyche and either Europa and the Bull or Frixos (both cubiculum $q$), and unidentified female figures (triclinium $w$). Peristyle $r$ also has simple motifs of birds, masks, animals, vases, tripods and garlands, a theme recurring in triclinium $w$. Garlands are also found in latrine $s'$, and birds and theatre masks in apodyterium $v$. The Second Style rooms (oeus $4$, exedra $y$, the antechamber of apodyterium $v$ and cubicula $x$ and $z$) had an elaborate architectural theme with columns, orthostats and garlands.

The wall paintings in the house are predominantly black, yellow, red and white, in that order. The atrium is black, with multicoloured ashlar blocks in the frieze zone. It is painted in the Second Style with some Fourth Style ribbons and candelabra in the dado, indicating that it was redecorated after the AD 62 earthquake (Mau 1908:318). The adjoining rooms, $e$, $f$, $h$ and $l$ are predominantly white-ground, as is cubiculum $q$, but they are all executed in different styles. Tablinum $o$ and fauces $p$ are red and yellow, peristyle $r$ is black, as is triclinium $w$, garden 5 and the antechamber of apodyterium $v$. The latter also has yellow panels, as has the apodyterium proper, exedra $y$ and cubicula $x$ and $z$. The northwest corner of the peristyle is also yellow. The tetrastyle oeus $4$ has a black dado, a red central zone and a blue frieze. The stuccoed columns are painted red in imitation of porphyry (McKay 1975:42), and are positioned on faux marble bases placed in each corner of the room.

The house encompasses all of Wallace-Hadrill's standards of dividing elements in wall painting (see figure 6). The simple dividing lines are found in atrium $d$, and the simple Fourth Style
borders occur in tablinum o and fauces p. Oecus 4 has dividing columns, and tepidarium u has vegetal columns. Cubiculum q has candelabra, apodyterium v, triclinium w and exedra y has architectural vistas and peristyle r and latrine s' have both. The portico along the north wall of peristyle r has an arched entryway on either corner executed in plaster and stucco (plate 6), and the intercolumniations are adorned with painted stucco with hunting motifs. Several of the rooms in the house had stuccoed cornices. An ornamental band of stucco runs along the cornice of the barrel-vaulted ceiling of oecus 4. Caldarium t has a stuccoed seashell covering the dome of an apse.

3.2.3. Floors
Atrium d and fauces a have opus signinum floors. The tablinum floor has a black and white mosaic in the Third Style (Richardson 1997:155). The peristyle floor is in opus signinum with bits of coloured limestone and marble. The floor of oecus 4 is coated with a black and white mosaic, with geometrical patterns separating the antechamber from the oecus proper. The floor of triclinium n has an elaborate multicoloured mosaic (yellow, red, green, white and black) with a geometric pattern, creating a three-dimensional grid effect (plate 10). The threshold of the antechamber of apodyterium v has an aqueduct motif in white and black (plate 11), while the apodyterium proper has a colourful mosaic in a triangular pattern. The mosaic floor of triclinium w is in black and white with a triangular star pattern. The black and white mosaics in cubicula x and z clearly mark out the threshold, with elaborate borders, and bed recesses by the use of different patterns.

3.2.4. Artefacts and lararia
In room b an oven for cooking was discovered, and in room c cooking equipment was found (Allison 2004b), but neither room has direct access to the street, probably excluding any commercial function. A strigil and small glass bottles, amphorae and other jugs were found in room m, which was probably a storage room. In peristyle r there are signs of a chest and a number of everyday utilitarian objects, such as a loom, a ceramic basin and needles (Allison 2004b). In the slightly trapezoid garden patch several terracotta statuettes, including a frog, a toad and two crocodiles (plate 12), were found (Allison 2004b; Hales 2003:155; PPM III:714). The amphibian nature of the animals is a strong argument for a fountain in the peristyle, such as those found in gardens 2 and 5.
In service area s, a lararium painting occupies the south wall with two snakes and a lar on the top right. There is also a lararium-room, j (plate 13), with a white-ground painting of two snakes and an altar, as well as a real rectangular altar and traces of wooden shelving around the walls (Frölich 1991:269-270). Other finds include a ceramic amphora and an oleare, probably meant for sacrifice, a bronze coin, and a bronze door lock (Allison 2004b). This suggests that the lararium was in use at the time of the eruption. The lararium-room was only accessible from garden 5, and was well hidden from the view of anyone outside the immediate household.

3.2.5. Contextualization

The traditional layout creates two clearly defined spheres, the public, centred around the atrium, and the private, centred around the peristyle. The public sphere is accentuated by the vast atrium, the austere, dominantly black wall decoration and the inclusion of the four Corinthian columns. The columns could have been added later, as the layout, with alae, corresponds with that of a Tuscan atrium (Richardson 1997:155). The choice to continue the Second Style décor rather than modernizing it was most likely a conscious one, as the house had been fully refurbished and walls added or prolonged (Leach 2004:229). The variation in the rooms e, f, h, and l could signify that they were semi-private, or that they had not been redecorated before the eruption. If the former were the case, the doors to these rooms may have been closed during official visits, as all the rooms had door fittings. In either case the rooms were probably of an informal character. Also, the quality of the painting in the rooms, with the exception of room l, is inferior compared with that of the atrium. The function of room l is not clear; it could have been designed as a private reception room.

Room q could be quite revealing in identifying the owner. It was most likely his private chamber, as it is the largest cubiculum in the house. It had been split from a larger room into p and q not long before the eruption (Erhardt 2004:190), perhaps because the owner wanted a larger cubiculum. It was different from the other rooms, both because of the panel paintings and the high quality of craftsmanship.

The private sphere was made more secluded as the south wall of tablinum o was expanded and triclinium n was sealed off from the atrium during a second construction phase (Ehrhardt
2004: Figure108; Richardson 1997:155). The line of sight, however, was still very open and the private sphere was accessible without having to pass through the tablinum. Richardson (1997:157) interprets oecus 4 and triclinium w as ladies’ dining rooms. There are no signs of this in the décor of oecus 4, and the decoration in triclinium w is similar to that of triclinium G in the Casa dell'Ara massima. In addition, the last possible alternative triclinium, n, is the smallest, less than half the size of oecus 4 and ¾ of the size of triclinium w. It is more likely that the rooms had no gender associations. The number of formal rooms, especially the two triclinia (n and w) and oecus 4 suggest that the owner was used to housing large gatherings of people. The dark background colour, the lack of panel paintings and the relatively few hints of nature suggest that even in the private sphere, the guest was reminded of the duties to the state.

Like garden 5 the bath complex seems like a haven from the stricter style of the rest of the house. Its wall paintings depict birds, theatre masks, nautical motifs and architectonic scenes on a yellow background. Neither the bath complex nor the garden could be classed as showcases for the owner, as the apodyterium’s antechamber had fittings for doors to the apodyterium proper. This means that neither the garden nor the bath complex was easily visible from the peristyle, and they were completely invisible from the public sphere. Unlike the Casa degli Amorini dorati, however, the Casa delle Nozze d'argento appears open and candid.

The other rooms surrounding the peristyle are interesting with regard to colours. Triclinium w and apodyterium ν both continue the black theme, while exedra y and cubiculum x (plate 8) and z are yellow. The yellow rooms could have been part of an older decorative programme, which explains the presence of the Second Style. However, as exedra y and the inner part of apodyterium ν are painted in the Fourth Style, the choice of colours could have been deliberate, perhaps to differentiate these rooms from the larger, black ones. It is also interesting that rooms x, y and z are in direct view from the tablinum, and were guaranteed to attract attention, especially as a contrast to the black rooms.

It is hard to distinguish any strictly informal rooms, but cubicula x and z, exedra y and the bath complex are good candidates. Garden 5 was informal, as was the peristyle. The atrium was
certainly formal, as was the tablinum, oecus 4, triclinium n and probably triclinium w. Only culina s, latrine s’, garden 2 (plate 3) and perhaps fauces p were strictly humble rooms.

3.3 The casa dell'Efebo (I 7 11, 19)

The Casa dell'Efebo was excavated between 1925 and 1926. The house is 660 m², and has 23 rooms (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:190; PPM I:620). The owner has been identified as freedman and wine merchant, Cornelius Tages (Zanker 2001:175; PPM I:619). The house is a conglomerate of three (Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 74) or five (PPM I:619) once independent units, and therefore has a somewhat unorthodox layout and distribution of room types. There are three entrances, six cubicula, two atria, and three triclinia, not including the summer triclinium in peristyle 23 (plate 28). The house was connected to the Casa I 7, 19 via a door in peristyle 23. While PPM I (751) treats Casa I 7, 19 as an annex to the Casa dell'Efebo, the houses will be treated as two separate units in this study, partly because of the strikingly different decoration and partly because the door connecting the two houses is very narrow.

3.3.1. Layout and spheres

The Casa dell'Efebo has three clusters, that of atrium A’, atrium A” and peristyle 23. In layout the house was open, and all rooms except the humble ones were visible from one of the atria. The entrance to atrium A” also introduces another interesting phenomenon; the shortest route (Brandt 2004:17) was divided according to the social status of the visitors. The public and humble guests would most likely go north to tablinum 4, and therefore triclinium 17 and peristyle 23 would not be in their direct sight line, while triclinium 10 would be in their dead sphere. The grander guests would probably enter triclinium 10 or 17, or peristyle 23, and mainly ignore atrium A’. In this respect, one group's dead sphere is the other group's shortest route.

Of the three entrances (10, 11 and 12), number 11 was most likely the main entrance to the house. Entrance 10 is immured (plate 14), and thus was no longer in use. Zanker (2001:175) argues that as entrance 11 only leads to a modest atrium (A”), entrance 12, leading directly onto the large peristyle, was used as the main entrance for visitors. If this were so, visitors would have to pass by a latrine (20), a culina (21) and a cubiculum (22) used as a storeroom,
all normally positioned by the slaves' entrance. It is more conceivable that entrance 11 was the only entrance to the main complex (PPM I:619). Therefore, it seems plausible that at the time of the eruption the house functioned as a single unit, contrary to Wallace-Hadrill's (1994:74) suggestion that the house constituted three different units of habitation.

3.3.2. Wall painting

The Casa dell'Efebo has six panel paintings. Tablinum 4 has a panel painting of Perseus freeing Andromeda from the sea monster. Cubiculum 12 contains three mythological paintings, all flanked by an amorino on either side. On the west wall is a depiction of Venus fishing in the company of two amorini (plate 20), while Apollo and Daphne constitute the central motif on the south wall (plate 21). The mythological panel on the north wall depicts Narcissus and Echo (plate 18). Triclinium 17 has a panel painting of Menelaus capturing Helen in the sack of Troy (plate 25). The castellum aquae in peristyle 23 is decorated on the west wall (plate 30) with the motif of the marriage of Mars and Venus (PPM 1:698). The south wall has a garden painting of a statue of Mars and a large-scale paradisos depicting a bull, a lion and a deer (plate 32).

The house has a number of vignettes, including attributes of gods. In cubiculum 9 the attributes of Minerva (shield, spear, helmet and owl) are flanked by panthers on the north wall (plate 16) and Jupiter's attributes (globe, thunderbolt, eagle and sceptre) with two griffins on the east wall (plate 17). High up on the north wall a peacock can be seen. The peacock was the attribute of of the goddess Juno, but here it probably functioned as an ornament rather than completing the Capitoline Triad. Cubiculum 11 has a vignette of Bacchus' attributes (cone, panther and kantharos), on the east wall (plate 19). Mercury's attributes (the caduceo, a hen and hat) and Minerva's attributes appear in triclinium 16 (plates 23-24). In addition, there are two figural representations in triclinium 17, one of a male carrying a sheep on his right shoulder, and another of a woman holding a sickle and a bundle of hay. These figures have been interpreted as personifications of spring and summer. An alternative is that the man is about to sacrifice, as he resembles an Archaic Greek statue, such as the Moschophoros (Kill-erich 2002:30-32), and the woman could be an allusion to the goddess Ceres. Other paintings include still life-panels of food in cubiculum 3, atrium A’, tablinum 4 and cubiculum 11. Cubiculum 11 also has still lifes of an exotic bird with fruit and a crow bird with berries.
There is a medallion in tablinum 4 of an unidentified male wearing a crown, perhaps Sol. The clinai in garden 23 are decorated (plate 33) with scenes of pygmies, set in a Nilotic landscape, engaging in various activities (Hales 2003:149; PPM I:620).

The house was painted in white-ground Fourth Style with architectural vistas in all rooms except triclinium 10, which was in black Second Style with orthostats and red borders, and bathroom 5, which had a black dado and a red and yellow central zone. The dado in cubiculum 9 was painted red and yellow in marble imitation.

3.3.3. Floors and ceilings
All the floors in the house are in cocciopesto except culina 7, room 15 and triclinium 16 which were in opus signinum, and triclinium 17. Triclinium 16 and 17 were the only rooms with expensive pavements; the former had a mosaic emblema with stylized plants, and the latter had an opus sectile pavement with an emblema arranged in a flower pattern with yellow, red, green, blue and white marble (plates 22, 26). None of the ceilings are preserved intact, but there are traces of decoration in three of the rooms. Those in cubicula 12 and 22 have painted plaster in simple white-ground with geometric patterns. The ceiling of triclinium 17 was covered with elaborately moulded stucco in a pattern of imitation coffering with roundels and small figures (plate 27).

3.3.4. Artefacts and lararia
A number of statues and statuettes were discovered during the excavation of the house. In cubiculum 2 a statuette of Isis was found (Allison 2004b). Several pieces of statuary, probably belonging to the garden, were found in room 15 and triclinium 17, where they may have been put for storage, restoration or salvage (Allison 2004b). These include the bronze statue of a youth or ephebos, from which the house takes its name, one intact marble statue of Pan holding a ram's head in his right hand and carrying a basket of fruit, another broken statuette, seemingly of Pan, a headless marble statuette of a drunk satyr and a marble statuette of a deer suckling a fawn. Traces of gilding were found on some of the statues. Four marble herms discovered in the garden were probably placed on the top of four marble fence posts (Jashemski 1993:42). An aedicula-fountain painted in red and blue with a stucco relief of Diana and two deer on the front was embellished with a bronze statuette of the goddess Pompona. This pro-
vided water to the mini-Nilus, which lead to a central marble fountain surrounded by a triclinium under a four-columned pergola (Zanker 1998:175).

In tablinum 4 a wooden bed and chest were found (Allison 2004b), perhaps suggesting that the room had been in use at the time of the eruption. Bathroom 5 was equipped with a bronze basin which had a drain and water inlet connected to the furnace in room 6/7, thus providing hot water (Allison 2004b). Atrium A" had a rare luxury item, in the form of an obsidian mirror attached near the entrance of cubiculum 9 (plate 15).

There are three lararia in the Casa dell'Efebo, all nearly hidden from view. The lararium in atrium A' consists of a niche adorned with a white-ground painting of the genius familiaris, two lares sacrificing and two life-size snakes in a landscape on each side of an altar. The lararium in corridor 18 also takes the form of a niche surrounded by a white-ground painting depicting two snakes and a bronze altar with an abundance of cereal produce (plate 31). At the southeast corner of portico 19 there is an ornate aedicula shrine decorated with moulded and painted stucco (plate 29). It has a marble imitation base, two columns decorated with a kantharos, a theatrical mask and a rhytòn. The apse is covered with a stucco seashell.

3.3.5. Contextualization
The simple white-ground wall painting is ubiquitous throughout the house, with the exception of triclinium 10. The choice of black for this room may indicate that it functioned as a winter triclinium. Even the extravagant triclinium 17 was painted in white-ground, albeit of a higher quality. The statuary, the obsidian mirror, the paradeisos, the opus sectile pavement, the summer triclinium, and the running water were expensive commodities. The main triclinium and peristyle are room types found in the top left (grand, formal and public) of figure 2; and some degree of elevation is to be expected.

Most of the grand rooms are found on a "grand pathway" from atrium A" to triclinium 17, culminating with peristyle 23. With regard to the second division, public and private, they seem to be equally distributed among the grand rooms. Atria A‘ and A” and tablinum 4 were public, and cubicula 2, 3, 9, 11 and 12 were probably private, at least theoretically. They are found close to important formal and public rooms, and some of them were most likely used for
entertaining guests. While the triclinium is normally considered a private room (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:11), this is hardly true for triclinium 17, the grandeur of which is not as intimate as it is intimidating. It seems more like a grand hall used for formal occasions, as opposed to the other triclinia, 10 being more secluded and 16, which is smaller and reserved for the preferred gods of the house owner. As the latter seemingly ranked third amongst the triclinia, it was probably rarely used for formal occasions. The humble rooms include the service quarters, bathroom 5 and latrines 8 and 20, culina 6/7 and 21 and cubiculum 22. All of these rooms were private and informal. Like most Roman houses, the Casa dell'Efebo has few private and informal rooms. This does not mean that living space was, as Zanker (1998:180) suggests, very limited, as there were six cubicula, at least two private triclinia and one peristyle, in addition to a second floor.

There are relatively few preserved panel paintings in the Casa dell'Efebo, and most of the painted decorations are in the form of vignettes and still lifes. It is interesting that they are found in the tablinum, perhaps signalling that the paterfamilias was a man of control in his affairs. The paintings in cubiculum 12 are, according to Richardson (2000:96) made by a prolific painter, and they are not among his best. The painting of Mars and Venus and Menelaus capturing Helen are of higher quality, which furthers the difference of decoration between rooms 17 and 23, in which they are situated, and the rest of the house.

3.4 The Casa dell'Ara massima (VI 16, 15.17)

The Casa dell'Ara massima is 180 m², with nine rooms (except taberna M) and belongs to the smaller dwellings in Pompeii. The house was excavated in 1903-1904. The dating of the perimeter walls to the third century BC, together with the discovery of a column in Sarno stone, indicates that the house was of ancient origin. The identity of the owner is a matter of speculation. Stemmer (1992:58) and PPM (V:847) suggest that the family was of the lower middle class, probably innkeepers or merchants of some sort. The latter seems most convincing, partly based on graffiti and partly on finds from the house. Stemmer (1992:59) also puts forward the theory that the whole of insula 16 was owned by petit bourgeois, but this would seem to be an inaccurate description of the nearby Casa degli Amorini dorati.
As noted by Allison (2004b) the discovery of foodstuffs could indicate that the house was occupied in some form at the time of the eruption, despite the lack of skeletal remains and valuables in the house. This is supported by the condition of the house, as there were no signs of pre-volcanic deterioration. The decoration is among the best preserved in Pompeii, and there are indications that the paintings had been restored after the earthquake of AD 62.

3.4.1. Layouts and spheres
The Casa dell'Ara massima is the only basic atrium house in the sample, and the only house without a garden. The layout is unremarkable, with the fauces (A) leading into an atrium (B), large for a house of such small dimensions. Atrium B is the only cluster in the house, no two other rooms open to one another. Following Brandt's movement analysis (Brandt 2004:13-18), the off-centre fauces leads the visitor towards pseudo-tablinum D, the actual tablinum F or triclinium G. It is surprising that the only identified cubiculum (H) is placed by the shortest, and most actively used, route. It could mean that the house owner used his cubiculum actively for entertaining guests. It is also interesting that room I, about which little is known, is positioned by the cubiculum in the dead sphere, even if it is the second largest room in the house.

3.4.2. Wall painting
The first sight to greet the visitor was pseudo-tablinum D, the culmination of the view from the threshold. The centre of attention is a pinax with Narcissus admiring his own reflection in the water (plate 35). Upon entering the house, the guest sees the rest of the west wall of atrium B, dominated by a large scaenae frons painting in strong nuances of red and yellow (plate 34). Two figures peer out from half open doors on each side of a yellow panel with sacred buildings, probably Dionysian shrines set in Egypt (PPM V:856; Stemmer 1992:50). Two comic masks in the red dado accentuate the theatrical theme. The side panels are adorned with golden vegetal candelabra, small pegasi and putti. In the middle of each candelabrum is a small pinax. The theatrical themes above and under the niche are only completely revealed once the viewer has entered the atrium.

There are six other panel paintings in the house. In tablinum F, there are two, Ariadne abandoned at Naxos on the east wall, and Selene and Endymion on the west wall (plate 47). In tri-
there are four panel paintings. The story of Selene and Endymion is repeated on the south wall. Ariadne at Naxos is also repeated on the west wall (plate 40), accompanied by maenads and a winged figure, either Nemesis (PPM V:877) or Hypnos, who was often included in Hellenistic portrayals of this theme. In addition, Hercules with Tanathos and Admetus (PPM V:875) is depicted on the east wall (plate 42), and Mars and Venus together with four putti playing with Venus' jewellery box and Mars' armour (plate 43) are portrayed on the north wall. In addition to the panel paintings and the large scaenae frons, there are a number of medallions, which have been interpreted as muses in triclinium G (PPM.V:878). In tablinum F there are still life medallions with gastronomic motifs, while cubiculum H has three still life paintings, each with a bird: a peacock, a sparrow and a swan.

All rooms with preserved wall paintings have a dominatingly red and/or yellow background colour (figs. 37, 41). The dado in triclinium G is red, while it is black in the other rooms. Black is an important secondary colour in cubiculum H. There are some instances of green and cinnabar as well. The dividing elements in tablinum F are mainly elaborate architectural vistas (plate 38), cubiculum B has candelabra dividing lines and triclinium G has both.

3.4.3. Floors and ceilings

The floors are all in either cocciopesto (A, B, D, F and G) or calcestuzzo (E, H, I, K, L and M). Rooms C and N have pavements of beaten earth (Allison 2004b). No ceilings are preserved, but the impluvium in atrium B suggests that there was a compluvium. The stuccoed cornice of cubiculum H can also be seen in connection with barreled vaults, but any conclusions as to ceiling type would be highly speculative.

3.4.4. Artefacts and lararia

In the triclinium, a number of artefacts were found, including a weight, knitting needles and meat hooks, or possibly fish hooks and netting needles (Allison 2004b). Also, a small marble table was found, with thin cistru m-shaped legs, and a weight in the shape of a sphinx at the bottom, maintaining balance. Three locks were found in the triclinium as well, probably belonging to caskets destroyed by fire. Nearly 180 bronze items (Stemmer 1992:58) were discovered in different parts of the house, mainly of utilitarian character, which emphasize the
owner's artisan or merchant background. A pinecone was found by the lararium, suggesting that the house owner was married (Stemmer 1992:57).

The house has some interesting graffiti that can help understand the owner's background. First, there is a graffito of a gladiator with a spear and a shield in the middle zone of the south wall in triclinium G. This strongly suggests that the owner had a relatively young girl in the family, as gladiators are known to have been objects of desire for young girls. In the atrium's east dado, the text:

\[
\text{SI QUIS NIN VIDIT VENEREM QUAM PINXIT APELLES, PUPA(M) MEA(M) ASPICIAT; TALIS ET ILLA NITET?}
\]

confirms the suspicion of the presence of a girl in the house. The writer of the text must have known at least rudimentary Greek, as it is written in Latin with Greek letters. A group of graffiti of what appear to be hams in the south dado has been associated with the owner, but Stemmer (1992:57) argues that this is not the case.

The north wall of the atrium is dedicated to a lararium (plate 36), consisting of a white painted wall surface with two snakes among green plants, eating fruit from a sacrificial altar. Above them is a hanging garland and part of a small figure, perhaps a lar. In the top left corner is a small niche, which still preserves part of a painting of a person, probably the genius familiaris, sacrificing at an altar (PPM V:853). This lararium would have been visible from the tablinum.

3.4.5. Contextualization

It seems strange that the Casa dell’Ara massima lacked any green areas that even the smallest houses would permit themselves. Whether this atrio-centric layout signifies tradition and modesty is uncertain. The layout of the house is not compatible with the Vitruvian axis. It does however bear a striking resemblance to cluster A” of the Casa dell’Efebo, which was probably an independent house at some point. Whether or not this is a sign of the age of the two houses is a matter of speculation, but it might signify that this type of layout was popular in Pompeii at some point. The passer-by could only see the white-ground Narcissus in the pseudo-tabli-
num, a sign of modesty and frugality. This strikes an ironic chord when put into context with the whole wall. The dominant theatrical theme could reflect the owner’s interest in the theatre, whether real or feigned, or it could be attributed to fashion. As the masks are meant for comedy, it seems probable that the latter is the case. The white lararium-painting that dominates the entire north wall is a contrast to the polychrome theatrical motifs. Rooms F and G both have elaborately patterned borders of stucco beneath the ceiling, signalling that these rooms must have had important functions.

The other motifs seem to focus on the theme of eternal youth and beauty, as a contrast to the fate of Narcissus. The young and beautiful Ariadne was abandoned on Naxos by Theseus only to be discovered by Bacchus, who fell in love with her. Luna discovered the beautiful Endymion and preserved his beauty by having him sleep forever. The first story is described by Clarke (1991:225) to have a happy outcome, the second less clearly so. Both of these are repeated, which could suggest a fascination for the myths and themes surrounding them, but it could just as easily have been a desire to appear fashionable. In triclinium G the panel painting of Mars and Venus is reminiscent of the idyllic theme of Bacchus and Ariadne, and is a contrast to other, more sombre, versions of the illicit lovers (in the Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto). Hercules defeating death to save Admetus and his devoted wife is the last of this series of mythological stories that end well, in a good comedy tradition. The scaenae frons in atrium B is also connected to comedy, as illustrated by the comedy masks (Stemmer 1992:25), and Vitruvius’ characteristics of a comedy mode of decor, such as balconies and everyday houses (Leach 1993:139-140).

According to Richardson (2000:96) who has identified the painter and his repertoire, the choice of motifs should probably be attributed to the commissioner rather than the painter. The motifs could have been chosen from copybooks. Stemmer (1992:55) believes the repetition of the motifs to be a lack of imagination on the part of the commissioner. The repetition of the theme of Ariadne and Bacchus within the same house also occurs in two other Pompeian houses, the Casa dei Capitelli colorati (VII 4, 3) and the Casa della Fortuna (IX 7, 20) (Stemmer 1992:52). This illustrates that it probably was a common phenomenon, which could signify that the owner of the Casa dell'Ara massima merely followed a trend.
3.5 The Casa degli Amorini dorati (VI 16 7, 38)

The Casa degli Amorini dorati was excavated between 1903 and 1905. The house is rather large, roughly 830 m² and has 24 rooms (PPM V:714), six of which are service rooms. It originated from three to four previous houses, and the original house was constructed in the third century BC (PPM V:714-715; Richardson 1997:317). The owner has been identified as Cn. Poppaeus Habitus, a relative of Poppaea, the Emperor Nero's wife (Richardson 1997:314; Della Corte 1954:61-64).

3.5.1. Layout and spheres

The west wall of tablinum E is the culmination of the view from the entrance, even though it is slightly off-centre (plate 44). Atrium B connects the two rooms, as well as cubicula C and D and exedra G. The latter room, like E, is also connected to peristyle F. The peristyle is hardly visible from the entrance as it is situated not behind, but alongside the tablinum (Hales 2003:119). Peristyle F is large and dominates the house (plate 56). It is Rhodian, with 17 columns, the west portico being elevated into a podium with four white Corinthian columns. The two in the middle have added plaster and stucco, forming an entrance gate with a pediment to triclinium O. The other columns are Doric with flutes, and the bases have been painted red and yellow. A pool with a fountain (plate 49) was situated in the centre of the peristyle garden (Jashemski 1979:34). Behind it, triclinium O seems like a prolongation of the peristyle, flanked by cubicula Q and R. Cubiculum N, the only room by the south wall of the peristyle, and cubicula I, L and M on the north wall were completely reserved for the private life. The rooms S-Y were service areas with staircases leading to the upper floor.

3.5.2. Wall painting

The wall paintings of the Casa degli Amorini dorati are executed in the Fourth Style. The house has ten extant mythological wall painting panels, five of which take their theme from the siege of Troy. The latter include Paris on Mount Ida and Achilles and Polyxena, both in atrium B; Paris abducting Helen in tablinum E (plate 45); Thetis collecting Achilles' armour in Vulcan's smithy and a motif generally accepted as Achilles, Briseis and a third party, probably Agamemnon (both in exedra G) (PPM V:784; Seiler 1992:36). All but the penultimate motif are visible from the atrium, and the picture of Paris and Helen concludes the line of
sight from the street through the fauces. Other paintings include Leda and the Swan in cubiculum C and again in cubiculum R (plate 54); Jason and Pelias in exedra G and in cubiculum R, Diana and Acteon and Venus fishing. There are also vignettes of Mercury, putti, griffins, a bearded mask, a satyr carrying the young Bacchus, and the four seasons. There are ten medallions, one unintelligible, one of a satyr and a maenad in peristyle F and, in cubiculum I, eight medallions with female portraits. Still life-panels, masks and busts decorate some of the inner rooms. Landscapes are represented in the friezes, and garden paintings in the dado. Room I has First Style marble imitation in the dado.

With regard to the colours used in the wall paintings, red (atrium B, exedra G) or red and yellow (cubicula C and D) dominated the public sphere. In the cubicula, the most common colour of the dado is black. The private sphere is markedly different. The peristyle is dominantly black, except for the yellow southeast corner. Cubiculum M is much in the same style. These two rooms are the exceptions, as cubiculum N is red and yellow. Cubiculum I is decorated with red wallpaper pattern on a yellow background with four gilded discs with cupids inserted into the walls (plate 52). Cubiculum R is also dominantly yellow, with a cinnabar dado and a white frieze (plate 53). The walls of cubiculum Q are executed in white-ground (plate 56).

In the black rooms, the dividing lines are few with simple columns in perspective, creating at most a simple architectural vista. In the rooms of the public cluster, however, there are both simple and impressive columns, elaborate candelabra and ornaments. The exception is the tablinum, which is dominated by at least two, probably three, wall painting panels (only the one with Paris and Helen is preserved), divided by simple columns. The dividing elements in the wall paintings of the rooms in the private cluster with less expensive background colours had impressive architectural vistas with birds, masks and other features. Rooms C, D, F, I, M, R and Q all have traces of elaborately stuccoed cornices, and although there are no discernible traces in the remainder of the house due to poor preservation of the upper part of the walls, it is conceivable that at least some of the more formal rooms (such as atrium B, tablinum E and exedra G) would also have had this.
3.5.3. Floors and ceilings

Most of the floors in the house are executed in cocciopesto with white tesserae, and only the exceptions will be dealt with in further detail. The floor of tablinum $E$ has a white mosaic with an emblema of geometric patterns in black, red and white tesserae. The threshold at the entrance to atrium $B$ is marked by a band filled with flowers, a dolphin and two griffins. The floor of peristyle $F$ is covered in cocciopesto with pieces of coloured marble. Exedra $G$ has a mosaic pavement in the Third Style consisting of white tesserae with a square emblema containing vegetal elements and a circle with geometric patterns. The Second Style mosaic pavement in room $I$ is predominantly white with black bands containing vegetal ornaments and geometric patterns. Cubicula $M$ and $Q$ both have opus signinum pavements with white tesserae in geometric patterns. Room $N$ has an opus signinum pavement with small circular, hexagonal and diamond-shaped slabs of marble. Triclinium $O$ had either marble tiles or opus signinum (Allison 2004b). Rooms $R$ and $Q$ are the only rooms in the house with partially intact ceilings. The one in room $R$ is in white-ground and is divided into squares by ornamented stucco frames inside, which are circles and hexagons with painted motifs, for instance fish, deer and a panther (plate 55). Although room $Q$’s ceiling is not as well preserved, it can be seen to have had sculpted stucco in white, green, blue and red with circles and squares filled with small figures.

3.5.4. Artefacts and lararia

Two medallions and six marble reliefs had been inserted into the wall paintings of the peristyle, one of them decorated with Venus and Cupid in a grotto and the rest with theatre masks (Allison 2004b; Jashemski 1979:40; Seiler 1992:Figures 261-262). Another relief, two oscilla discs, theatre masks (both comic and tragic) and marble heads of Bacchus were also discovered, and these were probably hung from the architrave, as part of the decorative scheme. Two male portrait busts, at least one of them in early Imperial style were also found. Double-headed marble herms of Bacchus and Ariadne, Bacchus and Silenus and Jupiter and Ammon, as well as pilasters, and a sundial were placed around the portico. Several marble statuettes, for instance of a man crushing a toad, sculptures of the goddess Fortuna and a number of animals (a dog killing a bird, a rabbit, and a boar) decorated the garden patch (Allison 2004b; Jashemski 1979:38; Richardson 1997:316; Seiler 1992:117-21). The peristyle also had two obsidian mirrors, one on the south side and one on the north side of the room (plate 50). In
exedra G the discovery of a bronze signet ring incised "CN HA" has been used to identify the owner (GENaeus HABitus). The lack of decoration, together with the utilitarian finds from rooms S - Y identify this area as the service part of the house.

A painted aedicula-lararium (e) with a travertine altar is located against the north wall of the peristyle between rooms I and J (plate 46). Six bronze statuettes were discovered in connection with it, of Jupiter, Minerva, Juno, Mercury and two lares (Seiler 1992: Figures:296-300), along with other artefacts indicating that it had been in use at the time of the eruption. Another shrine painted in the Fourth Style is located in the southeast corner (plate 47). In the white dado two snakes and an altar are depicted, the yellow main zone portrays sacred objects associated with the Isis cult: a snake with a ureus, two caskets, a cistrum, a patera and an ampulla (on the left) and figures associated with the cult: Anubis, Harpocrates with cornucopia, Isis with a cistrum and Serapis with a cistrum (on the right).

3.5.5. Contextualization

Although the layout of the Casa degli Amorini dorati does not conform to the Vitruvian ideal, it is more traditional than could be expected from a merged house. The house has the traditional two grand clusters, the atrium-cluster and the peristyle-cluster, as well as a humble service-cluster. Hales (2003:117-122) argues that the eschewed layout was a conscious choice on the part of the owner, perhaps according to fashion. It is equally likely that the house developed as a result of the availability of small houses nearby for purchase. One of the most noteworthy aspects is the narrow entrance from the atrium to the peristyle, which could have been shut off from the visitor if the owner desired to. Whether intentionally or not this created a distinctive difference between the public and the private sphere of the house.

The layout and choice of rooms are interesting with regard to understanding the owner's priorities. For example, the positioning of exedra G between the atrium and the peristyle suggests that this room was important, both in itself and as a thoroughfare from B to F or vice versa. Another point of interest is that room O is the only room traditionally identified as a triclinium. However, there are seven cubicula (C, D, I, M, N, Q and R). Three of these: M, Q and R, have the size and decoration to suggest that they could have been triclinia, but room R had a door too narrow to allow guests to enjoy the view of the peristyle garden. Room M has strong
similarities to peristyle $F$, analogous to the relationship between peristyle $r$ and triclinium $w$ in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento, which are also black. The seasons personified in room $Q$ was a common subject matter for triclinia (e.g. triclinium 17 in the Casa dell'Efebo and triclinium $i$ in the Casa di Sacello Illiaco).

The Casa degli Amorini dorati presents a different view to the beholder standing at threshold than it does to the visitor in the atrium, not unlike the Casa dell'Ara massima. This illustrates the significance of views in the Roman house. From the atrium four of the five Trojan wall painting-panels in the house are visible. This strong emphasis on the Trojan myth in the public sphere is hardly coincidental. It suggests that the owner was an educated man and wanted to impress his visitors.

Peristyle $F$ was the most extravagant room in the house, and "a particularly important example of a lavish peristyle garden" (Zanker 1998:168) The rare Rhodian peristyle provides a Hellenistic element, and at the same time the columns and the pediment over the entrance to triclinium $O$ are reminiscent of Greek temples (plate 51). While there are no remains of wall decoration in room $O$, there are signs indicating that it had marble flooring, and the room is the second largest in the house. This, together with the room’s ostentatious entrance indicates the importance of the room. Despite the apparent public and formal atmosphere, the peristyle most likely had informal and private functions. This is illustrated by the fact that the room was hidden from view, completely from the entrance and partially from the atrium. The two lararia in peristyle $F$ demonstrate the owner’s loyalty to the state gods, as well as showing that he was a worshipper of the Isis-cult (Hales 2003:148; Richardson 1997:314). Since the Isis-lararium was the only one visible from the tablinum and the traditional lararium could only be seen from the atrium, this could have indicated that the house owner identified himself foremost as an Isis worshipper.

Do the myths portrayed in various paintings carry any moral message? The paintings of the Trojan War are not those of the battle of the victorious Greeks, but of other important episodes from the story. The painting of Leda and the Swan, not traditionally set in direct context with the war, seems to be a reminder of how it started: Helen was the child of divine rape. The painting of Paris on Mount Ida could recalls Paris’ birth and tragic childhood. The two are
united in the large tablinum painting. Mercury leads Paris to Helen, who does not appear surprised, nor do her chambermaids. The painting of Thetis collecting Achilles' armour is a reminder that the hero is not immortal, or he would not need such equipment. Achilles appears in the two following paintings as well, first where he is torn from Briseis, and in return refuses to fight, and then with Polyxena, about to be killed by Paris. It is an interesting presentation, where Helen, rather than Paris, is portrayed as immoral, and Achilles is shown as stubborn and mortal. The theme of *femme fatale* is another aspect: Helen lures Paris, Polyxena lures Achilles to his death and Briseis, albeit innocent, does not help the Greeks. This fits well with two unrelated themes, of Venus fishing and of Diana and Acteon. This could suggest that the owner wanted to be perceived as a paterfamilias who protected the women of the family, also from themselves. Regardless of any symbolic meanings, the house owner probably wanted to be perceived as an educated man.
4. Analysis of the houses

In the previous chapter the four main houses were described focussing on layout, decoration and artefacts found in context. In this chapter the houses will be considered as projections of *romanitas* or *luxuria* in practice. The next step is to determine whether this is applicable to the broader sample of Pompeian houses, with emphasis on the 19 other houses in the study. The two ideologies will be examined separately by comparing the layout, wall painting motifs, dividing elements and colours, as well as floors. Other aspects, such as artefacts, lararia and gardens will also be examined. With regard to wall painting, the internal ranking in figures 4, 5 and 6 will form the basis for comparison, however quality is also a significant factor.

4.1 The Casa delle Nozze d'argento - *romanitas* in unlikely surroundings

The Casa delle Nozze d’argento shows an interesting double standard in *romanitas* and *luxuria*. The public guest would be introduced to the vast atrium, four times bigger than the atrium in the Casa degli Amorini dorati. The layout was open, the decoration was modest and the columns were reminiscent of public architecture. This signals an etiquette emblemic style, connecting the owner with the values of *romanitas*. It probably created the impression that the owner was a Roman citizen concerned with the matters of state. The view from the fauces illustrates that the house shows little of the privacy Hales (2003:133) associates with privilege and wealth. The view changed little when entering the large atrium, and there are in practice only two lines of sight, from the public sphere to *exedra* and from the private sphere. The line of sight from the private sphere was different. From oecus 4 to triclinium 6, most of the Rhodian peristyle was in full view. The oecus itself with expensive colours and the two triclinia were indications that the owner endured some luxury within his household.

While the peristyle was "surprisingly small after the atrium" (Richardson 1997:156), it had a Rhodian colonnade, unusual in Pompeii (Guidobaldi 2002:254), Egyptianized terracotta statuettes and probably a fountain. The intimate friend might gain access to garden 5 and perhaps the bath complex. The garden was larger than the peristyle and the atrium combined. The pri-
vate bath complex, which was probably closed off from the peristyle by doors, was among the most luxurious features of the house. The discovery of a strigil and bottles suggest that it was actively in use at the time of eruption. Garden 5 and the private bath suite are both associated with privacy and otium. They would have counted as a strong argument for extrovert luxuria, had they been more actively displayed to the visitors. However, as they were not, they do not qualify as status emblemic, perhaps except for a small group of intimate guests, and they do not necessarily exude luxuria quite as strongly as one might expect.

There are only two panel paintings in the house, in the owner's private cubiculum (the house has a ratio of 0.1 panel paintings per room, compared to the Casa dell'Ara massima, which has a ratio of 1.6 panel paintings per room). The dividing elements are also relatively modest with few architectural vistas. The relatively modest decor could indicate a conscious counter-reaction against the flamboyant Third Style. (Ehrhardt 2004:244). The background colours are dominantly mid-expensive, but the use of expensive colours honours the dignitas of the owner. Cubiculum q sends a mixed signal of modesty and profligacy with the high quality white-ground and the ornate decoration with pygmies and panel paintings. Neither of the two panel pictures in the room was easily accessible to any guests. This is in itself a strong message of pietas. The motif of Hercules and Priam is an indication of clementia, and the motif of Jupiter is associated with Rome. The Bucolic landscapes also accentuate Augustan romanitas. The only luxuria-inspired painting, of Bacchus and a maenad, was in a room probably downgraded to a storage room.

The wall painting styles accentuate the nature of the different spheres. The public sphere is largely painted in the Second Style, in some instances deliberately reconstructed. The conservative decor may have been the result of the owner's wish to maintain tradition and emphasize the importance of his family ties. This strong connotation to romanitas could have been a strategy of the owner to appear as a worthy Roman aedil-candidate. The private areas are more often executed in the Fourth Style.

The flooring of the house follows the pattern of function and status. The rooms along the shortest route, such as fauces a, atrium d and peristyle r were laid in opus signinum, often in simple patterns or with no patterns at all. Rooms meant for sitting or reclining, such oecus 4,
triclinia \( n \) and \( w \) and also exedra \( y \), cubicula \( x \) and \( z \) and apodyterium \( v \) are decorated with elegant geometrically shaped mosaics. There are, however, no examples of advanced figurative motifs, neither ornamental nor mythological, nor is there any instance of opus sectile.

The house owner could have made a division of views according to his social standing, to manipulate his visitors. He certainly wanted to appear as a *romanitas*-adherer to his clients, but his friends might have known better, and his family and close friends saw his true wealth. On the other hand, they also knew that not even in the private sphere were there many expensive decorations. The decoration remains simple, and in line with Vitruvius' taste in wall painting and Cicero's mantra of decorating one's house according to one's position and family.

In comparison, the Casa del Menandro is similar in size and layout, but has a considerably smaller atrium. The line of sight in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento is clouded by columns, while the clear focus in the Casa del Menandro is that of a comedy playwright (figs. 57-58). Applying Zanker (1999:40), the Casa dell'Menandro shows the Greek pleasures, reflecting the house as a private haven, while the Casa delle Nozze d'argento reminds the visitor of the Roman duties, as an "aid to life".

4.2 The Casa dell'Efebo - ostentatious dining quarters in a humble setting

The Casa dell'Efebo has relatively modest wall paintings coupled with expensive items of marble and bronze. The public sphere is modest, while triclinium 17 and garden 23 have a more extravagant decoration. The statuary, the mini-Nilus, the opus sectile-pavement, the paradeisos and the sculpted stucco ceiling are all strong signs of status emblemic style. Zanker (1979:500-501) claims that this domus imitated the villa, based on the above-mentioned extravagant decoration. He argues that the owner probably considered the atrium too simple for entertaining guests, and therefore led them directly via entrance 12 to the extravagant peristyle. As previously shown, entrance 12 was most likely not the main entrance. The argument that the atrium was not fit for entertaining guests is drawn from the conclusion, that the house is a villa imitation, as opposed to vice versa. Besides, there are hardly any remains of decoration in the atrium, aside from the rare obsidian mirror. It is also puzzling how tablinum 4 could have been in active use if it was placed so far away from Zanker's main entrance (12). If entrance 11 functioned as the main entrance and if tablinum 4 was in use, it seems more likely that the public visitors were channelled through the shortest route to the tablinum
while the private guests were shown the shortest route to the private sphere, as demonstrated in chapter 3.

Despite the fact that some of the more intimate reception rooms of the house exude an atmosphere of wealth and luxury, the general impression is one of modesty. The panel paintings are relatively few (the ratio is 0.5 panel paintings per room) and with the exception of those in triclinium 17, of simple and mediocre quality. In addition, although the high ranking architectural dividing elements are found in abundance, they too are mainly of low standard, lacking in detail and three-dimensional depth. This becomes clear when the house is compared to the other houses, such as the Casa della Caccia antica, which is about the same size. Even in several of the smaller houses the quality of the wall decoration surpasses that of the Casa dell'Efebo, for example the Casa dell'Ara massima and the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto. The fairly modest decoration in the house of a well-to-do freedman is noticeable, because it is so contrary to the stereotype of Petronius' Trimalchio and the Casa di Vetti (6, 15, 1). Where self-aggrandizement was the norm in the two other cases, the hint towards trade in the Casa dell'Efebo is modest, only the attributes of Mercury and Bacchus seem to have connotations to his professional career as a wine merchant.

Several of the motifs are associated with Roman values. The Capitoline Triad is among the strongest signs of Augustan influence, and thus of romanitas. The wine merchant house owner seemed to honour the Roman gods involved in his trade, both Bacchus and Mercury have their attributes in the house. The wedding of Mars and Venus, or at least their secret rendezvous, in peristyle 23, is a combination of strength and beauty, of Rome (Mars) and Pompeii (Venus) and of war as a prerequisite for happiness. The moral lesson in cubiculum 12, that neither gods (Apollo) nor men (Narcissus) escape the entanglements of love (Venus fishing), is intriguing, even though the choice of the three popular motifs could be motivated by fashion. The Trojan theme of Helen and Menelaus can be seen as a sign of iustitia, and the painting of Perseus and Andromeda could be a sign of civilization defeating barbarism. Another wall painting type that often occurs in the Casa dell'Efebo is the still life panel. The rustic still lifes in fauces 1, tablinum 4, cubiculum 11, atrium A′ and cubiculum 3 help emphasize romanitas impression in the house.
The predominant background colour is white, which is at the very bottom of the colour scale in figure 6. As pointed out by Wallace-Hadrill (1994:167) it is unusual for a house so large to have such an extensive amount of white-ground wall paintings. The only room that is not white is the black triclinium 10. This may be due to function rather than extravagance, as black winter tricinia were common, and also appear in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento, the Casa dell'Orso ferito, the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali, the Casa del Focolare di ferro, the Casa di Giulio Polibio and the Casa della Venere in conchiglia. The modest decoration and the affinity with the Roman gods nail the owner's Roman colours to the mast. The pavements are in the least expensive material with only two exceptions.

In terms of layout the house follows the Vitruvian axis from atrium A’ to peristyle 23. It also has a large public sphere. Both atrium A’ and A” and their immediate conjoined rooms are public, including triclinium 10. The view from atrium A” is open to both sides, culminating at the north wall of atrium A’ and the south wall of peristyle 23. Even the grand triclinium 17 is accessible from atrium A”, if only just. Nevertheless, the rooms are positioned where they are as a result of the merging of several houses, but it would have been easy, should the owner desire it, to immure certain entrances and seal off certain rooms from public access. In conclusion, this house is open and public with inexpensive decor. It is therefore a good example of romanitas.

4.3 The Casa dell'Ara massima - abundance in small quarters

The extravagant decoration of the Casa dell'Ara massima is a strong argument for luxuria. The atrium is dominated by a large scenae frons painting, and there are seven other panel paintings, but only one portraying the punishment of a mortal. The dominant colours are modest, red and yellow with some black. However, the candelabra and architectural vista dividing elements are of high quality and detail. The lack of a definite private sphere was probably not a conscious choice on the part of the owner, but was most likely connected to lack of space. In addition the entrances to triclinium g and cubiculum h are so small that they could easily have been locked by a regular door (which corresponds well with the thresholds). Finds suggest that these rooms were used mainly for private activities. The floors were of the most inexpensive type, suggesting that the house owner did not have the resources to prioritize a more expensive floor type, at least for his private triclinium.
There are some clues to understanding the identity of the owner. He probably knew rudimentary Greek, he seems to have been married and may have had a daughter he valued highly. Culina \( k \) and latrine \( l \) seem to have been shared between the house and taberna \( m \). This thoroughfare could suggest that the taberna was important part of the house, perhaps because it was the main source of income. There are signs that the owner had increased his fortune (Stemmer 1992:59), and that he learned Greek to match his new position in society. He could have been part of what Bergmann calls "the Campanian nouveaux riches", whose "conspicuous consumption" probably compensated for humble beginnings (Bergmann 1994:255). This explains why the motifs seem as if copied from other, wealthier houses, such as the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, as this may very well have been the case. This fits well with the fears of Cicero (Wallace-Hadrill 1994:4-5) of a 'vicious circle' of luxuria, wherein those of lower birth imitate the decoration in the houses of the nobles, who must surpass their clients to retain balance. Whether the commissioner of the decor was a nouveau riche, a newly educated man or someone who wanted to copy his patron, it seems likely that it was a conscious choice. The Fourth Style decoration and Egyptianized marble table show that the owner certainly was up to date with the latest fashion. The table was most likely not connected with Isis-worship, as it has the head of Minerva watching over the sphinxes; here Rome was placed above Egypt, and the owner above suspicion of being an Isis-worshipper. The wall painting types, motifs and dividing elements rank at the highest, and the house seems to have been fully restored from the AD 62 earthquake. The strong comedy element in the decoration also suggests that the house was a source of otium or, as Zevi (1998:30) suggests "hedonism", despite the lack of a garden or a clearly defined private sphere. For such a small domus, an unusually large part went to expensive decoration, suggesting a mindset closely linked with luxuria.

4.4 The Casa degli Amorini dorati - Privacy preserved

According to PPM (V:714) the Casa degli Amorini dorati is one of the most notable examples of rich and pretentious well-to-do middle class houses in Pompeii. Such a description is certainly a strong argument for luxuria, and it is substantiated. The excessive amounts of stucco used for the cornices and ceilings, the mosaic floors, the two obsidian mirrors, the marble reliefs, and the four-sided peristyle surrounding a fountain with statuary and herms are all vital to understanding the owner's inclination towards Hellenistic elements and luxuria. Hales (2003:127) points out that the columns and the pediment over the entrance to triclinium \( O \)
mimic public architecture, which would usually be associated with romanitas. However, they are reminiscent of Hellenistic temples, which were again associated with eastern luxury.

The house has a large private domain, completely dominating the public sphere. The private sphere is almost sealed off from the entrance, creating a strong division between the public guests, such as liberti and clientes, and the private amici and familiares. The house is strikingly different from the Casa dell’Efebo, which was also created by merging smaller houses. The Casa dell’Efebo had a much more open layout. However, the use of floor types in the Casa degli Amorini dorati might suggest that communication between the two spheres was more frequent than the layout would imply. The public rooms (mainly A and B) had cocciopesto, which was continued in peristyle F. Tablinum E and exedra G, the two rooms connecting atrium B and peristyle F both had mosaic floors. Perhaps the flow of visitors was directed through the atrium to the peristyle in order to protect the floors of tablinum E and exedra G from wear and tear.

The red and yellow wall painting of the public sphere is changed into the black of the private sphere. Most of the rooms, especially given the large number of cubicula, were informal. The ten extant panel paintings, including the two unintelligible ones in tablinum E, are another argument for luxuria. Even if there were no panel paintings in triclinium O, the ratio of panel paintings per room is 0.86, the equivalent to one painting in every grand room except two. Several of the paintings would have been visible to public visitors, such as those in the atrium and the exedra. Cubiculum I stands out with regard to decor. The Fourth Style wallpaper patterned walls were uncommon in Pompeii and the surrounding area. Wallace-Hadrill (1994:23) points out the correlation between this wall painting form and the use of fabrics in the Hellenistic East that was strongly associated with luxury. The four gilded discs and the meticulously stuccoed cornice add to the luxurious feel of the room, as does the faux marble painting in the dado. The room was most likely the owner’s private bedchamber. Given its position in the centre of the house, it is unlikely that the room was never entered by amici, and the room was probably designed partially with this in mind.

An interesting tendency is that the most impressive panel paintings have modest dividing elements and vice versa. The colours add to this; the rooms with the most expensive background
colours, such as peristyle $F$, have few or no panel paintings. The dividing elements, if there are any, are not as extravagant as in other rooms, which, on the other hand, have less expensive background colours. Red and yellow are the colours most frequently used in rooms with panel paintings. In this manner the commissioner could contrast the different areas of the house through decoration.

There are signs that luxuria is at least partly diluted with romanitas. One possible iconological interpretation of the motifs in the house is that the owner wanted to be perceived as a dutiful paterfamilias, a good Roman virtue. In the public sphere, themes from the Trojan War dominated, reminding the viewer of virtus and iustitia. However, the large and dominating panel paintings obscure any such message. The Capitoline Triad statuettes in the lararium and the Augustan motif of the threshold between tablinum $E$ and atrium $B$ (PPM V:738), can also be connected to Augustan ideology and romanitas. In addition to the Capitoline Triad, ancestor busts were found in the peristyle (Frölich 1991:47), which suggests that the owner revered his family heritage. Such a demonstration of family heritage could be linked with romanitas. When compared with the signs of luxuria, however, even when taking into account that romanitas does not prohibit the house owner to live comfortably, it is clear that the owner is more closely associated with the luxuria-mentality.

Having analyzed the four houses, it is apparent that the holistic impression of the Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa delle Nozze d'argento is that of romanitas and that the Casa degli Amorini dorati and the Casa dell'Ara massima are mainly luxuria-inspired. The analysis also shows that both ideologies have a varied spectre of decor, and that most of this is expressed through common elements.

**4.5 Romanitas**

The analysis suggests that the Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa delle Nozze d'argento show the clearest signs of romanitas among the four main houses, even though they differ greatly both in layout and decoration. The variation between the two houses is significant because it shows that decoration inspired by romanitas could be expressed in various ways. It is also noteworthy that the two other houses, especially the Casa degli Amorini dorati, show signs of romanitas in decoration.
4.5.1. Layout and spheres

The Casa dell’Efebo and the Casa delle Nozze d’argento have very different layouts, but both had a clear line of sight from the atrium to the peristyle. This open layout suggests that the owner had nothing to hide, that he was a candid Roman citizen. The same plan occurred in a number of houses to a varying degree. The Casa della Caccia antica (plate 61), the Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, the Casa di Octavio Quartio, the Casa del Menandro, the Casa dell’Orso ferito, the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali and the Casa del Sacello Iliaco all have a clear, unbroken line of sight through the house. The Casa di Giulio Polibio and the Casa di Caecilius Iucundus, which have a layout of two almost independent houses combined at the peristyle, have both open and closed layouts. In both cases the entrance to the right, probably the main entrance, provides the open alternative. The Casa del Sacerdos Amandus and the Casa del Focolare di Ferro have an open layout from the atrium, somewhat like the Casa dell’Efebo. This suggests that the open alternative was not uncommon in Pompeii, both in the traditional sense as described by Vitruvius, and in the conglomerate sense where the entrance is perpendicular to the line of sight, such as in the Casa dell’Efebo.

In the most formal rooms, such as the atrium, the tablinum and rooms where the ancestors were worshipped, a house owner with romanitas sympathies would most likely choose a sombre decoration rather than extravaganza in order to appear more sincere. The Casa delle Nozze d’argento and the Casa dell’Efebo are good examples of this. The quality of the decoration is particularly varied in the formal areas. Most houses in the sample have a fairly modest decoration in the atrium, which befits with the ideology of romanitas. The Casa della Venere in conchiglia and the Casa della Caccia antica both have yellow panels with vignettes, probably portraying the four seasons, a common theme in Pompeian atria (PPM III:113). The Casa della Venere in conchiglia has a marble impluvium, but no tablinum, and the formal sphere is relatively sombre. The formal spheres in the Casa della Caccia antica and the Casa di M. Fabius Amandio are more complex, as they show signs of both ideologies. The atrium of the Casa della Caccia Antica is modestly decorated, but tablinum 10 is a strong contrast. It is blue with two panel paintings, a number of putti, several floating figures of goddesses, and architectural vistas. This contrast is also found in the small Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, which has an atrium wall decoration of sacred landscapes and vases in red panels with yellow frames, yet also a cinnabar dado and some blue background colour (plate 76) in addition to an implu-
vium decorated with bits of coloured marble. The atrium was the dominant room in the house, and emphasis on the public sphere is a good indication of *romanitas*. When compared with the formal and public sphere of the Casa degli Amorini dorati and the Casa dell'Ara massima, however, all the above mentioned houses have a much more modestly decorated formal sphere.

4.5.2. Interior decoration

Considering the dominance of Fourth Style wall painting, the presence of earlier styles, especially the First and Second Styles within the houses deserves specific attention. Both styles are assertive as the context suggests the ideological connection. In the Casa di Giulio Polibio, the First Style masonry imitation, with the painted false door, "recalled the architecture of the public world" (Leach 2004:24, 63). This was partly because it was directly in view from the outside, and partly because the entire room was painted in First Style. This message is similar to the one portrayed by the conservative Second Style decor in atrium of the Casa delle Nozze d’argento.

With regard to panel paintings, three factors are important in establishing *romanitas*: the number of panel paintings, their size and quality, and their iconological background. As previously stated, the motifs in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento and the Casa dell'Efebo are few and as a rule small of varying quality. Another house with modest panel paintings is the Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, which has no preserved panel paintings. *Romanitas* was strongly connected with morals and values. Wall paintings with connotations to Roman virtues are frequent among Pompeian houses, and this is also reflected in the sample. The motifs of Narcissus, Paris and Helen, Perseus rescuing Andromeda and of Diana and Acteon are the most common in the sample (five houses), followed by the punishment of Dirce (three houses) and Apollo and Daphne (three houses). The widespread distribution of these motifs suggests that they may have been chosen according to fashion, and this would seem particularly likely when they are found in a random context. In some cases, however, the positioning of the motifs seems more premeditated. The image of Narcissus in pseudo-tablinum *D* of the Casa dell'Ara Massima was directly in the line of sight from the entrance. The modest white background combined with the moral connotations of the motif may have been the result of a
conscious desire on the part of the owner to portray romanitas, at least to the uninvited observer. This is an example of the ambiguous nature of the Roman mindset.

Occasionally the mythological paintings in a room had a common moral theme. Cubiculum 11 in the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali was completely dedicated to hubris. This is illustrated by four mythological wall paintings: the punishment of Dirce (south wall), the fall of Icarus (east wall), episodes from the myth of Diana and Acteon (west wall) and the story of Eteocles and Polynices, the two brothers who ended up falling at each other's hands (north wall). The scenes and their moral connotations were probably easily recognizable to visitors entering the room, and although they were not mythologically connected, the habitual association was a common factor (Bergmann 1994:226). The holistic decorative theme in children's cubiculum 6 in the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto could, as Clarke (1991:159) points out, have been a moral lesson aimed at the children. The cubiculum had depictions of Narcissus (north wall, plate 65) and of Pero and her father, Micon, in the prison cell (south wall) together with the verse, "in sadness is the meeting of modesty and piety" (Clarke 1991:159). While the former image can be interpreted as a warning against hubris, the latter, in connection with the verse, conveyed a message of pietas and of "filial piety" (Clarke 2003:257). The pictures were accompanied by a medallion containing a young boy with the attributes of Mercury and another with a young girl on the west wall. This lesson in virtue could have been, as Clarke (2003:259) suggests, a continuation of the Augustan ideals.

The Trojan War, a recurring theme in panel paintings, had been associated with Rome since the fourth century BC, and was actively used by Caesar and Augustus (Erskine 2003:15-16). It is therefore a paradox that the theme occurs most frequently in the dominantly luxurious rooms of the sample. The Casa degli Amorini dorati, the Casa del Sacello Iliaco, the Casa del Menandro, the Casa del Criptoportico and the Casa di Octavio Quarto all have rooms with decoration concerning the Trojan War. In the latter two, they are found in friezes in key rooms, in oecus h in the Casa di Octavio Quarto and in the criptoporticus in the Casa del Criptoportico. The commissioner of the decor in the Casa di Octavio Quarto had these decorations especially made to fit the most important room in the house. In addition the first climax of the scene, that of the apotheosis of Hercules, is positioned to greet the honoured guest (Clarke 1991:201-206). The Casa del Criptoportico has a narrative frieze in the crip-
toporticus with scenes from the Iliad book I, VI, XVII XVIII and XXI, as well as a fragment showing Aeneas' flight from Troy. This theme has a direct connection to Rome and Augustus, and thereby romanitas. It also provides a connection to Greece, by the use of friezes reminiscent of Greek temples and Greek nametags for the most important heroes. While all of these motifs have a strong connection with Rome and Roman values, their implementation, in numerous, large and high quality panel paintings, is more closely linked with luxuria. This illustrates a problem with assessing romanitas: extravagant depictions of modesty or vice versa.

The depiction of gods and their attributes are examples of the 'givens' of both family and society. Illustrations of gods appear either singularly, in established pairs (Mars and Venus, the Capitoline Triad) or in large groups. An example of a large group is found in the Casa dei Pittori, on the walls of triclinium 4. No less than five gods were represented in the form of attributes: Apollo's griffin and lyre (plate 67) and Hercules' boar, club and lion skin (plate 68) on the south wall, Minerva's owl, shield and helmet on the north wall and Mars' dog, helmet and javelin and Diana's deer on the east wall. At first sight, there are few connections between the individual gods. However, if seen in context with the owner's Hercules-lararium it becomes clear that Hercules could be the uniting theme. All the gods are connected with him; Diana and the Hind to his Fourth Labour, Mars had several conflicts with him; Apollo was often directly or indirectly connected with his adventures and Minerva was his protectress. The gods could also have had a political function. Mars was intertwined with the history of Rome, Minerva was part of the Capitoline Triad, Apollo was associated with Augustus, and Hercules represented virtus. Diana was associated with chastity, and thereby with Augustan moral. She was also a protector of slaves and lower class citizens, which might fit well with the standing of the owner of the Casa dei Pittori.

The Apollonic emperor-worship appears in various forms throughout Pompeii. The Casa I 7, 19 illustrates this very well. The birds in cubiculum a are associated with Apollo and Horus (PPM: I, 754), both sun gods, and as such associated with the emperor. The griffin, another symbol of Apollo, appears in a number of rooms in the house. A novel symbol of the emperor and of Apollo is found in cubiculum f, where Apollo's muses of the past (history) and of the future (astrology) are present, perhaps an allusion to the all-powerful emperor. In exedra e
there are other examples of Augustan-Apollonic iconography, such as flower vases, urns and Delphic tripods (plate 74).

4.5.3. Dividing elements

Quality is an important aspect in all interior decoration, but no other category shows the difference between well and poorly done craftsmanship better than the dividing elements. A well-shaped candelabra with ivy and masks (e.g. the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto) should be considered to be better than a low quality architectural vista (e.g. the Casa dell'Efebo). In the case of the Casa dell'Efebo, the architectural vistas are dominant, but they are low in quality. Quality is also important considering that very few of the houses in this study have simple dividing lines, the best examples being the Casa del Sacerdos Amandus and Casa I 7, 19. When taking the quality of the dividing lines into consideration, the Casa dell'Efebo has much less extravagant decoration than all of the other houses, save the two above mentioned and the Casa del Principe di Napoli.

4.5.4. Colours

The background colours of the walls' middle zone are a strong and easily noticeable factor in the wall decoration, and it is the only factor of the figures 4, 5, and 6 which has been put into a hierarchy by contemporary sources. White is generally considered inexpensive, which, as stated earlier, is a strong argument for modesty in the Casa dell'Efebo. White, red, yellow or the combination of them, were popular and inexpensive background. In the sample they are found in eleven rooms in the Casa del Menandro, eight rooms in the Casa di Giulio Polibio (not including those with coarse plaster), six rooms in the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto and five rooms in the Casa di Octavio Quarto. The Casa della Venere in conchiglia is predominantly yellow, while yellow dominates four rooms in the Casa della Caccia antica, three of the four well preserved rooms in the Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, two rooms in the Casa I 11, 17, and one room each in the Casa del Criptoportico, the Casa del Sacello Iliaco and the Casa dei Pittori. This does not include rooms where the three inexpensive colours are combined with expensive colours. This example illustrates that modest background colours occurred in a large number of houses, and that romanitas, at least moderation, could well have been expressed through conscious choice of colours.
4.5.5. Lararia

As mentioned in chapter 2, a secluded lararium could suggest *romanitas*. It is both a given signifying that it is part of the heritage of the ethnic culture, and etiquette emblemic style a sign of identification with a common culture. There are a number of lararia in the sample that fit the secluded lararium type. These are found in cubiculum 13 in Casa dei Pittori, service courtyard N in the Casa di Giulio Polibio; culina s in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento, room 45 and culina 52 of the Casa del Menandro, culina 8 of the Casa I 11, 17; atrium A’ and corridor 18 in the Casa dell'Efebo; culina g in the Principe di Napoli and culina 15 in the Casa di Apollo. Two lararia are unusual in this context, the one in room j in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento and the one in peristyle 23 in Casa dell'Efebo. Neither was immediately visible to the visitors of the house. Room j was only accessible via the isolated garden 5 and the extravagant aedicula-lararium in peristyle 23 was concealed behind the castellum aquae and would not have been immediately visible to anyone taking the shortest route to the summer triclinium.

4.6 Luxuria

As was the case with the Casa delle Nozze d'argento and the Casa dell'Efebo, the two other main houses, the Casa degli Amorini dorati and the Casa dell'Ara massima, vary greatly in decoration and layout. The analysis of the houses illustrates that *luxuria* is as varied as *romanitas*, and at times at least as contradictory. As previously stated, *luxuria* is associated with expensive decor. The quality of the decoration, signs of Hellenizing elements and of personal grandeur are equally significant in identifying *luxuria* in decoration. Like *romanitas*, *luxuria* does not exclude traces of the other ideology, such as moral iconology or use of inexpensive colours. The realization of *luxuria* in the other houses in the sample will help to create a practical definition of the term.

4.6.1. Layout and spheres

The Casa dell'Ara massima and the Casa degli Amorini dorati differ greatly in layout and size. The small-sized Casa dell'Ara massima is dominated by the atrium, which takes up a third of the house, excluding the taberna. On the other hand, the triclinium is uncharacteristically closed off from the atrium. The Casa degli Amorini dorati is strongly dominated by the
private sphere, which is almost detached from the public sector. The closed and private layout occurs in other houses as well. The Casa I 7, 19, the Casa del Focolare di ferro and the Casa di Apollo are closed, and the private sphere is only partly visible from the atrium in the Casa del Criptoportico, the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto and to a larger degree in the Casa della Venere in conchiglia and the Casa del Principe di Napoli. The Casa I 11, 17 has a manipulated axis from the outside which leads the view directly to oecus 4, the most decorated room in the house.

The dominating atrium and the tablinum in the Casa dell'Ara massima give the public sphere a protruding position, to an even larger degree than in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento. In this respect it is more romanitas-oriented. However, the decoration of the formal sphere, which coincides with the public sphere, is executed with a strong presence of luxuria. This is also the case with the Casa degli Amorini dorati. The private sphere dominates the house; the 339 m² peristyle is more than seven times larger than the atrium, and even larger than the peristyle in the Casa delle Nozze d’argento. Yet the formal and public atrium and tablinum had five panel paintings (including two in the tablinum no longer legible) and one in exedra G clearly visible from the atrium. With the exception of the Casa dell’Ara massima, none of the houses (eleven in total) with preserved atrium decoration in this study had panel paintings in the atrium, not even the otherwise elaborate Casa del Menandro and the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto. Extravaganza in a public and formal room was unusual, and could be an argument for luxuria.

4.6.2. Wall paintings and motifs

When taking into account the size of the houses in the sample, the Casa dell'Ara massima has the highest number of panel paintings per square metre. The Casa degli Amorini dorati has six paintings in or clearly visible from the atrium (seven, if we include the painting of Leda and the Swan in cubiculum 2), but relatively few in the private sphere. The overall ratio is roughly 0.86 paintings per room, in comparison to the abundantly decorated Casa del Menandro with a ratio of 0.95, with 26 panel paintings in 27 grand rooms. Iconologically, five of the remaining panel paintings and probably two others in tablinum E of the Casa degli Amorini dorati depict the Trojan War, as discussed above. The private sphere was visibly more Hellenistic.
In the Casa dell'Ara massima, scenes from Greek mythology not directly connected with Rome also dominate. The motifs are light-hearted, except for the widely popular theme of Narcissus. The scene with Hercules and Admetus could be associated with Euripides' play "Alcestis", which fits well with the theatrical theme of the large scena frons. The muses in triclinium *G* are a third hint towards a theatrical decoration. There are strong parallels with the Casa della Caccia antica, which also has only one painting showing the punishing of a mortal (Allison 2002:84), that of Diana and Acteon. The "serious" motifs of Diana and Acteon and Narcissus were so popular in Pompeii that they might have been chosen on account of fashion. The other themes are also light-hearted, including the motif of Daedalus and Pasiphae, which probably had more humorous than moral connotations.

Impressive scena frons-paintings occur in Ala 13 in the Casa della Caccia antica, cubiculum 25 of the Casa di Apollo and in the Casa del Criptoprtico, all of which have several other luxurious traits. Ling (1995:77) argues that the scena frons decor must not be seen as imitations of the theatre stage, partly because the columns are unrealistically thin. This is an argument worthy of Vitruvius: "for pictures cannot be approved which do not resemble reality" (*De Arch.* 7, 5, 3-4). However, frail columns were the norm in architectural vistas from the Third Style onwards, and the scena frons compositions were probably symbolic rather than realistic depictions of the Roman theatre stage. The theatrical theme, also found in the peristyle of the Casa degli Amorini dorati, focuses on entertainment rather than duties. This is another indication of *luxuria*.

### 4.6.3. Dividing elements

While the dividing elements in the Casa degli Amorini dorati vary from the simple to the advanced, the most common ones are architectural vistas. The dividing elements in the Casa dell'Ara massima consist solely of architectural vistas and candelabra, and both houses score high in figure 5.

The two houses are easily matched by a number of the other houses. The Casa del Menandro, the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, the Casa della Caccia antica, the Casa dell'Orso ferito, the Casa di Giulio Polibio, the Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, the Casa di Octavio Quartio and the Casa della Venere in conchiglia are all dominated by dividing elements in the form of cande-
labra, columns and architectural vistas in equal or better quality. In some houses, the dividing elements are more complex than the panel paintings. In ala 4 of the Casa del Menandro, some of the elaborate divisions include complex mythological subjects, while the panels are monochrome with simple vignettes. Room f in the Casa di Octavio Quartio has white panels with vignettes, while the dividing lines, in the form of architectonic vistas populated with figures, resemble the scaenae frons (plate 64). In oecus h of the same house faux marble is used as a sort of dividing line, albeit a horizontal one.

4.6.4. Colours
None of the four main houses were dominated by expensive colours. The Casa dell'Ara massima is mainly red and yellow, and the Casa dell'Efebo is almost entirely white, with one black room. However, black, which dominates the Casa delle Nozze d'Argento and the peristyle of the Casa degli Amorini dorati, is not such an extravagant colour as blue, green or cinnabar. These colours only appear occasionally in the four houses, but they are found in larger quantities elsewhere. In the Casa del Menandro oecus 11 and caldarium 48 is entirely green, and tablinum 10 in the Casa della Caccia antica and room 11 in the Casa della Venere in conchiglia are both predominantly blue (plates 62, 73). Blue is also used in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento, the Casa di Apollo, the Casa del Sacello Iliaco and the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali. Triclinium c in the Casa del Sacello Iliaco is completely painted in cinnabar. Cinnabar is also found in the dado zone in a number of houses, but rarely in the main zone. Compared to these colours, black is more common, and it also dominates rooms in the Casa dell'Orso ferito, the Casa di Giulio Polibio, the Casa I 7, 19, the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali and the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto.

4.6.5. Floors
While it is difficult to link floor types directly to romanitas and luxuria, there are two types that signal the status emblemic style and thereby luxuria: polychrome pictorial mosaics and opus sectile. Mosaics were common in Pompeian houses, but pictorial mosaics were even more rare. The Casa del Menandro has three rooms with colourful pictorial mosaics: oecus 11 has a Nilotic motif with pygmies and ducks (plate 59); the mosaic emblema in cubiculum 21 depicts a satyr and maenad and caldarium 48 has a mosaic portraying marine animals and ithyphallic figures. In addition to the Casa dell'Efebo, the Casa di Apollo had two rooms with
opus sectile, oecus 18 and room 22. Opus sectile emblemata were found in triclinium o of the Casa di Caecilius Iucundus, in room l of the Casa di Fabius Amandio, and in triclinium c, cubiculum d, cubiculum h and tablinum k in the Casa dell'Orso ferito. The presence of four rooms with marble emblemata in addition to extensive mosaic emblemata inside such a small house is unusual (Ehrhardt 1988:75). In comparison, the larger Casa dell'Ara massima has no extravagant flooring, and the Casa del Principe di Napoli only has one opus sectile emblema, in triclinium k.

4.6.6. Artefacts and lararia

While artefacts are revealing about the day-to-day activities, they are more easily replaceable than wall paintings and mosaics. As mentioned above, Zanker (2003:266) argues that the purchase of items with political motifs must have been based on a conscious decision. Allison (2004:139) classifies objects for the purpose of display or prestige as luxurious artefacts. Large-scale sculpture is particularly connected with prestige display. Artefacts are useful in strengthening or weakening signals that other types of decoration convey; they are an integral part of the holistic context. The need to see the artefacts in the wider context of the house is illustrated with two examples:

The first example concerns a marble table support in the Casa del Principe di Napoli. This support in the form of Silenus cradling the infant Bacchus was discovered in garden n (Strocka 1984:31, figures 130-131). Bacchus reoccurs throughout the house for example in the large-scale wall painting in exedra m, opposite Venus. Both of these gods represent pleasure as opposed to the gods associated with duties, such as Apollo and the Capitoline Triad. The panel painting in triclinium k of Perseus holding the head of Medusa so that Andromeda can see her reflection in the water seems to mimic the Bacchic ritual in the Villa dei Misteri involving Silenus and a mask reflected in a bowl of water. All of these signs might suggest villa imitation. The second example considers erotic motifs. Zanker (1990:278) polarizes Augustan symbols as opposed to chariot races and erotic scenes, which are considered to be manifestations of luxuria. He also argues (Zanker 1990:272-73) that silverware decoration was used actively by the owner to address his position in social gatherings, for example when the cups were passed around in toasts to the emperor. The large collection of silverware in the Casa del Menandro, in all 112 pieces, has an abundance of both erotic scenes (Painter
2001:56-58, plate 5 and 6) and chariot races (Painter 2001:62-63, plate 11 and 12), and these are strong indications of luxuria. While the motif is erotic, it could also be valued iconographically, as a depiction of Venus and Mars, which could be considered romanitas. However, when seen in context with the chariot race cup and the generally abundant decoration in the Casa del Menandro, it is unlikely that the cup is meant to honour the need of Rome for a happy life.

The lararia in the sample which were clearly visible to guests are located in atrium B of the Casa dell'Ara massima, peristyle F of the Casa degli Amorini dorati, by the entrance of the Casa dei Pittori, in atrium b of the Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus (plate 77), in atrium b of the Casa del Sacello Iliaco, in peristyle 12 of the Casa del Criptoportico (plate 69) and in atrium b and exedra 25 in the Casa del Menandro. The last mentioned lararium took the form of marbled niche with plaster casts of wooden figures, and was installed during the Fourth Style period (Ling 1997:61, 90). This corroborates the theory that the positioning of lararia in the public sphere was of newer date. The Hercules lararium attached to the Casa dei Pittori (PPM II:795), is unique in this sample because it is placed outside the entrance, but so close to the door that it was probably not a street altar.

4.6.7. Gardens and water features

Most of the houses in this sample had some sort of planted garden, the exception being the Casa dell'Ara massima, which had neither a planted garden nor any such painted motifs. This is unusual, as even the smaller houses, such as the Casa del Sacerdos Amandus, the Casa del Focolare di ferro, the Casa del Principe di Napoli and the Casa dei Pittori all had gardens. The Casa I 11, 17, the smallest house in the sample, had no planted garden, but compensated this with a small courtyard.

In some instances painted representations were used in lieu of real gardens, or more often as an optical expansion of the garden space (Jashemski 1979:55-56; Ling 1991:152). Of the four main houses, both the Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa delle Nozze d'argento had garden paintings, along with ten other houses in the sample (the Casa di Apollo, the Casa I 7, 19, the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, the Casa dell'Orso ferito, the Casa della Venere in conchiglia, the Casa dei Cubicoli floreali, the Casa del Menandro, the Casa di Giulio Polibio, the Casa di M.
Fabius Amandio and the Casa dei Pittori. The small garden areas of the Casa di Fabius Amandio and the Casa dell’Orso ferito were amplified in this way. Behind the planted garden in peristyle 8 of the Casa della Venere in conchiglia the wall is covered with a garden painting portraying plants, birds, fountains, a statue of Mars, and Venus in a shell (plate 72) Other houses had a combination of gardens and garden paintings. The Casa dei Cubicoli floreali had two rooms decorated entirely with garden paintings. Cubiculum 8 (plate 60) incorporated a garden with plants and birds on light-blue background, with depictions of Apis, pharaonic statues and marble reliefs with Dionysian references (Ling 1991:151). The gardens of the Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa della Caccia antica both had Egyptianizing subject matter, in the form of pygmy-scenes. This illustrates the liminal and sometimes unrealistic nature of the garden.

Paradisi were another common motif in Pompeian gardens, and the subject was present in eight houses (the Casa di Octavio Quartio, the Casa I 7, 19, the Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, the Casa della Caccia antica, the Casa dell'Efebo, the Casa dell'Orso ferito, the Casa dei Pittori and the Casa di Caecilius Iucundus). The eastern and exotic connection emphasizes the link with luxuria.

The peristyle garden was the most common type of garden in the sample. However, only the Casa del Menandro, the Casa delle Nozze d'argento and the Casa degli Amorini dorati had four-sided peristyles, while the rest of the houses had pseudo-peristyles with varying numbers of columns and colonnades. In some cases the pseudo-peristyles were manipulated to look like a complete peristyle by means of positioning the columns in the axial view from the entrance. The Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto and the Casa dei Pittori are good examples of this (plates 71, 75). The peristyle of the casa di M. Lucretius Fronto has a single collonade, which is positioned along the line of sight. The Casa dei Pittori has a two-colonnated peristyle in direct view from the entrance, appearing as part of a full peristyle. The peristyle gardens were probably inspired by the palaces of Hellenistic kings (Hales 2003:99), and this gave them an even stronger connection to luxuria.

The introduction of the aqueduct to Pompeii during the reign of Augustus led to a comprehensive change in the layout and style of the gardens (Hodge 2002:306; Leach 2004:127-28).
Prior to this they had been dominated by trees, but now there was an increase in the use of flowers and plants, as well as fountains and pools (Hodge 2002:306; Jashemski 1979:32-33). The Casa dell'Efebo and the Casa degli Amorini dorati had both, and there was most likely a fountain in peristyle of the Casa delle Nozze d'argento. The Casa dell'Orso ferito had an elaborate mosaic fountain with shells and marine motifs in garden, which was visible from the entrance (plate 66). Garden of the Casa di Octavio Quartio (plate 63) had the most elaborate water features in the sample. The garden is remarkably large when seen in comparison with the house itself, a typical small atrium house. The garden is dominated by two water channels, or Euripi, one of them running the whole length of the garden, the other along the back of the house to biclinium. An aedicula-fountain with steps formed the centre of the garden, while other fountains and pergolas were found in connection with the longer channel (Jashemski 1979:45-47; Zanker 2001:147-154).

Private baths were another luxury commodity, which was introduced with the aqueduct. The running of baths required expensive resources, and in addition to the excessive amounts of water (Hodge 2002:329), fuel for the hypocaust was also needed. Therefore, only the wealthiest houses had baths. The Casa delle Nozze d'argento, the Casa del Criptoportico and the Casa del Menandro were the only houses in the sample with private baths. The bath complex in the Casa del Criptoportico is decorated in the Second Style, and frigidarium has a particularly fine example of a scena populated with actors (plate 70). The bath in the Casa del Menandro (rooms 43-48) even has its own atrium (46), and the complex is decorated throughout with elegant paintings in the Second and Fourth Styles of competing athletes and bathing women.

4.7 Summary

This analysis has shown that the realization of romanitas and luxuria in architecture and decoration is neither absolute, nor static. The relative increase in luxurious items, such as gardens and expensive decoration in small houses, made the demand to rise above the rest higher. Stucco was commonplace, and low quality architectural vistas were not unusual. This development suggests that decorative manifestation of luxuria was widespread. The analysis confirms this, but romanitas was equally prevalent, both as an objection to the excesses and as a reminder of the virtues connected with being Roman. Whether the traces of these mentalities
were found in isolation or were holistic impressions, whether they were extravagant embellishments or panel paintings addressing pietas, they appear in all houses of the sample.

The two conceptions were manifested in various ways, through layout, motifs, colours, dividing elements, quality, gardens, floors, artefacts, and stucco, representing the duties and modesty of *romanitas* or the Hellenistic otium associated with *luxuria*. This analysis has illustrated that the two ideologies were not mutually exclusive, but that they could co-exist either in equal measure or, as in the case of the four houses, with one of the ideologies clearly more dominant than the other.
5. Concluding remarks

The analysis of the 23 houses has revealed a diverse and complex combination of decoration and architecture. Despite their varied nature all the houses exhibit elements of romanitas or luxuria, both individually and in a holistic context. In the introductory chapter four central issues were presented. On the basis of the analysis I intend to examine these factors by focussing on the four main houses.

The study has demonstrated that in many cases the decorative messages in the houses are synchronized with the holistic impression of romanitas and luxuria. The Casa delle Nozze d'argento was austere, dignified and conservative; the Casa dell'Efebo had a minimalist and patriotic style; the Casa dell'Ara massima expressed light-hearted and fashionable elegance and the Casa degli Amorini dorati had a lavish Hellenized otium sphere.

None of the four houses is an exclusive projection of either ideology. They have all shown a conflicting dichotomy where one of the ideological manifestations took precedence over the other. The Casa delle Nozze d'argento portrayed a very strong image of romanitas to the outside viewer, but the impressive garden and tetrastyle oecus presented another appearance to the more intimate guest. Triclinium 17 and garden 23 of the Casa dell'Efebo both had a luxurious atmosphere, but holistically the house presented an impression of romanitas. The Casa dell'Ara massima had strong ties to luxuria, but lacked the private sphere for enjoying otium. The Casa degli Amorini dorati had a marked private sphere, but the public domain conveyed strong moral messages in decoration.

These dichotomies follow the public or formal spheres. The luxurious decoration in the Casa delle Nozze d'argento follows the private, and even intimate, sphere. The luxury in the Casa dell'Efebo was not hidden, but was in the public guest's dead sphere, as well as in the private sphere. The two luxuria-dominated houses seem to invert the division of the romanitas houses. The Casa dell'Ara massima had an extravagantly decorated atrium, but a simpler triclinium and cubiculum. The Casa degli Amorini dorati had a small public sphere, but with a very high den-
ality of large panel paintings. In the last two houses, it would seem as if the intent was to impress the public visitors even more than the intimate guests. Such a juxtaposition of seemingly contradictory impressions need not have been problematic to the Roman mindset.

Fashion was not the main reason for choice of decor in the four houses. The owners' personal taste and ideological conviction must have been at least as important. The Casa delle Nozze d'argento had conservative Second Style wall painting and no panel pictures in the public sphere. The Casa dell'Efebo had extensive low quality white-ground wall painting. Luxuria was strongly connected with fashion, but explaining the scaenae frons of the Casa dell'Ara massima and the Rhodian peristyle with the stuccoed pediment in the Casa degli Amorini dorati purely as fashion, would imply that most houses in Pompeii were hopelessly unfashionable.

As illustrated in the study the four houses were not unique; the 19 other houses also show strong signs of luxuria and romanitas. The variations in size, forms of decor, motifs and architectural design create difficulties in trying to find a single characteristic that functioned as a united expression of either ideology. Wall decoration, layout, floors and artefacts were not so dominating that either of them individually could decide the allegiance of the house owner. The commissioner could create different displays for different visitors, presenting romanitas to some and luxuria to others. When seen in relation to each other, the dominating mentality of the owner becomes clearer. It is therefore important that a conclusive study takes a holistic approach to the house contrary to the methods of Hales and Zanker, who focus on isolated and atomistic examples.

This demonstrates the problem with the use of romanitas and luxuria as analytical tools. Their usefulness is limited to the standard of preservation. Because expressions of both ideologies are often found within the same house it can be difficult to decide which was the most dominating in a less well-preserved house. Therefore the analytical value of romanitas and luxuria is apparent only in houses that are well enough preserved to create a holistic impression.
The ideology of *romanitas* was in its last phase at the time of the eruption. It has been preserved for posterity largely because of the unique conservation of Pompeii. However, Pompeii was located in the political periphery and was strongly influenced by Rome. There is reason to believe that the rest of the Roman world was equally affected by *romanitas* and *luxuria*, although this is more difficult to detect because the mentality of *romanitas* waned shortly after the eruption. The public sphere lost ground to the private not long after the interment of the city, rendering the atrium almost void of function. Luxurious items such as expensive colours and cut marble were produced more efficiently, which lead to a rapid fall in price. In a sense, the end of *romanitas* marked the beginning of the long decline of Roman society. The Romans would soon grow accustomed to luxury far beyond what their expectancies had been some decades earlier. Luxury became increasingly commonplace, and an assessment of the buildings of the Late Empire within this dichotomy would prove difficult. An analysis of the manifestations of *romanitas* and *luxuria* is therefore limited in use both with regard to time and material.
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Appendix 1: Maps of Pompeii and the Environment

Figure 7: Map of the distribution of the houses in the sample

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<th>B = Casa del Sacello Ili-aco (I 6, 4)</th>
<th>C = Casa di M. Fabius Amandio (I 7, 2-3)</th>
<th>D = Casa del Sacerdos Amandus (I 7, 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E = Casa dell’Efebo ((I 7, 10-12)</td>
<td>F = Casa I 7, 19</td>
<td>G = Casa dei Cubicoli floreali (I 9, 5)</td>
<td>H = Casa del Menandro (I 10, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I = Casa I 11, 17</td>
<td>J = Casa dei Pittori (I 12, 11)</td>
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<td>L = Casa della Venere in Conchiglia (II 3, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus (V 1, 26)</td>
<td>N = Casa delle Nozze d’argento (V 2,1)</td>
<td>O = Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto (V 4, a)</td>
<td>P = Casa di Apollo (VI 7, 23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q = Casa del Focolare di ferro (VI 15, 6)</td>
<td>R = Casa di Principe di Napoli (VI 15, 7-8)</td>
<td>S = Casa degli Amorini dorati (VI 16, 7)</td>
<td>T = Casa dell’Ara massima (VI 16, 15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U = Casa dell’Orso ferito (VII 2, 44-46)</td>
<td>V = Casa della Caccia antica (VII 4, 48)</td>
<td>W = Casa di Giulio Polibio (IX 13, 1-3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8: Pompeii and the surrounding area
Appendix 2: Ground plans of the Houses

All the ground plans are taken from *Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici*, which does not operate with a scale for their ground plans (however it is approximately 1:700). For most of the houses in the sample, the scale given will be a ratio to the PPM original ground plan before resizing it. Some houses appear in *Häuser in Pompeji*, which has a scale to their ground plans, and they will be more accurately described.

*Casa delle Nozze d’argent* (V 2,i) Scale 1:535
Casa dell’Efebo (I 7, 10-12). Scale 1:1.4 of the PPM original

Casa dell’Ara massima (VI 16, 15-17). Scale 1:330
Casa degli Amorini dorati (VI 16, 7) Scale 1:350
Casa del Criptoportico (I 6, 2). The same size as the original from PPM.

Casa del Sacello Iliaco (I 6, 4). Scale 1:1.5 of the PPM original
Casa di M. Fabius Amandio (I 7, 2-3). Scale 1:2 of the PPM original.

Casa del Sacerdos Amandus (I 7 7). Scale 1:1.9 of the PPM original.
**Casa I 7, 19.** Scale 1:1.4 of the PPM original

**Casa dei Cubicoli Floreali** (I 9,5). Scale 1:1.6 of the PPM original.
**Casa del Menandro** (I 10, 4). Scale 1:1.25 of the PPM original.

**Casa I 11, 17.** Scale 1:2.5 of the PPM original.
Casa dei Pittori (I 12, 11). Scale 1:1.75 of the PPM original.

Casa di Octavio Quartio (II 2,2). Scale 1:0.84 of the PPM original.
Casa delle Venere in Conchiglia (II 3,3). Scale 1:1.5 of the PPM original.

Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus (V 1, 23-26). Scale 1:1.12 of the PPM original.
Casa di L. Lucretius Fronto (V 4, a). Scale 1:1.34 of the PPM original.

Casa di Apollo (VI 7, 23) Scale 1:1.25 of the PPM original.
Casa del Focolare di ferro (VI, 15, 6). Scale 1:1.7 of the PPM original.

Casa del Principe di Napoli (VI 15, 7-8). Scale 1:340.
**Casa dell’Orso ferito** (VII 2, 44-46). Scale 1:350

**Casa della Caccia antica** (VII 4, 48). Scale 1:385.
**Casa di Giulio Polibio** (IX 13, 1-3). Scale equal to the PPM original.
Appendix 3. Description of the 19 remaining houses


2. **The Casa del Sacello Iliaco** (I 6, 4) c. 400 m², two floors. 17 rooms, open layout with unbroken axis. Fourth Style dominant (six rooms), also Second Style (two rooms). Large wall painting with elephants and two indiscernable persons. Stuccoed sacellum dedicated to Achilles. (PPM I:280-329)

3. **The Casa di Fabius Amandio** (I 7, 2-3) c.125 m², one floor. 8 rooms. Open layout with view and fauces-atrium-pseudo-peristyle axis. Fourth Style decoration of architecture and garden paintings. Red and yellow dominant, some blue. One mosaic floor and traces of opus sectile. (PPM I:553-575)

4. **The Casa del Sacerdos Amandus** (I 7, 7) c. 230 m². Eleven rooms. Semi-open layout (open from atrium) via two-colonnaded peristyle m to garden n. Third Style dominant in six rooms. Varied mythological motifs in two rooms. Black and red, with some yellow dominate the house. Two mosaic floors, marble emblema in triclinium b. Statue of Isis found in situ. (PPM I:586-618)


6. **The Casa dei Cubicoli floreali** (I 9, 5) c. 425 m². 16 rooms. Very open layout reminiscent of that in the Casa dell Sacello Iliaco. Third Style dominates, garden paintings with Egyptian deities in two rooms. Black, green and blue are dominating background colours.
Mosaic in six rooms, two mythologicaals, three with emblema, one of marble. (PPM II:1-137)

7. **The Casa del Menandro** (I 10, 4) c. 1700 m², two floors. 53 rooms, 27 of which were meant for family or guests. Includes stable and bath complex. Open layout, with Vitruvian axis. Four-sided peristyle. Second, Third and Fourth Styles represented, Fourth Style dominates. Several artefacts found, including extensive silverware. (PPM II:240-397)

8. **The Casa** (I 11, 17) c. 140m², two floors. 8 rooms. Semi-open layout, guided from the fauces, open from vestibule, non-impluviate atrium. Fourth Style dominant. Red and yellow are the most common background colours. Poorly preserved except oecus 4. Lararium by front door and in culina 8. (PPM II:666-683)

9. **The Casa dei Pittori** (I 12, 11) c. 250m². 13 rooms. Closed layout with open view between the two-collonaded peristyle and the non-impluviate atrium. Second and Fourth Style dominate, with vignettes of gods and one mythological panel painting. Red, black and yellow are the most frequent background colours. (PPM II:794-830)

10. **The Casa di Octavio Quartio** (II 2, 2) 17 rooms. Open axis. Grand entrance. Fourth Style with many mythological panel paintings, especially the double frieze of Hercules and the Iliad in oecus h. 2/3 of the house consists of the very large garden. Elaborate marble impluvium. Egyptian terracotta statuettes, Mini-Nilus and a painting of an Isis-priest signal Egyptian connotations, not unusual for houses with villa imitations. Red and white dominate with some black and white. (PPM III:42-108)

11. **The Casa della Venere in conchiglia** (II 3, 3). c. 300m². 18 rooms. Semi-closed axis. No tablinum, but one of the largest triclinia in Pompeii (the wall decoration is not preserved).Fourth Style throughout the house. Mythological panel paintings include a large painting of Venus in a shell and a garden painting. Dominating colours include yellow and white, with blue and cinnabar dominating cubiculum 11. Some elegant animal statuary. Opus sectile impluvium. (PPM III:112-172)

12. **The Casa di L. Caecilius Iucondus** (V 1, 23, 26) Twin domus with 26 as main entrance. 35 rooms. Semi-open view. Fauces floor has mosaic motif of a sleeping dog. Aedicula-
lararium with marble relief of the earthquake of AD 62 in the atrium. Third and Fourth Style dominate. Mythological depictions with some erotic scenes, and Bacchic allusions. Opus sectile in triclinium. (PPM III:574-620)

13. The Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto (V 4, a) c. 460m². 19 rooms. Two floors. Third style dominates. Several high quality mythological panel paintings, including Bacchic motifs. Also hunting scenes. Dominating colours are black, yellow and red. Finds include marble table with lion’s feet. (PPM III 966-1029)

14. The Casa di Apollo (VI 7, 23) c. 300m². 27 rooms. Semi-open layout with sight line through atrium via tablinum to courtyard 18, yet peristyle 24 completely hidden from view. Two rooms with simple quadratic opus sectile flooring. Fourth Style painting. Cubiculum 25 with elaborate mosaic wall decoration outside and scanae frons with Apollo inside. Finds include a Diana statue. (PPM IV:470-524)

15. The Casa del Focolare di Ferro (VI 15) 6. c. 240m². 13 rooms. Closed layout, view from tetrastyle atrium to tablinum. Very little decoration preserved. Fourth style triclinium l with black walls and a mythological panel painting, probably of Atalanta and Meleager. (PPM V:622-646)

16. The Casa del Principe di Napoli (VI 15, 7.8) c.240 m², two floors, 12 rooms. Semi-closed layout, single-colonnaded peristyle (n) visible from atrium d. The Fourth Style with simple architectural vistas throughout the house. Mythological panels and life size paintings of Venus and Bacchus in exedra m. White dominated the house. Opus sectile emblema in triclinium k. Finds include marble table with sphinxes. (PPM V:647-649)

17. The Casa dell’Orso ferito (VII 2, 44-46), 165 m², two floors, 12 rooms. Very open layout with an elaborate mosaic fountain in the zenith. The fountain has depictions of Venus, Neptune and ducks. Extravagant flooring, with elaborate mosaic (including the wounded bear at the entrance) and four opus sectile floors. Only two intact mythological paintings, of Narcissus and Danae with Perseus. Yellow and black Fourth Style dominate the house. (PPM VI:742-785)
18. **The Casa della Caccia antica** (VII 4, 48) c. 600 m², two floors. 18 rooms. Open layout. Red, white, and yellow dominate the walls. One blue room. Extravagant paintings with large hunting scenes, bucolic landscapes or advanced *scaenae* frons. The two-colonnaded peristyle is has a cistern. (PPM VII:6-43)

19. **The Casa di Giulio Polibio** (IX 13, 1-3) Two floors, 37 rooms on ground floor. Twin domus with 3 as main entrance. Entrance hall dominated by First Style decoration. All Styles represented in house. Black and white often as used background colours, but the house was under restoration, and several rooms were unfinished. Some red and yellow as well. A number of mythological panel paintings and depictions of gods, the punishment of Dirce and Minerva. (PPM X:183-356)
Appendix 4: Photographs of the Houses

*Casa delle Nozze d’argento*

Plate 1: View from fauces

Plate 2: Peristyle

Plate 3: Garden 2 with natatio
Plate 4: Cubiculum q, Pygmies

Plate 5: Cubiculum q, Hercules and Priam

Plate 6: Peristyle portico

Plate 7: Atrium b, Second Style
Plate 8: Cubiculum x

Plate 9: Oecus 4

Plate 10: Mosaic floor, triclinium n

Plate 11: Entrance apodyterium v, aqueduct mosaic

Plate 12: Teracotta crocodile, found in peristyle r

Plate 13: Lararium room j
Casa dell’Efebo

Plate 14: Fauces I, entrance 11, bolted.

Plate 15: Atrium A”, obsidian mirror

Plate 16: Minerva’s attributes, cubiculum 9

Plate 17: Jupiter’s attributes, cubiculum 9

Plate 18: Narcissus, cubiculum I2

Plate 19: Bacchus’ attributes, cubiculum I1
Plate 20: Venus fishing, cubiculum 12
Plate 21: Apollo and Daphne, cubiculum 12
Plate 22: Triclinium 16, mosaic emblamata
Plate 23: Minerva’s attributes, triclinium 16
Plate 24: Mercury’s attributes, triclinium 16
Plate 25: Menelaus and Helen, triclinium 17
Plate 26: Triclinium 17, Opus Sectile floor.

Plate 27: Stuccoed ceiling decoration, triclinium 17

Plate 28: Peristyle 23, summer triclinium
Plate 29: Aedicula lararium behind castellum aquae

Plate 30: Mars and Venus, castellum aquae, peristyle 23
Plate 31: Lararium, corridor 18

Plate 32: Peristyle 23, hunting scene with bull

Plate 33: Peristyle 23, clinai decoration
Casa dell'Ara massima

Plate 34: Atrium with scaenae frons above pseudo-tablinum

Plate 35: Narcissus, pseudo-tablinum

Plate 36: Lararium, north wall of atrium
Plate 37: Tablinum F, east wall

Plate 38: Tablinum F detail.

Plate 39: Tablinum F, west wall, Selene and Endymion

Plate 40: Triclinium G, Ariadne, Nemesis and maenads
Plate 41: Triclinium $G$, east wall

Plate 42: Triclinium $G$, east wall. Hercules and Admetus

Plate 43: Triclinium $G$ north wall, Mars and Venus

*Casa degli Amorini dorati*

Plate 44: View from fauces to tablinum

Plate 45: Tablinum $E$ with Paris and Helen
Plate 46: Aedicula-lararium 

Plate 47: Isis-sacellum, peristyle 

Plate 48: Peristyle 

Plate 49: Peristyle garden 

Plate 50: Peristyle, obsidian mirror 

Plate 51: Peristyle with pediment
Plate 52: Cubiculum I with golden putti discs  Plate 53: Room R
Plate 54: Room R, Leda and the Swan  Plate 55: Room R, stuccoed ceiling
Plate 56: Room Q.
Other Houses

Plate 57: Casa dell’Menandro, view from fauces

Plate 58: Casa dell’Menandro, Menander, peristyle c

Plate 59: Casa dell’Menandro. Nilus mosaic, oecus 11

Plate 60: Casa dei Cubicoli floreali, cubiculum 8
Plate 61: Casa della Caccia antica, view from fauces

Plate 62: Casa della Caccia antica, tablinum 10

Plate 63: Casa di Octavio Quartio, garden Nilus-view

Plate 64: Casa di Octavio Quartio, room $f$
Plate 65: Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, Narcissus.

Plate 66: Casa dell’Orso ferito, view from entrance.

Plate 67: Casa dei Pittori, triclinium 4, Apollo’s attributes

Plate 68: Casa dei Pittori, triclinium 4, Hercules’ attributes

Plate 69: Casa del Criptoportico, peristyle lararium

Plate 70: Casa del Criptoportico, frigidarium 20
Plate 71: Casa di M. Lucretius Fronto, peristyle

Plate 72: Casa della Venere in conchiglia, peristyle wall

Plate 73: Casa della Venere in conchiglia, room 11

Plate 74: Casa I 7, 19, exedra ε, Apollonic symbols (tripod and lyre)
Plate 75: Casa dei Pittori, view from the fauces

Plate 76: Casa di M. Fabius Amandio, atrium west wall

Plate 77: Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus, lararium with earthquake motif